# Lexicon of The Renaissance

## Key Words in Walter Pater's Studies in Art and Poetry

Diotimos Editions

2026

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## About this Lexicon

This Lexicon accompanies the Diotimos Editions text of Walter Pater's *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, which prints the fourth edition of 1893, the last Pater saw through the press, with the original Conclusion of 1873 at the back. Each entry gathers what a word or phrase means in the book: what the word meant in Pater's English, what he does with it, the passages to read, and, where the material allows, its place in his other writings, the sources he took it from, and what later readers made of it. Entries are grouped by category, and alphabetical within each. The Lexicon holds nine hundred and eighty-eight entries, four hundred and ninety-four articles and four hundred and ninety-four short entries, on the words of the Preface, the nine essays and both texts of the Conclusion, under ten headings: Criticism and method; Beauty, pleasure and the senses; Love, friendship and the passions; History, culture and the Renaissance; Art and its materials; Poetry, language and letters; Religion, myth and the sacred; Images from nature and science; Time, flux and the moment; and People and places.

### How an entry is built

An article opens with its headword, a line naming what the word is in the book, and the forms in which it occurs. At a Glance says in four short paragraphs what the word is, what Pater does with it, what the edition offers on it, and where to begin reading. Meaning gives the sense of the word in Pater's time and the family it belongs to. Use in the book follows the word through the essays and argues what Pater makes of it; where a reading is the compiler's and not the text's, it is marked "can be read as". Places to read lists the passages in the order of the book, each with one sentence on what it says there; its opening sentence says exactly what the list includes. Where the material allows, Elsewhere in Pater, Pater's sources and Later readings set the word beside his other writings, the authors he quotes, and his readers. Where the edition's notes, Key Words, Glossary or Introduction say something of the word, In this edition sets it out, with any difference

between the 1873 and 1893 texts of the Conclusion. See also names related entries.

A short entry gives the word's forms and every place where it occurs ("Attested"), or, for a common word, its places in the Preface and the number of further paragraphs in which it occurs; then a gloss and the passages that matter, and See also. A passage that matters to several entries is told in full in one of them, its home, and the others give it a clause and point there: "(PRE §3; see Chemist)".

### References and quotations

References are to chapter and paragraph. The chapters are cited by these letters: PRE, Preface; FRE, Two Early French Stories; PIC, Pico della Mirandola; BOT, Sandro Botticelli; ROB, Luca della Robbia; MIC, The Poetry of Michelangelo; LEO, Leonardo da Vinci; GIO, The School of Giorgione; BEL, Joachim du Bellay; WIN, Winckelmann; CON, Conclusion; C73, the Conclusion of 1873. Paragraphs are counted from the chapter heading, one for each block of text, the epigraphs and verse quotations included and the illustrations, captions and dates left out: PRE §2 is the second paragraph of the Preface, and CON §1 the Greek epigraph of the Conclusion.

Quotations of the book are the edition's text, word for word, with Pater's spelling ("realise", "æsthetic") and without the edition's note numbers or italics. Pater's quotations in other languages are given with the English of the edition's notes. Translations of other works are the compiler's own; outside sources are cited by author, work and place in the footnotes.

## Criticism and method

### Abstract

*To draw off the general from the particular: the critic's reproach and the sculptor's method · The Renaissance*

*abstract*, *abstracting*, *abstracted*

### At a Glance

**The word.** What is drawn away from particular things and considered apart from them; as a verb, to draw off and keep only part of a thing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Greek sculptors sought "to abstract and express only what is structural and permanent" (ROB §7).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §7 says that Pater's "point concerns the removal of transient particulars so that a figure can present a broadly recognizable type".

**A place to read.** ROB §7, with WIN §37 and PRE §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *abstrahere* is to drag away, and its participle *abstractus*, "drawn off", gave the schoolmen their term for the mind's act of considering a form apart from the matter it is found in, the universal apart from the individual. English kept both halves of that history. The adjective means general, theoretical, removed from experience; the verb means to draw off, to separate, to keep one part and leave the rest. Pater uses both, and the book turns on the difference between them.

## Use in the book

The adjective opens the book as a reproach. Writers on art have tried "to define beauty in the abstract", and the true student of æsthetics defines it "not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1; see Concrete terms); the critic has "no need to trouble himself with the abstract question what beauty is in itself" (PRE §2), and what matters is not "a correct abstract definition of beauty for the intellect" but a temperament (PRE §4; see Abstractness; Temperament). The book closes the same way. A theory that asks the sacrifice of experience to "some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves" has "no real claim upon us" (CON §5); in 1873 the phrase was "some abstract morality" (C73 §6; see Abstract morality).

Between these ends, in the essays on sculpture, the verb changes sides. The law of the Greek sculptors "prompted them constantly to seek the type in the individual, to abstract and express only what is structural and permanent" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit), and the Winckelmann essay repeats the law: sculpture presents its types "not by accumulation of detail, but by abstracting from it" (WIN §37). Sculpture itself is "the abstract art" (ROB §13), the art in which the personal quality of *intimité* is "rarest of all" (see Imaginative order).

Abstraction of this kind is still something seen. Botticelli's Madonnas have faces whose "abstract lines" have little nobleness (BOT §7; see Abject); after death, "it is said", "only the abstract lines remain, in a great indifference" (MIC §19; see Abstract line); Leonardo's beauty is seen above all in his drawings, and in these chiefly "in the abstract grace of the bounding lines" (LEO §22). The masters of the Venetian school keep of their Alpine background "certain abstracted elements only, of cool colour and tranquillising line" (GIO §6), and Japanese fan-painting gives "first, only abstract colour" (GIO §2). In each case the abstract is a line or a colour held apart from the rest of the thing, and it remains a matter for the eye.

The danger comes when abstraction leaves the senses altogether. Pico della Mirandola, the Florentine Platonist, after the change that came over him, seems to feel "the chilling touch of the abstract and disembodied beauty Platonists profess to long for" (PIC §11; see Disembodied beauty), and Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the eighteenth-century German historian of ancient art, "living in a world of exquisite but abstract and colourless form", could hardly have conceived of the art of the modern world (WIN §45). The same paragraph sees in the Greek gods themselves a premonition of the medieval spectres: "Those abstracted gods" seem, in a phrase Pater quotes, "ready to melt out their essence fine into the winds" (WIN §45; see Essence).

The word can be read as the book's measure of the general. The critic must not abstract, because his material is the particular impression; the sculptor must, because stone cannot hold the passing moment (see Allgemeinheit). The two demands meet in one rule: an abstraction is good while it is a selection made within the visible, and bad when it leaves the visible behind for a definition.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the adjective "abstract" or the verb "to abstract" occurs, in the order of the book; *abstraction* and *abstractness* have their own entries.

**PRE §1** Writers have tried to define beauty in the abstract; the true student defines it in the most concrete terms possible.

**PRE §2** The critic need not trouble himself with the abstract question what beauty is in itself.

**PRE §4** What matters is not a correct abstract definition of beauty but a certain kind of temperament.

**FRE §3** Abelard and Heloïse meet to refine on the nature of abstract ideas; Abelard knew the exact value of every abstract thought.

**PIC §11** The chilling touch of abstract and disembodied beauty seems already upon Pico.

**BOT §3** Line and colour are the medium of abstract painting.

**BOT §7** The abstract lines of the Madonna's face have little nobleness.

**ROB §7** The Greek sculptors abstract and express only what is structural and permanent.

**ROB §13** The personal quality of intimité is rarest of all in the abstract art of sculpture.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo presses on to the abstract form of beauty about which the Platonists reason.

**MIC §18** The medieval treatment of the Creation of Man came to have an almost independent and abstract existence of its own.

**MIC §19** After death, it is said, only the abstract lines of a face remain.

**LEO §22** Leonardo's curious beauty is seen above all in the abstract grace of the bounding lines of his drawings.

**GIO §2** In the pictorial temperament all ideas however abstract float up as visible scene; Japanese fan-painting gives first only abstract colour.

**GIO §6** The essay's abstract language becomes clear by examples; the Venetian masters keep certain abstracted elements only of their Alpine background.

**WIN §2** Goethe speaks of Winckelmann as of an abstract type of culture.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann's native tendency was to escape from abstract theory to intuition.

**WIN §33** At first sight sculpture seems more real than the faint, abstract world of poetry or painting.

**WIN §37** Sculpture presents its types not by accumulation of detail but by abstracting from it.

**WIN §45** Winckelmann lived in a world of abstract and colourless form; the abstracted gods seem ready to melt out their essence.

**CON §5** A theory that asks the sacrifice of experience to some abstract theory has no real claim upon us.

**C73 §6** In 1873, some abstract morality has no real claim upon us.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §7 glosses *Allgemeinheit* as "Universality", and says that Pater's "point concerns the removal of transient particulars so that a figure can present a broadly recognizable type".

## See also

Abject; Abstract line; Abstract morality; Abstract painting; Abstraction; Abstractness; Allgemeinheit; Concrete terms; Disembodied beauty; Essence; Imaginative order; Temperament.

### Abstract morality

*A morality held as a rule over the self rather than made one's own: in the Conclusion of 1873, one of three things for whose sake a theory may not ask us to give up experience · The Renaissance*

*some abstract morality*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A code of conduct held as general rules, apart from the persons and the cases it governs.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The theory, or idea, or system, which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract morality we have not identified with ourselves, or what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us" (C73 §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; in the revised text it reads "some abstract theory" (CON §5; see Abstract theory).

**A place to read.** C73 §6.

## Meaning

"Abstract" is the Latin *abstractus*, drawn away: an abstract morality is one drawn away from the lives it is meant to rule, a set of precepts held in general and applied from outside. Pater's qualifying clause names what such a morality lacks. It has not been "identified with ourselves", and so it stands over the person as a demand rather than within him as a disposition.

The contrast had a philosophical form in the German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel, whom Pater names in the same paragraph (C73 §6; see Facile orthodoxy). Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (1821) sets *Moralität*, the morality of the single conscience bound to a universal law, below *Sittlichkeit*, the ethical life of a people, in which the individual lives the good as his own element in its customs and institutions; and it calls Immanuel Kant's law of duty, taken by itself, an empty formalism.[1] Pater's clause can be read beside that contrast, with the difference that what Hegel finds in the community Pater looks for in the single temperament.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentence of the sixth paragraph of 1873, in a list of three things for whose sake a theory may ask us to give up part of experience: an interest into which we cannot enter, an abstract morality, and what is only conventional (C73 §6; see Conventional orthodoxy). All three can be read as one condition: each is something outside the self. As with theory in the revised sentence (CON §5; see Abstract theory), what is refused is not morality but a morality kept from outside the person, and the paragraph has just allowed theories and ideas their use as instruments of criticism (C73 §6; see Religious or philosophical ideas).

The essays had already shown morality standing apart from a life. The medieval Renaissance of the French stories had its "antinomianism", its "spirit of rebellion and revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the

[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Berlin, 1821), §§105–141 ("Die Moralität") and §§142–157 (the opening of the third part, "Die Sittlichkeit"); on the empty formalism of the Kantian standpoint, §135, Remark.

time" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism), and in Winckelmann "the moral instinct, like the religious or political, was merged in the artistic" (WIN §12; see Religious sense). In the one, the search after the pleasures of the senses and the imagination impels people "beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal" (FRE §32); in the other, the insincerity of Winckelmann's religious profession is "only one incident of a culture" in which the moral instinct was merged in the artistic (WIN §12). In both a life goes another way than the moral or religious ideas it lives among, and the Conclusion of 1873 can be read as stating as a rule what the essays had told as history.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the revised sentence, the paragraph on the antinomianism of the medieval Renaissance and the paragraph on Winckelmann's merged moral instinct, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** The medieval Renaissance had its antinomianism, its spirit of revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the time.

**WIN §12** In Winckelmann the moral instinct, like the religious or political, was merged in the artistic.

**CON §5** A system that asks the sacrifice of any part of experience to some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves has no real claim upon us.

**C73 §6** In 1873 a system that asks the sacrifice of any part of experience to some abstract morality we have not identified with ourselves has no real claim upon us.

## Later readings

Pater's colleague at Brasenose, the chaplain John Wordsworth, the poet's great-nephew, wrote to him soon after the book appeared that its Conclusion amounted to an assertion "that no fixed principles either of religion or morality can be regarded as certain, that the only thing worth living for is momentary enjoyment".[2] The revised text put "theory" where "morality" had stood, and the change can be read as Pater's reply to such readers: the sentence that had seemed to free the reader from morality now frees him only from a theory he has not made his own (CON §5; see Abstract theory).

## See also

Abstract theory; Antinomianism; Conventional orthodoxy; Facile orthodoxy; Religious or philosophical ideas; Religious sense.

[2] John Wordsworth to Walter Pater, 1873, in *Letters of Walter Pater*, ed. Lawrence Evans (Oxford, 1970), pp. 12–14.

## Abstract theory

*abstract theory*

Attested: *abstract theory* (WIN §9; CON §5). A theory is literally a viewing, from the Greek *theōria*, and an abstract one is drawn away, *abstractus*, from the things it views: a general account held apart from the cases it is meant to explain. The phrase comes twice, at the two places in the book where a mind is shown turning from theory to what it can see. In the Winckelmann essay the scholar who has handled the words of Greek poetry meets its life in the antiquities, and Pater finds there his native tendency to escape from abstract theory to intuition (WIN §9; see Realisation; Sight and touch). In the Conclusion the turn becomes a rule. Any theory, idea or system that asks of us the sacrifice of part of our experience, in consideration of "some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves", has no real claim upon us (CON §5; see Conventional orthodoxy). The qualification is the point. Pater does not reject theory, which in the same paragraph is allowed its use as one of the "instruments of criticism" (CON §5; see Instruments of criticism); he rejects the theory that has not become part of the person who holds it. The 1873 text had "some abstract morality" (C73 §6; see Abstract morality), a phrase the revision replaced with "some abstract theory", and the change can be read as moving the sentence from ethics to method.

### See also

Abstract; Abstract morality; Conventional orthodoxy; Instruments of criticism; Realisation; Sight and touch.

## Abstract type

*an abstract type of culture*

Attested: *abstract type* (WIN §2). A type is a model or pattern, the form that a kind of thing takes at its clearest; an abstract type is one drawn off from the accidents of a particular life. Pater uses the phrase in the second paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, reporting the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832): he "speaks of the teacher who had made his career possible, but whom he had never seen, as of an abstract type of culture, consummate, tranquil, withdrawn already into the region of ideals, yet retaining colour from the incidents of a passionate intellectual life" (WIN §2). The sentence holds two opposites in balance. The type is abstract, consummate and withdrawn, like a statue; it keeps colour from a passionate life, like a portrait. Goethe's next step, as Pater gives it, is to class Winckelmann "with certain works of art" (WIN §2; see Suggestiveness), and the essay can be read as following the same double course throughout:

Winckelmann as a type of culture, studied as one studies the "pregnant types" of Greek sculpture (WIN §35; see Pregnant type), and Winckelmann as a passionate man, with his "romantic, fervent friendships" (WIN §14; see Hellenism). Goethe's own essay, the sketches for a portrait of Winckelmann in *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* (*Winckelmann and His Century*, 1805), is built the same way, in short sections that move between the man and the idea.[3]

## See also

Hellenism; Pregnant type; Suggestiveness; Type.

# Abstraction

*The Greek sculptor's system of the general, and what it cost · The Renaissance*

*abstraction*, *abstractions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The act of drawing the general out of the particular, or the general idea that results.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek sculpture was "a system of abstraction which aimed always at the broad and general type" (ROB §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §9, with MIC §4 and WIN §45.

## Meaning

The noun names both the act and its product: abstraction is the mind's drawing off of a common quality, and an abstraction is the general notion that the act leaves behind. In the plural the word is usually a complaint, the abstractions of philosophy against the things of experience; in the singular, in Pater's essays on sculpture, it names a method of art.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the second sentence of the ninth paragraph of the essay on the Florentine sculptor Luca della Robbia (1399/1400–1482), which states the price of Greek generality. Greek sculpture had found a way of relieving the hardness of pure form (see Relieve): "But it involved to a certain degree the sacrifice of what we call expression; and a system of abstraction which aimed always at the broad and general type, at the purging away from the individual of what belonged only to him, and of the mere accidents of a particular time and place, imposed upon the range

[3] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Skizzen zu einer Schilderung Winckelmanns", in *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1805).

of effects open to the Greek sculptor limits somewhat narrowly defined" (ROB §9).

The sentence restates the law of the paragraph before last (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit) and turns it round. There the law was a power: it gave the Greek works their "breadth of humanity" and their universal acceptance (ROB §8; see Breadth of humanity). Here it is a limit. What the system abstracts from is exactly what the next sentences say Michelangelo needed: "individual expression", "individual character and feeling, the special history of the special soul" (ROB §9; see Individual expression). The word "system" matters. Abstraction is not a vagueness in the Greek eye but a discipline consistently applied, and a discipline has the defects of its rule.

The Michelangelo essay names abstraction as one of three means to one end. Michelangelo "secures that ideality of expression which in Greek sculpture depends on a delicate system of abstraction, and in early Italian sculpture on lowness of relief, by an incompleteness" (MIC §4; see Ideality of expression). Abstraction, low relief and incompleteness are equivalents: each keeps sculpture from the hard literalness of stone (see Equivalent of colour; Incompleteness; Low relief). The Winckelmann essay carries the thought to its end. "The supreme and colourless abstraction of those divine forms, which is the secret of their repose, is also a premonition of the fleshless, consumptive refinements of the pale, medieval artists" (WIN §45; see Repose). Abstraction carried far enough can be read as foreshadowing the very thing it seemed to oppose, the fleshless refinements of the medieval artists.

The first use in the book is the plural, and it stands on the other side. Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher, writing his treatises in Latin, "tries to find a ground of reality below the abstractions of philosophy", as one who had "felt the hand of Heloïse" (FRE §7). There abstractions are what a lover of experience must get below. The book's one consistent judgement can be read in the four uses: abstraction is admirable as a method that serves the eye, and perilous as a habit that forgets it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "abstraction" or "abstractions" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §7** Abelard tries to find a ground of reality below the abstractions of philosophy.

**ROB §9** Greek sculpture was a system of abstraction aiming always at the broad and general type, and it narrowed the range of effects open to the sculptor.

**MIC §4** Ideality of expression depends in Greek sculpture on a delicate system of abstraction, in early Italian sculpture on lowness of relief, in Michelangelo on incompleteness.

**WIN §45** The colourless abstraction of the divine forms, the secret of their repose, foreshadows the fleshless refinements of medieval art.

## See also

Abstract; Abstractness; Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity; Equivalent of colour; Ideality of expression; Incompleteness; Individual expression; Low relief; Relieve; Repose.

## Abstractness

*abstractness*; *abstract*

Attested: *abstractness* (PRE §1); the adjective *abstract*, in the Preface, at PRE §§1, 2, 4. The quality of being drawn off from particular things, general and removed from experience. Beauty is relative, "and the definition of it becomes unmeaning and useless in proportion to its abstractness" (PRE §1; see Relative); the adjective's uses in the Preface all name what the critic can do without: definitions of beauty "in the abstract" (PRE §1), "the abstract question what beauty is in itself" (PRE §2), "a correct abstract definition of beauty for the intellect" (PRE §4; see Temperament). Elsewhere the adjective comes in seventeen further paragraphs and is not always a reproach: Botticelli blends story and sentiment with "the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting" (BOT §3; see Abstract painting), sculpture is "the abstract art" (ROB §13), Leonardo's drawings have "the abstract grace of the bounding lines" (LEO §22). In the Conclusion, a theory that asks the sacrifice of experience to "some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves" has no claim on us (CON §5); the 1873 text had "some abstract morality" (C73 §6; see Abstract morality).

## See also

Abstract; Abstract morality; Abstract painting; Concrete terms; Relative; Temperament; Universal formula.

## Accident

*What belongs to the moment and not to the type, and the chance that sometimes serves art · The Renaissance*

*accident*, *accidents*, *accidental*, *accidentally*

## At a Glance

**The word.** In the language of philosophy, a quality a thing may have or lack without ceasing to be what it is; in common speech, a chance event.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek sculptors purged from the individual "all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment" (ROB §7).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §§7, 10, with WIN §34.

## Meaning

The Latin *accidere* is to fall upon, to befall, and *accidens* rendered the Greek *symbebēkos*, which Aristotle defined as what belongs to a thing and is truly said of it, but neither of necessity nor for the most part.[4] An accident in this sense is the opposite of the essence: the colour of a man's cloak, not his being a man. The everyday sense, a chance happening, grew from the same root. Pater uses both, and in the della Robbia essay they meet.

## Use in the book

The philosophical sense governs the essays on sculpture. The Greek law of *Allgemeinheit* purged from the individual "all that belongs only to him, all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit), and the Greek system aimed at "the purging away from the individual of what belonged only to him, and of the mere accidents of a particular time and place" (ROB §9; see Abstraction). The Winckelmann essay says it again with an image: the white light of sculpture reveals "the tranquil godship" in man, not what is accidental in him (WIN §34; see Godship). Sculpture purges "all that is accidental" from the supreme types (WIN §37), and the youth of the Berlin *adorante* "is characterless, so far as character involves subjection to the accidental influences of life" (WIN §40). The accidents are the passing moods and acts that make a person this person now; Greek sculpture leaves them out.

The tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay turns the word to the other sense, and the turn is the essay's argument in small. Michelangelo secured his expression "in a way quite personal and peculiar to himself, which often is, and always seems, the effect of accident" (ROB §10; see Caricature). The next sentence makes accident a collaborator: "time and accident" have done for the Venus of Melos, the Hellenistic marble found on Melos in 1820 and now in the Louvre, fraying its surface and softening its lines, what Michelangelo gains by leaving nearly all his sculpture in "a puzzling sort of incompleteness" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness). Chance, which the Greek sculptor shut out, returns as a source of expression. The accidents purged from the form come back as accidents to the stone.

Elsewhere the word keeps both values. Medieval religion tended to keep "the degrading or painful accidents" of man's nature always in view (PIC §10); for Pico every "accident in the lives of men" had a higher meaning (PIC §13; see Accidental combination). In *Calumnia* one may note "the suggestiveness of an accident which identifies the image of Truth with the

[4] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* V.30, 1025a14–15.

person of Venus" (BOT §9; see Veritas), and Michelangelo came "through an accident" to study the early Italian sculptors (MIC §7). In its primary aspect a great picture "has no more definite message for us than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow" (GIO §2), and in the poetry of the Pleiad, a group of sixteenth-century French poets, a sudden light transfigures some trivial thing and leaves "a longing that the accident may happen again" (BEL §28). In these the accident is a gift.

The two senses can be read as the two halves of Pater's aesthetic. As a student of Greek art he honours the purging of accidents, the type held above the moment. As the critic of the Preface and the Conclusion he lives by the accident, the impression that comes once and will not come again. The della Robbia essay finds a third way, in which the passing thing is neither purged nor arrested but allowed to show through a form that does not quite fix it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "accident" or its family occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §10** Medieval religion tended to keep the degrading or painful accidents of man's nature always in view.

**PIC §13** For Pico every accident in the lives of men was filled with higher meanings, and every accidental combination of events had significance.

**BOT §9** In Calumnia an accident identifies the image of Truth with the person of Venus.

**ROB §7** Greek sculpture purged from the individual all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment.

**ROB §9** The Greek system purged away the mere accidents of a particular time and place.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's expression always seems the effect of accident; time and accident have softened the Venus of Melos.

**MIC §2** Men of inventive temperament, Victor Hugo for instance, have relieved conceptions of moral or spiritual greatness by lovely accidents or accessories.

**MIC §7** Michelangelo came through an accident to study the early Italian sculptors.

**LEO §28** Verrocchio died of grief, it was said, when the mould of his equestrian statue of the condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni accidentally failed.

**GIO §2** In its primary aspect a great picture has no more definite message than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow.

**BEL §28** A trivial thing transfigured for a moment in the Pleiad's poetry leaves a longing that the accident may happen again.

**WIN §26** The æsthetic element is only accidentally connected with the ritual.

**WIN §32** It is partly accident which makes the born artist poet or painter rather than sculptor.

**WIN §34** The white light of sculpture reveals not what is accidental in man but the tranquil godship in him.

**WIN §36** Browning's characters seem to come to him by strange accidents from the ends of the world.

**WIN §37** Sculpture gradually purges away all that is accidental from the supreme types.

**WIN §40** The adorante is characterless, so far as character involves subjection to the accidental influences of life.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann's nature was like a relic of antiquity laid open by accident to the modern atmosphere.

**WIN §49** The local, accidental colouring of its own age has passed from Hellenic culture.

## See also

Abstraction; Accidental combination; Allgemeinheit; Caricature; Essence; Godship; Impression; Incompleteness; Repose; Type; Veritas.

## Adjunct

*adjuncts*

Attested: *adjuncts* (PRE §3). What is joined to a thing without belonging to its essence; in the older logic, a quality joined to a subject but not part of its essence. The æsthetic critic's function is to "separate from its adjuncts, the virtue" by which a work produces its special impression (PRE §3; see Æsthetic criticism; Virtue). The adjuncts of a work can be read as whatever comes with it but does not produce its effect, such as its subject taken by itself, its history, the reputation of its maker; two paragraphs later Pater speaks of "the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination" (PRE §5; see Disengage).

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Disengage; Element; Virtue.

## Æsthetic criticism

*Criticism that begins from the effect of a work · The Renaissance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Æsthetic criticism is Pater's name for a criticism that starts from what a work does to the one who meets it and works back to what in the work produces it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface defines the æsthetic critic by his objects, "all works of art, and the fairer forms of nature and human life", and by his function, "to distinguish, to analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue" that produces an impression (PRE §3). Two Early French Stories sets æsthetic value against antiquarian interest (FRE §23). The School of Giorgione gives the discipline its beginning, a grasp of the differences between the arts, and one of its chief functions, to estimate how near each work comes to music (GIO §§1, 10).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines æsthetic criticism as "The study of how an object produces a distinctive effect in experience", and sends the reader to the Preface.

**A place to read.** PRE §§2–3, the whole method in two paragraphs.

## Meaning

"Æsthetic" goes back to the Greek *aisthētikos*, "of perception by the senses", and through German philosophy came to mean what concerns beauty and the arts (see Æsthetics). Pater's phrase claims it for criticism: an æsthetic criticism can be read as one that judges a work as an object of the senses and the imagination, by the kind and degree of pleasure it gives, and not by its antiquarian or historical interest (FRE §23, BEL §21).

## Use in the book

The Preface builds the method in steps. Its first step is to know one's impression (PRE §2; see Impression). Its objects are wide, "music, poetry, artistic and accomplished forms of human life", all of them "receptacles of so many powers or forces" (PRE §2; see Powers or forces). Its facts are the answers to the critic's questions, "the original facts with which the æsthetic critic has to do" (PRE §2). Then comes its procedure. "The æsthetic critic, then, regards all the objects with which he has to do, all works of art, and the fairer forms of nature and human life, as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations, each of a more or less peculiar or unique kind. This influence he feels, and wishes to explain, by analysing and reducing it to its elements" (PRE §3). And last, its function: "to distinguish, to analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair personality in life or in a book, produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure, to indicate what the source of that impression is, and under what conditions it is experienced" (PRE §3; see Virtue; Chemist).

The list of objects matters. Æsthetic criticism is not confined to works of art; it takes in "La Gioconda, the hills of Carrara, Pico of Mirandola" in one breath (PRE §3), a portrait, a landscape and a man. So the book's subjects include a scholar, Pico, and a scholar's life, Winckelmann's, alongside paintings and poems.

Two Early French Stories draws a boundary. Antiquarianism may add to the charm of an old text, but only where there is "a real, direct, æsthetic charm in the thing itself"; without it no antiquarian effort can make the work "a proper subject of æsthetic criticism" (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm; Discriminate). The story of Aucassin and Nicolette, Pater says, "has something of this quality".

The School of Giorgione, added to the book in 1888, gives the discipline a beginning and a function of a new kind. It begins with the grasp "that the sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind" (GIO §1), and its functions are to define these limitations, "to estimate the degree in which a given work of art fulfils its responsibilities to its special material" (GIO §1; see Responsibilities to its material). Yet the arts also borrow from one another (GIO §3), and all of them struggle towards the condition of music; so "one of the chief functions of æsthetic criticism, dealing with the products of art, new or old, is to estimate the degree in which each of those products approaches, in this sense, to musical law" (GIO §10; see Condition of music). The Preface's critic measured an effect and traced its source; the critic of the later essay also has a standard to measure by. The two accounts agree, on one reading, since the Preface asked for the conditions under which an impression is felt, and the Giorgione essay names the most general of those conditions, the medium.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase, or "æsthetic critic", occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** In æsthetic criticism the first step is to know one's own impression; the objects it deals with are receptacles of powers or forces; the answers to the critic's questions are the original facts the æsthetic critic has to do with.

**PRE §3** The æsthetic critic regards all objects as powers producing pleasurable sensations, and his function is to disengage the virtue that produces an impression.

**FRE §23** No merely antiquarian effort can make an old work a proper subject of æsthetic criticism without a real æsthetic charm in the thing itself.

**GIO §1** The grasp that each art has its own order of impressions is the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism, and one of its functions is to define the limitations of each art.

**GIO §3** A just apprehension of the differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism, yet each art passes into the condition of another.

**GIO §10** One of the chief functions of æsthetic criticism is to estimate how near each work approaches to musical law.

## In this edition

The Glossary defines æsthetic criticism as "The study of how an object produces a distinctive effect in experience", with "See the Preface"; its entry "Aesthetic" is given under Æsthetics.

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Æsthetic philosopher; Æsthetics; Chemist; Condition of music; Discriminate; Impression; Powers or forces; Responsibilities to its material; To see the object as in itself it really is; Virtue.

# Æsthetic effect

*The result a work produces on the one who receives it, governed by laws that the great masters make legible · The Renaissance*

*æsthetic effect*; *æsthetic effects*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An effect is a result; an æsthetic effect is the result a work of art produces in the senses and the mind of the one who receives it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The qualities of the great masters are "most often typical standards, or revealing instances of the laws by which certain æsthetic effects are produced" (MIC §21).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §21.

## Meaning

The Greek *aisthēsis* is perception by the senses, and "æsthetic" in Pater keeps that root: it names what belongs to feeling and perception before judgement (see Æsthetics). An effect, from the Latin *efficere*, to bring about, is what a cause produces. An æsthetic effect is thus a sensation or impression caused by a work, and the phrase puts the stress where the Preface puts it, on what the work does to the one who looks, reads or listens.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the first sentence of the last paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which turns from the man to a general rule: "The qualities of the great masters in art or literature, the combination of those qualities, the laws by which they moderate, support, relieve each other, are

not peculiar to them; but most often typical standards, or revealing instances of the laws by which certain æsthetic effects are produced" (MIC §21; see Typical standards).

The sentence makes a claim about what a great master is. His qualities are not private gifts but instances of laws, and the laws govern effects: they say how a sweetness relieves a strength, how a strangeness is made lovely. The qualities are "most often", not always, such standards, and the old masters show them most legibly: "The old masters indeed are simpler; their characteristics are written larger, and are easier to read, than the analogues of them in all the mixed, confused productions of the modern mind" (MIC §21; see Analogue). Studied in them, the law becomes "a standard or measure which helps us to put in its right place many a vagrant genius" (MIC §21; see Vagrant genius). The paragraph ends: "Perhaps this is the chief use in studying old masters."

The claim joins two parts of the book that can seem opposed. The Preface asks the critic to deal in the particular: each work affects us "with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure" (PRE §3; see Special manifestation), and the critic is to disengage that virtue "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Chemist). The chemist's comparison already implies laws: an element behaves by rule wherever it is found. The last paragraph of the Michelangelo essay draws the implication. The impression is unique, but the means by which it is produced are lawful, and a critic who has learned them in Michelangelo can recognise them in the English poet and painter William Blake (1757–1827) and in the French poet and novelist Victor Hugo, "his true sons" (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength).

"Effect" is a word the book uses often of art, and almost always with this sense of a result produced on a receiver. Michelangelo's incompleteness communicates to pure form "breath, pulsation, the effect of life" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness); in the ideal poem or picture "form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect to the 'imaginative reason'" (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason); and in the Pleiad's slight poems a sudden light transfigures some trivial thing, a winnowing-fan or the dust in a barn door, and "the thing has vanished, because it was pure effect; but it leaves a relish behind it" (BEL §28). The phrase "æsthetic effects" gives the word its theory. It can be read as Pater's nearest approach to a science of criticism: not a universal formula for beauty, which the Preface refuses (PRE §1; see Universal formula), but a study of the laws by which beautiful effects are made, learned from the masters in whom they are written largest.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §21** The qualities of the great masters are typical standards, or revealing instances of the laws by which certain æsthetic effects are produced.

## See also

Æsthetics; Analogue; Chemist; Imaginative reason; Incompleteness; Special manifestation; Sweetness and strength; Typical standards; Universal formula; Vagrant genius.

# Æsthetic philosopher

*The student of art for whom the tradition of a name is as real as the authentic works, and the Giorgionesque as real as Giorgione · The Renaissance*

*æsthetic philosopher*; *philosopher*, *philosophers*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A thinker about beauty and art: here, one who studies their effects and influences, not only their facts.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For the æsthetic philosopher, therefore, over and above the real Giorgione and his authentic extant works, there remains the Giorgionesque also—an influence, a spirit or type in art, active in men so different as those to whom many of his supposed works are really assignable" (GIO §18).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §18 says that Pater's category of the Giorgionesque "includes work by other painters, copies, attributions, and enduring habits of seeing", and that "The difference between influence and authorship is what lets his argument survive changes to the list of works by Giorgione".

**A place to read.** GIO §18, with GIO §25.

## Meaning

"Æsthetic" comes from the Greek *aisthētikos*, belonging to perception by the senses; the word became the name of the philosophy of beauty in eighteenth-century Germany (see Æsthetics). An æsthetic philosopher, in Pater's century, was one who theorised about beauty and art. Pater's use is narrower and more practical. His æsthetic philosopher asks what a body of work does to the mind, and counts as part of an artist's reality the effect his name has had.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the turn of the Giorgione essay, after Pater has given up most of the master's pictures to the critics. The "new Vasari", the English critic Joseph Archer Crowe and the Italian connoisseur Giovanni

Battista Cavalcaselle's *A History of Painting in North Italy* (1871), has left "only one" of the six or eight famous pictures "certainly from Giorgione's hand" (GIO §14; see Authentic works). "But, although the number of Giorgione's extant works has been thus limited by recent criticism, all is not done when the real and the traditional elements in what concerns him have been discriminated; for, in what is connected with a great name, much that is not real is often very stimulating" (GIO §18; see Discriminate). The æsthetic philosopher is the one for whom this matters. For him "there remains the Giorgionesque also—an influence, a spirit or type in art" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque).

The phrase sets two kinds of knowledge side by side and ranks them. The antiquarian, or "the accomplished science of the subject" (GIO §14), separates the real from the traditional and keeps the real. The æsthetic philosopher keeps both, because the traditional has worked on men's minds as surely as the real. A "veritable school" grew out of true and false attributions, copies and traditions alike (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque). Giorgione becomes "a sort of impersonation of Venice itself" (GIO §18; see Impersonation). For the philosopher this impersonation is a fact, and a more interesting one than a date.

The essay's last paragraph names the method. Beyond "the narrower range of the strictly ascertained facts" lies the *vraie vérité*, the real truth, of "those more liberal and durable impressions" which supplement them (GIO §25; see Ascertained facts), and with it the indirect influence by which an artist "really makes himself felt in our culture" (GIO §25; see Indirect influence). The æsthetic philosopher can be read as the Preface's æsthetic critic, asking his question of a reputation (PRE §2; see Æsthetic criticism). The answer, for Giorgione, is a type of art more durable than his pictures.

Elsewhere in the book "philosopher" is mostly a word for the schools, the philosophers whom Pico hoped to reconcile (PIC §8) or those against whom Winckelmann protested (WIN §7). Only in the Giorgione essay is the word joined to the æsthetic, and there it can be read as describing Pater himself.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "philosopher" or "philosophers" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §8** In the age of Lorenzo artists and philosophers do not live in isolation.

**PIC §8** The generous hope of reconciling the philosophers with one another and with the Church.

**PIC §13** In Pico's Heptaplus the ancient philosophers either did not speak of divine things or spoke of them dissemblingly.

**PIC §15** Whatever philosophers said of reconciling the old faith with the new, artists valued the Greek imagery.

**BOT §5** Botticelli, like other artists so entire, would usually care little for a philosopher's theories, even in a poem in terza rima.

**GIO §18** For the æsthetic philosopher there remains the Giorgionesque, over and above the real Giorgione.

**BEL §8** If anywhere the Renaissance became conscious, as a German philosopher might say, it is in Du Bellay's little book.

**WIN §7** Winckelmann protests against Christian Wolff and the philosophers.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's knowledge was as if recalled by one who had been lover and philosopher at once.

**WIN §41** The poets, orators, historians and philosophers of Greece.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Æsthetics; Ascertained facts; Authentic works; Discriminate; Giorgionesque; Impersonation; Indirect influence.

# Æsthetic value

*The worth a work has as art, which the history of its age can neither give it nor take away · The Renaissance*

*æsthetic value*; *an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The worth of a thing as a source of the pleasure proper to art, as against its worth as a record of the time that made it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** A poet's work, to have the highest interest, must have "an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value" (BEL §21).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines "Aesthetic" as "Pertaining to sense, perception, or the qualities felt in art", and adds that "The exact emphasis depends on the passage."

**A place to read.** BEL §§3, 21.

## Meaning

Value is worth, what a thing is good for or how much it counts; "æsthetic" ties the worth to perception and the pleasure that comes through it. An æsthetic value is the worth a work has for one who looks at it or reads it now, as art. Pater sets it against two other kinds of worth that a work may have, the antiquarian and the historical, which belong to the past it records and can be real without it.

## Use in the book

The phrase is first a test. In the first essay Pater grants that antiquarianism may add to the charm of an old text, but only on a

condition: unless some purely artistic quality went to its making, "no merely antiquarian effort can ever give it an æsthetic value" (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm). Æsthetic value cannot be lent by scholarship. It must have gone into the making, and the critic can only find it there.

The essay on Joachim du Bellay, the sixteenth-century French poet, applies the test twice, and the two verdicts differ. The first is given to a manner. When Pierre de Ronsard, the leading poet of the Pleiad, doubles French daintiness by Italian finesse, "nearly all the force and all the seriousness of French work disappear" (BEL §3; see Finesse), and what remains is elegance. Pater sets a value against the loss: "But this elegance, this manner, this daintiness of execution are consummate, and have an unmistakable æsthetic value" (BEL §3). The "But" turns a list of losses into a judgement of worth. A style that has lost nearly all its force and all its seriousness can still have an æsthetic value, because its execution is consummate.

The second verdict is given to a poet, and it asks more. Du Bellay's chief interest, Pater says, is that he is "a characteristic specimen of the poetical taste of that age" (BEL §21). That is an historical interest, and it is not enough: "But if his work is to have the highest sort of interest, if it is to do something more than satisfy curiosity, if it is to have an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value, it is not enough for a poet to have been the true child of his age, to have conformed to its æsthetic conditions, and by so conforming to have charmed and stimulated that age; it is necessary that there should be perceptible in his work something individual, inventive, unique, the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality" (BEL §21). The age's own "æsthetic conditions" produce only historical value; æsthetic value, in the higher sense, needs a temper of the poet's own. The French critic Sainte-Beuve found that impress in the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets*; Pater, though he thinks the critic may have exaggerated it, finds in the *Regrets* the intimacy of a homesick man (BEL §21; see Intimité; Home-sickness).

The two passages can be read as marking two levels. A manner may have æsthetic value of its own, as the Pleiad's elegance has; a poet has the highest value only when his own impress is on the manner. The paragraph that lets Du Bellay's poetry stand as "part of the manner of a time" (BEL §13; see À la mode) makes the same distinction from the other side: "everything that has style, that has been done as no other man or age could have done it, as it could never, for all our trying, be done again, has its true value and interest" (BEL §13; see Style). "No other man or age": the value of style can belong to a person or to a period, and the essay values both, while ranking the person higher.

The test can be read as the Preface's, carried into history. The æsthetic critic asks of each work what it is "to me" (PRE §2; see Æsthetic criticism), and of each period, "In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the

period find itself?" (PRE §4). The Du Bellay essay can be read as Pater's clearest demonstration that the two interests can be told apart in the same poems. The poetry of the Pleiad has much of the historian's interest and some of the critic's; the winnower's song, which ends the essay, has "in the highest degree, the qualities, the value, of the whole Pleiad school of poetry" (BEL §28; see Pure effect), a grace of fancy nearly all the pleasure of which lies in the dexterous handling of a thing slight in itself.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "æsthetic value" or "an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value" occurs, with BEL §§13 and 28, where the value of the Pleiad's style is named, in the order of the book.

**FRE §23** No merely antiquarian effort can give an old work an æsthetic value unless some artistic quality went to its making.

**BEL §3** The Pleiad's elegance, manner and daintiness of execution are consummate and have an unmistakable æsthetic value.

**BEL §13** Everything that has style, done as no other man or age could have done it, has its true value and interest.

**BEL §21** To have an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value, a poet's work must bear the impress of his own temper.

**BEL §28** The winnower's song has in the highest degree the qualities and value of the whole Pleiad school.

## See also

À la mode; Æsthetic charm; Æsthetic criticism; Daintiness; Finesse; Home-sickness; Intimité; Pure effect; Style.

# Æsthetics

*The study of beauty, and the adjective Pater builds on it · The Renaissance æsthetics*; *æsthetic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Æsthetics is the philosophy of beauty and of the arts. The name goes back to the Greek for perception by the senses, and the adjective "æsthetic" keeps that root.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The noun comes once, in the first paragraph: the aim of "the true student of æsthetics" is to define beauty "not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1). The adjective runs through the book, most often in "æsthetic criticism", and twice marks a value distinct from the historical or antiquarian (FRE §23, BEL §21).

**In this edition.** The Glossary's entry "Aesthetic" gives "Pertaining to sense, perception, or the qualities felt in art", adding that "The exact emphasis depends on the passage".

**A place to read.** PRE §1, where the true student of æsthetics is set against the seekers of a universal formula.

## Meaning

The Greek *aisthēsis* is perception through the senses, and *aisthētikos* what concerns it. The German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten took the word for a new science of sensory knowledge and of beauty as its perfection, naming it in 1735 and making it the title of his *Aesthetica* (1750).[5] Kant called the judgement of taste æsthetic in his *Critique of Judgement* (1790), and the lectures on æsthetics of G. W. F. Hegel, published after his death, made the noun the name of the German philosophy of art. English took the word up around 1800, at first in Kant's sense of what concerns perception by the senses; by the 1830s it served for the philosophy of taste and the fine arts. The adjective spread more widely, for whatever concerns beauty and the pleasure taken in it. Pater writes both with the ligature.

## Use in the book

Pater's one use of the noun corrects the discipline. Against the writers who sought "some universal formula" for beauty he sets "the true student of æsthetics", whose aim is the formula for "this or that special manifestation" of beauty (PRE §1; see Universal formula). The "true" student is the one whose subject is particular beauties, and the rest of the book may be taken as his practice.

The adjective then does steady work. Most often it names the criticism the Preface describes (see Æsthetic criticism). Twice it separates the beauty of a work from its interest as a document. To say that an old text "has an antiquarian interest" often means "that it has no distinct æsthetic interest for the reader of to-day" (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm). Of Du Bellay Pater asks what his work must have "if it is to have an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value": not only conformity "to its æsthetic conditions", the taste of its age, but the impress of the writer's own temper (BEL §21; see Æsthetic value). The word measures what survives the age that produced a work.

In the School of Giorgione the adjective goes back to its root in the senses. Art addresses "the 'imaginative reason' through the senses", and so "there are differences of kind in æsthetic beauty, corresponding to the differences in kind of the gifts of sense themselves" (GIO §1). Æsthetic

[5] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* (Halle, 1735), §116, where the science of things perceived by the senses is called *aesthetica*; and *Aesthetica* (Frankfurt an der Oder, 1750), §1, and §14, where the end of aesthetics is the perfection of sensory cognition, which is beauty.

beauty is plural because the senses are. The same essay says that for "the æsthetic philosopher", over and above the real Giorgione and his authentic works, "there remains the Giorgionesque also" (GIO §18; see Æsthetic philosopher). In Greek religion "the æsthetic element", only accidentally connected with the unchanging ritual, "expands with the freedom and mobility of the things of the intellect" (WIN §26).

## Places to read

The noun's one place, and every paragraph in which the adjective occurs outside the phrases "æsthetic criticism" and "æsthetic critic" (for which see Æsthetic criticism), in the order of the book.

**PRE §1** To define beauty in the most concrete terms, and to find the formula for this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of æsthetics.

**PRE §7** The fifteenth century in Italy is to be studied for its personalities with their profound æsthetic charm, and for its general spirit.

**FRE §23** An antiquarian interest often means no distinct æsthetic interest; without a real æsthetic charm no antiquarian effort can give a work æsthetic value.

**MIC §2** Men of inventive temperament relieve conceptions with little æsthetic charm of their own by lovely accidents.

**MIC §21** The qualities of the old masters are often typical standards, or revealing instances of the laws by which certain æsthetic effects are produced.

**GIO §1** There are differences of kind in æsthetic beauty, corresponding to the differences in kind of the gifts of sense.

**GIO §18** For the æsthetic philosopher, over and above the real Giorgione and his authentic works, there remains the Giorgionesque.

**BEL §3** The elegance and daintiness of the French Renaissance manner have an unmistakable æsthetic value.

**BEL §21** A poem has an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value only if it bears the impress of the writer's own temper, not only the æsthetic conditions of its age.

**WIN §26** In Greek religion the æsthetic element, loosely tied to the fixed ritual, expands with the freedom of the intellect.

## In this edition

The Glossary gives "Aesthetic" as "Pertaining to sense, perception, or the qualities felt in art", and adds, rightly for this book, "The exact emphasis depends on the passage". It has no entry for the noun; the phrase has its own entry, "Aesthetic criticism".

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Æsthetic criticism; Æsthetic philosopher; Æsthetic value; Beauty; Concrete terms; Universal formula.

# Affinity

*A likeness of nature that draws one thing to another: Pater's word for Winckelmann's bond with Greece · The Renaissance*

*affinity*; *affinities*; *native affinity*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A natural kinship or attraction between things or persons, by which they draw together.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The element of Plato that drew Winckelmann was the "element of affinity" that is "wholly Greek, and alien from the Christian world" (WIN §7).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §7 says that Plato's *Lysis* "begins with young men gathering at a wrestling school".

**A place to read.** WIN §§7, 14.

## Meaning

*Affinity* comes through French from the Latin *affinitas*, relationship by marriage, from *affinis*, bordering on, related. In English it meant first a kinship by marriage, then any natural likeness or attraction. In the eighteenth century chemists used it for the force by which certain substances combine with one another in preference to others, and Goethe took the chemists' "elective affinities"[6] for the title of his novel of 1809, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, in which the attractions of four people follow the laws of chemistry. The word thus came to Pater's generation with three senses at once: a family likeness, an attraction, and a law of combination.

## Use in the book

The Winckelmann essay uses the word five times, in four paragraphs, and every time of a bond that is natural rather than chosen. The first is Winckelmann's bond with Plato. Plato, "saved so often for his redeeming literary manner", is excepted from his scorn of the philosophers, and what draws Winckelmann is not the side of him that seems to pass "into a world no longer pagan" (WIN §7). "But the element of affinity which he presents to Winckelmann is that which is wholly Greek, and alien from the Christian world, represented by that group of brilliant youths in the Lysis, still uninfected by any spiritual sickness, finding the end of all endeavour in the aspects of the human form, the continual stir and motion of a comely

[6] Torbern Bergman, *Disquisitio de attractionibus electivis* (Uppsala, 1775); German chemists rendered its *attractio electiva* as *Wahlverwandtschaft*.

human life" (WIN §7). The affinity is selective: Winckelmann finds in Plato what is already his, and leaves the rest. The sentence can be read as defining affinity itself, a likeness that finds its own in its object.

In the fourteenth paragraph the word names Winckelmann's whole relation to Greece. The repression of his German youth, removed at last, "gave force and glow to Winckelmann's native affinity to the Hellenic spirit" (WIN §14; see Hellenic spirit), and the same paragraph insists that the affinity was more than intellectual: it is "proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men" (WIN §14; see Hellenism). "Native" is the essay's emphasis. Winckelmann does not acquire Greek taste; he was born with a nature that answered it, and the end of that repression only set it free. In his letter to the young Livonian nobleman Friedrich Reinhold von Berg, which Pater quotes, Winckelmann, in Pater's English, names the same bond: "the first time I saw you, the affinity of our spirits was revealed to me" (WIN §16). The affinity with Greece and the affinity with a friend are, on the essay's showing, one disposition.

The last use generalises it into a law of the arts: different attitudes of the imagination have "a native affinity with different types of sensuous form" (WIN §32; see Ultimate differences of the arts). Here the chemists' sense can be read as returning: a phase of the mind combines with a form as an acid with a base, and sculpture is the form with which the Greek imagination had its affinity. The essay can be read as using one word for the man, the friendship and the history of art, and as finding the same law in all three: things that are alike in nature come together without effort.

The book's other affinities keep the sense of a drawing together. Florence, as the French historian Ernest Renan had pointed out, "had always had an affinity for the mystic and dreamy philosophy of Plato" (PIC §6); in the Leonardo essay Goethe in the *Elective Affinities* "does transmute ideas into images" (LEO §21; see Transmute); and of La Gioconda Pater asks by what "strange affinities" the dream and the person grew up apart and yet together (LEO §30; see Portraiture).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "affinity" or "affinities" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §6** Florence had always had an affinity for the mystic and dreamy philosophy of Plato.

**LEO §21** Goethe, in the Elective Affinities and the first part of Faust, transmutes ideas into images.

**LEO §30** By what strange affinities had the dream and the person grown up thus apart?

**WIN §7** The element of affinity Plato presents to Winckelmann is wholly Greek, the brilliant youths of the Lysis.

**WIN §14** Winckelmann's native affinity to the Hellenic spirit, proved by his friendships, was not merely intellectual.

**WIN §16** At their first meeting the affinity of their spirits was revealed to Winckelmann.

**WIN §32** Different attitudes of the imagination have a native affinity with different types of sensuous form.

## See also

Hellenic spirit; Hellenism; Portraiture; Transmute; Ultimate differences of the arts.

# Allegorical interpretation

*Reading a hidden meaning beneath the surface of a text · The Renaissance*

*allegorical interpretation*; *allegory*, *allegorical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Allegorical interpretation reads a text as saying something other than what it says on its surface: a story becomes a figure of a moral, philosophical or spiritual truth.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Without a sense of history, the fifteenth-century scholars "were thus thrown back upon the quicksand of allegorical interpretation" (PIC §4). Yet, "With its strange web of imagery, its quaint conceits, its unexpected combinations and subtle moralising, it is an element in the local colour of a great age" (PIC §5).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §4 on *in recessu divinius aliquid* says that the interpreters "seek a higher meaning behind the surface sense of Homer or Moses".

**A place to read.** PIC §§4–5.

## Meaning

The Greek *allēgoria* is "speaking otherwise", saying one thing and meaning another. As a method of reading it is as old as Greek philosophy, which read Homer's gods as natural forces or virtues; Philo of Alexandria, the Jewish Platonist of the first century, read the books of Moses so, and the Christian church read the Old Testament as a figure of the New. Medieval exegesis taught four senses of Scripture, the literal and three hidden ones.

## Use in the book

Pater treats the method as a symptom. Because the scholars of the fifteenth century had no historic sense and no idea of development, "they were thus thrown back upon the quicksand of allegorical interpretation" (PIC §4; see Historic sense; Development). The religions had to agree, "And

here the first necessity was to misrepresent the language, the conceptions, the sentiments, it was proposed to compare and reconcile. Plato and Homer must be made to speak agreeably to Moses. Set side by side, the mere surfaces could never unite in any harmony of design" (PIC §4). The interpreter must therefore go below the surface for a diviner meaning held in reserve (PIC §4; see In recessu divinius aliquid). The words "quicksand" and "misrepresent" are severe, and the judgement is the historian's: the method destroys what it reconciles.

The next paragraph softens without retracting. As a curiosity of the human mind, a "madhouse-cell" into which we may peep, the method "has its interest" (PIC §5; see Madhouse-cell). It is "an element in the local colour of a great age" (PIC §5; see Local colour), and it "illustrates also the faith of that age in all oracles, its desire to hear all voices, its generous belief that nothing which had ever interested the human mind could wholly lose its vitality" (PIC §5). The last clause is, almost word for word, Pater's own definition of humanism at the end of the essay (PIC §16; see Humanism). The method is false, the faith behind it true.

Elsewhere the book sets the word against meaning that lives in the form. In the Venus of Melos the spiritual motive is not attached to the sensuous form "as its meaning to an allegory", but saturates it (WIN §28; see Sensuous form), and "In some of the feebler allegorical designs of the middle age, we find isolated qualities portrayed as by so many masks" (WIN §38). Giorgione's small pictures serve "neither for uses of devotion, nor of allegorical or historic teaching" (GIO §12). The book can be read as preferring meaning that lives in the form to meaning hidden beneath it, and as forgiving Pico his allegories for the sake of the faith they served.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "allegorical interpretation", "allegory" or "allegorical" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §4** Without the historic sense, the fifteenth-century scholars were thrown back on the quicksand of allegorical interpretation.

**PIC §5** As a curiosity of the human mind, the allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century has its interest.

**BOT §9** In the allegorical picture of Calumnia, Botticelli's Veritas has the person of Venus.

**MIC §4** The creation of life is in various ways the motive of all Michelangelo's work, whether legend or allegory.

**GIO §12** Giorgione's pictures serve neither devotion nor allegorical or historic teaching.

**WIN §28** In Greek sculpture the motive is not attached to the form as its meaning to an allegory, but saturates it.

**WIN §38** The feebler allegorical designs of the middle age portray isolated qualities as so many masks.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §4 renders *in recessu divinius aliquid* "something more divine hidden within", and says that Pater "characterizes the method he is about to illustrate: interpreters seek a higher meaning behind the surface sense of Homer or Moses".

## See also

Development; Historic sense; Humanism; In recessu divinius aliquid; Local colour; Madhouse-cell; Sensuous form.

# Allgemeinheit

*Breadth, generality, universality: the law of the Greek sculptors · The Renaissance*

*Allgemeinheit*; *breadth*, *generality*, *universality*

## At a Glance

**The word.** German, "generality" or "universality", from *allgemein*, common to all.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "*Allgemeinheit*—breadth, generality, universality—is the word chosen by Winckelmann, and after him by Goethe and many German critics, to express that law of the most excellent Greek sculptors" (ROB §7).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §35 says that "Pater will distinguish breadth achieved through disciplined selection from a generality produced by imprecise observation".

**A place to read.** ROB §7, with WIN §35.

## Meaning

German *allgemein* joins *all*, "all", and *gemein*, "common", and *Allgemeinheit* is the quality of what is common to all. In Hegel's philosophy, which the Winckelmann essay quotes, it is the word for universality, as against particularity (*Besonderheit*). Pater never uses it without a gloss, and the glosses differ: "breadth, generality, universality" (ROB §7), "generality or breadth" (WIN §35), "completeness" (WIN §51). The first gloss, breadth, is a word of the eye; the others are words of the mind; the word's interest in the book lies in their joining.

## Use in the book

The seventh paragraph of the della Robbia essay is one sentence, and it is the word's chief passage: "*Allgemeinheit*—breadth, generality, universality

—is the word chosen by Winckelmann, and after him by Goethe and many German critics, to express that law of the most excellent Greek sculptors, of Pheidias and his pupils, which prompted them constantly to seek the type in the individual, to abstract and express only what is structural and permanent, to purge from the individual all that belongs only to him, all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment, all that (because in its own nature it endures but for a moment) is apt to look like a frozen thing if one arrests it" (ROB §7). Pheidias is the Athenian sculptor of the fifth century BC who made the statues of Athena in the Parthenon and of Zeus at Olympia.

The sentence has four verbs, seek, abstract, express and purge (see Abstract; Purge), but its weight is in the parenthesis. The parenthesis can be read as giving the law a reason that is not Plato's. The Greek sculptor does not leave out the moment because the idea is more real than the appearance; he leaves it out because a passing feeling, held in stone, "is apt to look like a frozen thing". The generality of Greek sculpture is a solution to a problem of the medium, the problem the essay calls the special limitation of sculpture (ROB §5; see Special limitation). The next paragraph draws the gain, "the breadth of humanity in them" (ROB §8; see Breadth of humanity), and the one after draws the cost, the sacrifice of expression (ROB §9; see Abstraction). In the eleventh paragraph the Tuscan sculptors partake "of the *Allgemeinheit* of the Greeks, their way of extracting certain select elements only of pure form and sacrificing all the rest" (ROB §11; see Pure form).

The Winckelmann essay pairs the word with *Heiterkeit*: "*Heiterkeit*—blitheness or repose, and *Allgemeinheit*—generality or breadth, are, then, the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal" (WIN §35; see Heiterkeit). The next sentences guard it from a misreading. That generality "has nothing in common with the lax observation, the unlearned thought, the flaccid execution, which have sometimes claimed superiority in art, on the plea of being 'broad' or 'general.'" Hellenic breadth and generality come rather of a culture "minute, severe, constantly renewed", which concentrates its impressions into types (WIN §35; see Pregnant type). At the end of the essay the pair returns for Goethe, whose Hellenism was "the *Allgemeinheit* and *Heiterkeit*, the completeness and serenity, of a watchful, exigent intellectualism" (WIN §51).

The guard in WIN §35 reconciles the word with the Preface. Pater asks the critic to work "in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1; see Concrete terms), and he admires a sculpture whose law is generality. There is no contradiction once the generality is seen as an achievement of the concrete: the Greek type comes of "a culture minute, severe, constantly renewed", many impressions concentrated, not few impressions blurred. *Allgemeinheit* is breadth earned by detail, and the della Robbia essay sets it beside Michelangelo's incompleteness and, midway between them, the

Tuscan low relief, as one of the three answers to the same problem (ROB §§6, 11).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which *Allgemeinheit* occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §7** Allgemeinheit expressed the law that prompted the Greek sculptors to seek the type in the individual.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors partake both of the Allgemeinheit of the Greeks and of the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo.

**WIN §35** Heiterkeit and Allgemeinheit are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal; Hellenic breadth comes of a minute and severe culture.

**WIN §51** Goethe's Hellenism was the Allgemeinheit and Heiterkeit, the completeness and serenity, of a watchful intellectualism.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §7 glosses the word as "Universality" and says that Pater's "point concerns the removal of transient particulars so that a figure can present a broadly recognizable type". The note at ROB §11 says that "Pater's ideal of Tuscan relief combines the breadth he assigns to Greek sculpture with the individual expression he finds in Michelangelo". The note at WIN §35 glosses it "Generality or breadth", adds "Generality or universality", and says that "Pater will distinguish breadth achieved through disciplined selection from a generality produced by imprecise observation".

## See also

Abstract; Abstraction; Breadth of humanity; Concrete terms; Heiterkeit; Pregnant type; Pure form; Purge; Special limitation; Type; Universality.

# Analogue

*A counterpart that answers to something on another level · The Renaissance*

*analogue*, *analogues*; *analogy*, *analogies*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An analogue is a thing that corresponds to another in a different order or medium, as a symbol to what it signifies or a likeness to its original.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico's "own story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent to the expression of this purpose in his writings" (PIC §5). In his

system “Every object in the terrestrial world is an analogue, a symbol or counterpart, of some higher reality in the starry heavens” (PIC §13). In the Giorgione essay the “imaginative reason” is “that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol” (GIO §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** PIC §13, with PIC §5 and GIO §9.

## Meaning

The Greek *analogon* is what stands “according to ratio”, in proportion: four is to two as two is to one. An analogue is a counterpart in that proportion, the same relation in a different place. “Analogy”, the reasoning from such correspondences, was a tool of medieval theology and of nineteenth-century science alike.

## Use in the book

Pater uses the word first of Pico himself. The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century is the feebler counterpart of the truce between the gods of Greece and the Christian religion made in the art of the time (PIC §5; see Artistic reconciliation). “And it is for his share in this work, and because his own story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent to the expression of this purpose in his writings, that something of a general interest still belongs to the name of Pico della Mirandola” (PIC §5). Pico, buried in the Dominican habit yet lying down to rest amid thoughts of the older gods, is the visible equivalent of his own argument. Pater returns to the point in PIC §13, where the life is “so perfect a parallel to the attempt made in his writings to reconcile Christianity with the ideas of paganism” (PIC §13), and the last paragraph opens on it: “This picturesque union of contrasts” pervades “an actual person, and that is why the figure of Pico is so attractive” (PIC §16).

The second use describes Pico’s cosmos. “In explaining the harmony between Plato and Moses, Pico lays hold on every sort of figure and analogy”, and “Everywhere there is an unbroken system of correspondences. Every object in the terrestrial world is an analogue, a symbol or counterpart, of some higher reality in the starry heavens, and this again of some law of the angelic life in the world beyond the stars” (PIC §13; see Correspondence). The world is built of three storeys, and each thing below is the analogue of something above. Pico, again, “unfolds the analogies between” the soul’s ascent to unseen beauty “and other movements upward of human thought” (PIC §14).

The book can be read as taking the word from Pico’s system and keeping it for art. In the Giorgione essay the arts have their “analogy” one with another, “between a Greek tragedy and a work of Greek sculpture, between a sonnet and a relief” (GIO §4), and the “imaginative reason” is “that

complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol" (GIO §9). What was a false cosmology in Pico, a ladder of analogues from earth to angels, becomes in the critic a true account of how art means: the feeling and its sensible form are born together. Pico's life as an analogue of his thought is the bridge between the two uses.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "analogue", "analogues", "analogy" or "analogies" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §5** Pico's story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent of the purpose of his writings.

**PIC §13** Pico lays hold on every figure and analogy; every earthly object is an analogue of a higher reality.

**PIC §14** Pico unfolds the analogies between the soul's ascent and other movements upward of thought.

**MIC §21** The characteristics of the old masters are easier to read than their analogues in the confused productions of the modern mind.

**GIO §4** Poetry finds guidance in the analogy between a Greek tragedy and a work of Greek sculpture.

**GIO §9** The "imaginative reason" is the faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol.

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Correspondence.

# Analysis

*The loosing of a thing into its parts: the critic's method in the Preface, and in the Conclusion the force that dissolves the self · The Renaissance*

*analysis*; *analyse*, *analysed*, *analysing*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The resolving of a whole into its elements, from the Greek *analysis*, a loosing up.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the Preface the critic's function is "to distinguish, to analyse" (PRE §3); in the Conclusion analysis goes on until all that is actual in an impression is "a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it" (CON §3).

**In this edition.** The edition does not gloss the word; note 206, on "Lessing's analysis" (GIO §2), is on the *Laocoon*.

**A place to read.** PRE §3; CON §3.

## Meaning

The Greek verb *analyein* is to loose or undo: to undo a web, as Penelope undid hers by night, or to set a prisoner free from his bonds. In the geometers it became the method of working back from what is sought to what is given, and in the chemists of the eighteenth century the resolving of a compound into its elements, which is the sense that came into nineteenth-century psychology. The associationist psychologists, the Scottish philosopher James Mill and after him his son, the English philosopher John Stuart Mill, called the method of their philosophy "analysis": the taking apart of complex states of mind into the simple sensations and associations that compose them. Pater uses the word in both its senses, the chemist's and the psychologist's, and the book can be read as tracing a movement from the one to the other.

## Use in the book

The Preface makes analysis the critic's work. He who experiences impressions strongly drives directly "at the discrimination and analysis of them" (PRE §2; see Discriminate). The critic regards the works of art and nature as powers producing pleasurable sensations, and wishes to explain their influence "by analysing and reducing it to its elements" (PRE §3; see Chemist). The function of the æsthetic critic, Pater says, is "to distinguish, to analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue" by which a work produces its special impression of beauty or pleasure (PRE §3; see Æsthetic criticism; Virtue). The verbs are a chemist's: distinguish, analyse, separate, and the product is a residue, the active principle of the thing. Analysis here keeps something. The critic ends holding a virtue, "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3).

The essays practise the method and name it seldom. A lover of strange souls may still "analyse for himself the impression" made on him by Leonardo's works, and the legend, corrected by its critics, may now and then support "the results of this analysis" (LEO §3; see Impression). Lessing's analysis of the spheres of sculpture and poetry in the *Laocoon* is called an important contribution to a philosophy of the variations of the beautiful (GIO §2; see Ultimate differences of the arts). Du Bellay's trouble is "analysed" in his sonnets, and its sentiment conveyed directly to us (BEL §21). And since religions grow by natural laws and change with the life of those who hold them, "a fine analysis of these differences is one of the gravest functions of religious criticism" (WIN §24; see Natural law).

The Conclusion turns the method on the one who uses it. It begins with the body, which science resolves into "natural elements" (CON §2; see Natural elements), and moves to the mind, where reflexion loosens each object into "a group of impressions" (CON §3; see Reflexion). Then a new

paragraph in 1873, and a new sentence in 1893, begins with the word itself. "Analysis goes a step further still", and finds each impression limited by time and divisible as time is, so that what is actual in it is a single moment, "gone while we try to apprehend it" (CON §3; see Divisibility). What is real in our life "fines itself down" to a single sharp impression (CON §3; see Tremulous wisp). And the sentence that ends the third paragraph names the point at which the method stops: it is with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that "analysis leaves off" (CON §3; see Weaving and unweaving).

The two uses can be read as one method at two depths. In the Preface analysis leaves a virtue in the critic's hand; in the Conclusion it leaves nothing that stays, and the critic is himself among the things dissolved. Pater does not then abandon the method or seek a doctrine to stop it. The next paragraph turns from what analysis finds to what we should do with it, and its answer is a sharper attention, not a firmer belief (CON §4; see Observation). The word that began as the critic's tool ends as the description of his condition, and the Conclusion's ethic is the critic's method practised on life.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "analysis", "analyse", "analysed" or "analysing" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** He who experiences impressions strongly drives directly at the discrimination and analysis of them.

**PRE §3** The function of the æsthetic critic is to distinguish, to analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue of a work.

**LEO §3** A lover of strange souls may still analyse for himself the impression made on him by Leonardo's works.

**GIO §2** Lessing's analysis of the spheres of sculpture and poetry was an important contribution to a philosophy of the variations of the beautiful.

**BEL §21** The trouble of Du Bellay's life is analysed, and its sentiment conveyed directly to our minds.

**WIN §24** A fine analysis of the differences among religions, as life modifies them, is one of the gravest functions of religious criticism.

**CON §3** Analysis goes a step further still, and leaves off with the passage and dissolution of impressions.

**C73 §4** In 1873 analysis "tells us", where the later text has "assures us", and the sentences stand as a paragraph of their own.

## Pater's sources

The method had its classic English statement in James Mill's *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* (1829), which his son edited with notes in 1869, the year after Pater's review of the poems of the English poet and designer William Morris first printed the sentences of the Conclusion; Pater's paragraph can be read beside it.[7] For the associationists analysis ended in sensations and their laws of combination. Pater's analysis ends a step further, in the moment in which a sensation is already gone, and nothing in the paragraph suggests that the laws of combination restore what the analysis has dissolved. The Scottish philosopher David Hume had gone as far, and had found in the self "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement".[8]

## In this edition

In 1873 the sentence of analysis opened the fourth paragraph and began "Analysis goes a step further still, and tells us that those impressions of the individual" (C73 §4); the revised text joins it to the third paragraph and has "assures us that those impressions of the individual mind" (CON §3).

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Chemist; Discriminate; Dissolution; Divisibility; Impression; Natural elements; Natural law; Observation; Reflexion; Self-reflexion; Tremulous wisp; Ultimate differences of the arts; Virtue; Weaving and unweaving.

# Antiquarian criticism

*antiquarian criticism*; *antiquarian treatment*; *antiquarian*

Attested: *mere technical or antiquarian criticism* and *technical or antiquarian treatment* (BOT §10); *antiquarian* also at FRE §23 (three times) and WIN §4; *antiquarianism* in four paragraphs (see Antiquarianism). Criticism concerned with the dates, documents and circumstances of a work rather than with its effect. The first essay states the principle: antiquarianism "may often add greatly to the charm we receive from ancient literature", but only where there is "a real, direct, æsthetic charm in the thing itself" (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm). The Botticelli essay applies it to painters. General criticism, "over and above mere technical or antiquarian criticism", "may be very well employed" in

[7] James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* (London, 1829); new edition with notes by Alexander Bain, Andrew Findlater, George Grote and John Stuart Mill (London, 1869).

[8] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (London, 1739), Book I, Part IV, section 6, "Of personal identity".

interpreting the great to general culture, "whereas smaller men can be the proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment" (BOT §10; see General criticism). Pater then makes his exception for the artists of a peculiar quality of pleasure, and the essay itself can be read as the proof that a secondary painter may outgrow antiquarian treatment (see Secondary painter). "Mere", and the first essay's "merely antiquarian effort" (FRE §23), are the operative words: antiquarian knowledge is a servant of criticism, never its substitute. The Winckelmann essay shows the habit at its source, in "Winckelmann's boyish antiquarian wanderings among the ugly Brandenburg sandhills" (WIN §4).

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Antiquarianism; General criticism; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Secondary painter.

### Antiquarian interest

*antiquarian interest*; *interest of a purely antiquarian order*

Attested: *interest of a purely antiquarian order*, *antiquarian interest* (FRE §23). The interest a work has as evidence of the past, not as art. Aucassin and Nicolette has such an interest "For the student of manners, and of the old French language and literature", but Pater warns that "To say of an ancient literary composition that it has an antiquarian interest, often means that it has no distinct æsthetic interest for the reader of to-day" (FRE §23). The phrase is the first term of a contrast, whose second is a real æsthetic charm in the work itself (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm). Pater grants the interest, and keeps it in its place: the tale, he says, has "something of this quality" as well (FRE §23; see Antiquarianism).

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Antiquarianism; Borrowed interest.

### Antiquarianism

*Historical interest, set against æsthetic value · The Renaissance*

*antiquarianism*, *antiquarianisms*; *antiquarian*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Antiquarianism is the study of the remains of the past, its objects, records and customs, for their historical interest.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Two Early French Stories antiquarianism "by a purely historical effort, by putting its object in perspective", can add to the charm of ancient literature, but cannot create it (FRE §23). The Botticelli

essay asks for general criticism "over and above mere technical or antiquarian criticism" (BOT §10); the Leonardo essay finds that on the questions raised about his legend "mere antiquarianism has in this direction little more to do" (LEO §3).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the note at LEO §3 sets the historical critic's work beside the interpreter's.

**A place to read.** FRE §23, the first half of the paragraph.

## Meaning

The Latin *antiquarius* was one devoted to antiquity. From the sixteenth century the English antiquary collected coins, inscriptions, charters and local customs; by the nineteenth the word could suggest a learned but narrow interest in facts for their own sake. Pater uses "antiquarianism" for the historical study of works of art and literature, as distinct from their criticism.

## Use in the book

Pater's fullest statement comes in Two Early French Stories. Aucassin and Nicolette, he grants, "has much interest of a purely antiquarian order" for the student of manners and of Old French, though such an interest often means no æsthetic interest at all (FRE §23; see Antiquarian interest). He does not dismiss the method. "Antiquarianism, by a purely historical effort, by putting its object in perspective, and setting the reader in a certain point of view, from which what gave pleasure to the past is pleasurable for him also, may often add greatly to the charm we receive from ancient literature" (FRE §23). It is an aid, and its condition is the thing it cannot supply, a real æsthetic charm in the work (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm). Pater distinguishes that charm from the "borrowed interest" an old work may acquire "through a true antiquarianism" (FRE §23; see Borrowed interest). The phrase "a true antiquarianism" is fair to it, and can be read as placing Pater's objection in its claims, not its work.

The later essays keep the line. Over and above "mere technical or antiquarian criticism", general criticism may relate the great painters to general culture, while "smaller men can be the proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment"; Botticelli is an exception, since his peculiar quality of pleasure gives him a place in general culture (BOT §10; see General criticism). For Leonardo the questions Carlo Amoretti raised in 1804 about the dates and anecdotes of Vasari's legend have become "subjects of special study, and mere antiquarianism has in this direction little more to do"; attribution is left to "technical criticism", and the impression his works make remains for "a lover of strange souls" to analyse (LEO §3; see Impression). The essay ends where scholarship leaves off: "Two questions remain, after much busy antiquarianism, concerning

Leonardo's death", his religion and whether Francis I was present, and Pater leaves them (LEO §36).

The essay on Winckelmann shows the other face of the word. His "boyish antiquarian wanderings among the ugly Brandenburg sandhills" (WIN §4) answer Goethe's eagerness "actually to handle the antique", and "from a few stray antiquarianisms, a few faces cast up sharply from the waves, Winckelmann, as his manner was, divines the temperament of the antique world" (WIN §31; see Temperament). In him antiquarianism becomes divination. The book can be read as drawing the line between the two not by subject but by temper: the same relics serve the antiquary's knowledge or the critic's sense of beauty, and Winckelmann has both.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "antiquarianism", "antiquarianisms" or "antiquarian" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §23** An antiquarian interest often means no æsthetic interest; antiquarianism can add to the charm of old literature but cannot supply it.

**BOT §10** Smaller men are proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment; Botticelli belongs to general culture.

**LEO §3** The questions raised about Leonardo's legend have become special studies, and mere antiquarianism has in this direction little more to do.

**LEO §36** Two questions about Leonardo's death remain after much busy antiquarianism.

**WIN §4** Winckelmann's boyish antiquarian wanderings among the Brandenburg sandhills.

**WIN §31** From a few stray antiquarianisms Winckelmann divines the temperament of the antique world.

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Antiquarian criticism; Antiquarian interest; Borrowed interest; General criticism; Impression; Temperament.

# Art-casuistry

*The case-by-case study of what each art can and cannot do, which Pater asks criticism to build into a system · The Renaissance*

*art-casuistry*, *art-casuistries*; *casuistical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Casuistry applied to the arts: the reasoning from particular cases about the powers and limits of each art.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To such a philosophy of the variations of the beautiful, Lessing's analysis of the spheres of sculpture and poetry, in the Laocoon, was an important contribution. But a true appreciation of these things is possible only in the light of a whole system of such art-casuistries" (GIO §2).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §2 says that Lessing's *Laocoön* (1766) "distinguishes arts that arrange bodies in space from poetry, which unfolds signs in time", and that "Pater extends the problem to what different arts can learn from each other".

**A place to read.** GIO §§1–2.

## Meaning

Casuistry, from the Latin *casus*, a case, is the reasoning of moral theology about particular cases of conscience: whether this act, in these circumstances, is a sin. The Jesuit casuists of the seventeenth century made it an elaborate science, and the French mathematician and religious writer Blaise Pascal's *Provincial Letters* (1656–57) made the word a byword for subtlety in excuse.[9] Pater takes the word back to its first sense and moves it to the arts. An art-casuistry is a reasoned judgement on a case: what this art, with this material, can rightly attempt. Pater's compound keeps a trace of the confessional, as if each art had its own conscience and its own duties.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the second paragraph of the Giorgione essay, after the first has laid down its principle. Popular criticism errs in treating poetry, music and painting as "translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought" (GIO §1). Against it stands "the opposite principle—that the sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material). Each art therefore "has its own special mode of reaching the imagination, its own special responsibilities to its material" (GIO §1; see Special limitation). The duties of each art are its responsibilities, and one of the functions of æsthetic criticism is "to estimate the degree in which a given work of art fulfils its responsibilities to its special material" (GIO §1). Casuistry is the natural word for such judgements.

The German critic and dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing is the precedent. His *Laokoon* argued that painting and sculpture, which arrange bodies side by side in space, and poetry, which sets actions one after another in time, have different objects, and that a poet who describes like a painter or a painter who tells a story like a poet mistakes his art.[10] Pater calls it "an important contribution" to "a philosophy of the variations of the

[9] Blaise Pascal, *Les Provinciales* (1656–57), letters 5–10.

[10] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie* (Berlin, 1766), chapters 16–18.

beautiful", and asks for more: "a true appreciation of these things is possible only in the light of a whole system of such art-casuistries" (GIO §2). Lessing worked out one case, sculpture and poetry; Pater wants all of them. The essay's examples follow at once: painting is "the art in the criticism of which this truth most needs enforcing", because popular judgement makes every picture a poem (GIO §2; see Literary interest).

The adjective returns near the end of the essay, of a case the Renaissance had argued. Giorgione's master stroke with mirrors, armour and still water, "by which all the sides of a solid image are exhibited at once", settles "that casuistical question whether painting can present an object as completely as sculpture" (GIO §20; see Casuistical question). The question is the old Renaissance debate about the rank of the arts, which the Leonardo essay also recalls (LEO §21; see Casuistical question). Pater's word turns a quarrel about precedence into a question of means. The casuist does not ask which art is nobler but what each can do; and the essay's own answer, that all the arts strive toward the condition of music (GIO §5; see Condition of music), may be taken as the conclusion the system of art-casuistries was built to reach.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "art-casuistries" or "casuistical" occurs, with the paragraph that lays down the principle, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** The sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase of beauty, untranslatable into any other.

**GIO §2** Lessing's Laocoon was an important contribution, but a true appreciation is possible only in a whole system of art-casuistries.

**GIO §20** Giorgione's mirrors and armour settle the casuistical question whether painting can present an object as completely as sculpture.

## See also

Anders-streben; Casuistical question; Condition of music; Literary interest; Sensuous material; Special limitation.

# Ascertained facts

*ascertained facts*; *ascertain*

Attested: *ascertained facts* (GIO §25, twice); *ascertain* (PIC §12). To ascertain is to make certain, from the Old French *acertener*. Pater's phrase names what scholarship can establish, and he uses it to set a limit to it. The French expression *vraie vérité*, the real truth, recognises "those more liberal and durable impressions which, in respect of any really considerable person or subject, anything that has at all intricately occupied men's attention, lie

beyond, and must supplement, the narrower range of the strictly ascertained facts about it" (GIO §25). The "new Vasari" has taken most of Giorgione's pictures from him; such exceptions, "properly qualified", are "but a salt of genuineness in our knowledge", and beyond the "strictly ascertained facts" lies the indirect influence by which an artist makes himself felt in our culture (GIO §25; see Indirect influence). "Strictly" in both places concedes the facts their rigour, and "narrower" puts them in their place. The note at GIO §25 renders *vraie vérité* "The real truth" and says that it is "a durable impression of an artist's influence that historical facts can refine". The Pico essay uses the verb of a different temper, the scholar's devotion to the old gods: Pico "is anxious to ascertain the true significance of the obscurest legend, the lightest tradition concerning them" (PIC §12).

## See also

Æsthetic philosopher; Impression; Indirect influence.

## Authentic works

*authentic works*, *authentic extant works*; *authenticity*; *authenticating*, *authenticates*

Attested: *authentic works* (LEO §§25, 29; GIO §17, twice); *authentic extant works* (GIO §18); *authenticity* (GIO §14); *authenticating* (GIO §19); *authenticates* (WIN §22). "Authentic" comes through the Latin from the Greek *authentēs*, one who acts on his own authority; an authentic work is one truly by the artist whose name it bears. The question was a live one in Pater's time, when connoisseurs were reassigning the old attributions picture by picture. For Leonardo the answer is severe: "the number of Leonardo's authentic works is very small indeed", and yet "there is a multitude of other men's pictures through which we undoubtedly see him, and come very near to his genius" (LEO §25). The pictures of the Louvre are "his most authentic works, which came there straight from the cabinet of Francis the First" (LEO §29): the provenance is the proof. The Giorgione essay meets the same problem more boldly. Criticism "so freely diminishes the number of his authentic works" (GIO §17), yet "over and above the real Giorgione and his authentic extant works, there remains the Giorgionesque also" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque). The two essays can be read as one argument: technical criticism separates what in his reputed works is "really his" (LEO §3; see Antiquarianism), and the æsthetic critic learns from all the works through which the artist's genius is seen. The edition's notes record later judgements, among them the Louvre's present assignment of the Bacchus to Leonardo's workshop (note at LEO §25).

## See also

Antiquarianism; Giorgionesque; Legend.

## Borrowed interest

*borrowed interest*; *borrow*, *borrowed*, *borrowing*

Attested: *borrowed interest* (FRE §23); *borrowed* (FRE §1; PIC §11); *borrowing* (ROB §6; BEL §1); *borrow* (BEL §1; WIN §26). Interest lent to a work from outside it, by its age or its history, as against a value of its own. The artistic quality a work has in itself, Pater says, "it is always pleasant to define, and discriminate from the sort of borrowed interest which an old play, or an old story, may very likely acquire through a true antiquarianism" (FRE §23; see Antiquarianism; Discriminate). The figure is from money: what is borrowed is owed back, and is not the borrower's own. The verb comes in five further paragraphs, and most of them are kinder to borrowing. French writers claim that Boccaccio "borrowed the outlines of his stories from the old French fabliaux" (FRE §1; see Fabliau); the commentary of Pico della Mirandola on the "Song of Divine Love" of his friend, the poet Hieronymo Beniveni, has imagery "borrowed indifferently" from every source (PIC §11; see Cabala); the Gothic manner had one chance more "in borrowing something from the rival which was about to supplant it", and in the Renaissance "French poetry too did but borrow something to blend with a native growth" (BEL §1). Colour in sculpture is the one borrowing Pater condemns, "an unskilful contrivance to effect, by borrowing from another art, what the nobler sculpture effects by strictly appropriate means" (ROB §6). The gods of wilder peoples, changing with their worshippers in Athens, Corinth or Lacedæmon, "borrow something of the lordliness and distinction of human nature there" (WIN §26).

### See also

Antiquarian interest; Antiquarianism; Cabala; Discriminate; Fabliau.

## Ce fleur particulier

*ce fleur particulier*

Attested: *ce fleur particulier* (BEL §13). "That particular flower", the note at BEL §13 renders it, adding that Pater's printed phrase "has irregular gender agreement": *fleur* is feminine in French, and the phrase should read *cette fleur particulière*. Pater uses it at the end of the paragraph in which he asks the reader to look at the poetry of the Pleiad "long enough to understand it": "Let us dwell upon it for a moment, and try to gather from it that special flower, ce fleur particulier, which Ronsard himself tells us every garden has" (BEL §13). The image can be read as the Preface's method in a gardener's figure. There the critic is to disengage "the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair personality in life or in a book, produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure" (PRE §3; see Virtue), and here he

gathers from a whole school the one flower that is its own. The paragraph has just said what makes the gathering possible: "For there is style there; one temper has shaped the whole" (BEL §13; see Style). A garden of faded adornments still has its particular flower, and the essay's last pages can be read as finding it in the winnower's song (BEL §28; see Pure effect).

## See also

Pure effect; Style; Virtue.

# Centrality

*The quality of a culture whose interests are gathered round a single centre: with breadth, blitheness and repose, the mark of the Hellenic · The Renaissance*

*centrality*; *central*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of being at or near the centre; of a mind or a culture, its gathering of all its powers round one point.

**In *The Renaissance*.** With breadth, blitheness and repose, centrality is one of the "marks of Hellenic culture" (WIN §49).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §§49–50.

## Meaning

*Centrality* is a word of the seventeenth century, formed from "central", from the Latin *centralis* and *centrum*, the point of a pair of compasses round which a circle is drawn. In Pater's use it is a quality of mind: the opposite of the one-sided, the specialised and the eccentric, a culture that keeps its many interests in relation to one centre. Pater does not name him, but the word belongs with the criticism of the English poet and critic Matthew Arnold, who set the culture of a centre against the provincial and called "the fitness, the measure, the centrality" the soul of all good criticism;[11] Pater sets it beside breadth and repose as a mark of the Greeks.

## Use in the book

The noun comes twice, at the close of the Winckelmann essay, where Pater asks whether Greek culture can be had again. Centrality is named with breadth, blitheness and repose among the marks of Hellenic culture (WIN §49; see Breadth of humanity), and the next paragraph answers that the demand survives the Greek world: "Yet, not less than ever, the intellect demands completeness, centrality" (WIN §50). The modern problem of

[11] Matthew Arnold, "The Literary Influence of Academies", in *Essays in Criticism* (London, 1865).

unity with ourselves "is far harder than it was for the Greek within the simple terms of antique life" (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self), but the demand is not lowered. Centrality is what Winckelmann gave Goethe: "It is this which Winckelmann imprints on the imagination of Goethe, at the beginning of life, in its original and simplest form, as in a fragment of Greek art itself, stranded on that littered, indeterminate shore of Germany in the eighteenth century" (WIN §50). The image can be read closely: Germany is a shore without a centre, "littered, indeterminate", and Winckelmann lies on it like a broken marble, keeping the shape of a whole.

The adjective prepares the noun. Winckelmann's life had a "central enthusiasm", and nothing entered it "unpenetrated" by that (WIN §6; see Enthusiasm); the leading motive of his culture, "like some central root-fibre", held his life together (WIN §42); Greek sculpture "finds the secret of its power in presenting these types, in their broad, central, incisive lines" (WIN §37), and loses nothing "of its central impassivity" when passion plays over it (WIN §38); even the English poet Robert Browning's intricate poem has "the clear ring of a central motive" (WIN §36; see Creative act). In each case the centre is what keeps a variety whole. The essay can be read as tracing one quality from a man's character to a statue's line and from there to the modern poet, and as calling it, at the end, by its abstract name.

The essay does not make centrality a single gift. Goethe's Hellenism is "the completeness and serenity, of a watchful, exigent intellectualism" (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism), which tries each form of culture "till its secret is won from each, and then lets each fall back into its place" (WIN §51). The centre is not one talent but the point from which all are seen; the direct exercise of a single talent, in the modern world, "could only have ended in a thin, one-sided growth" (WIN §51). Centrality is thus the essay's answer to specialisation, and its last word on Winckelmann, whose own culture was narrow, is that he showed Goethe a centre that Goethe could make broad.

The book's other "central" things keep the plain sense of the middle or the chief: the "central love-poetry of Provence" (FRE §20), Dante as "the central expression and type" of certain experiences (FRE §29), the "central head" of the Last Supper (LEO §§26, 27).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "centrality" occurs, with the paragraphs of the Winckelmann essay in which "central" names the centre of a life, a work or a culture, in the order of the book.

**WIN §6** Nothing was to enter into Winckelmann's life unpenetrated by its central enthusiasm.

**WIN §36** In spite of its intricacy, Browning's poem has the clear ring of a central motive.

**WIN §37** Sculpture presents its types in their broad, central, incisive lines.

**WIN §38** Passion plays over the Hellenic form, which loses nothing of its central impassivity.

**WIN §41** Greece cannot be conceived from a central point without the key of its sculpture.

**WIN §42** The leading motive of Winckelmann's culture held his life together like a central root-fibre.

**WIN §49** Centrality, with breadth, blitheness and repose, is a mark of Hellenic culture.

**WIN §50** Not less than ever, the intellect demands completeness, centrality.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity; Character; Creative act; Enthusiasm; Exigent intellectualism; Repose; Unity with one's self.

## Common forms

*common forms*

Attested: *common forms* (LEO §§2, 11). "Forms" here are the shapes and the usages of things, and "common" means both shared and ordinary. Pater uses the phrase twice in the Leonardo essay, once of thought and once of sight. The world's suspicion of Leonardo's unbelief was its way of marking his "intolerance of the common forms of things" (LEO §2; see High indifference): the common forms are the received ways of believing and behaving. Nine paragraphs later they are the ordinary shapes of the visible world. Some of Leonardo's sketches of chance people have "that remote beauty" known only to those "who, starting with acknowledged types of beauty, have refined as far upon these, as these refine upon the world of common forms" (LEO §11; see Remote beauty). The second passage makes a scale of three steps, each a refinement of the one below: the common forms, the acknowledged types, the remote beauty. Taken together, the two uses may be said to describe a single temperament, which cannot rest in the common forms of thought or of beauty and must refine upon both.

## See also

High indifference; Remote beauty; Type.

## Concrete terms

*Defining beauty by its instances · The Renaissance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** In logic a concrete term names a thing, an abstract term a quality taken apart from things; "concrete" comes from the Latin for grown together, solid.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface asks for beauty to be defined "not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1). The word returns where something general is found in a particular: "concrete works of art" (PRE §7), "some brief and wholly concrete moment" (GIO §20), Winckelmann solving a theoretical question "in the concrete" (WIN §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the note at WIN §9 says that Pater's "finding" of Greek art "makes the encounter active and concrete".

**A place to read.** PRE §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *concretus* is grown together, condensed, as a solid is. Logicians took the pair concrete and abstract for two kinds of name. John Stuart Mill put it so in his *System of Logic* (1843): a concrete name stands for a thing, as "white" for white things, and an abstract name for an attribute of a thing, as "whiteness".[12] To define beauty "in the most concrete terms possible" is to define it by the beautiful things themselves, and not by beauty as a quality drawn off from them.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the turn of the first paragraph, where beauty is to be defined "not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1; see Universal formula). The reason is given just before: beauty "is relative" (PRE §1; see Relative). The Preface does not give up definition. It asks for many definitions, each as concrete as its object allows, and the essays can be taken as attempts at them (see Beauty).

The other places show what the concrete is good for. The fifteenth century in Italy is to be studied "not merely for its positive results in the things of the intellect and the imagination, its concrete works of art, its special and prominent personalities", but also for its general spirit (PRE §7): the concrete is the first object, though not the only one. In the School of Giorgione the highest sort of dramatic poetry presents "some brief and wholly concrete moment—into which, however, all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have condensed themselves", and Giorgione's school selects such instants (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). The

[12] John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic* (1843), book 1, chapter 2, §4.

concrete moment holds the general, as the word's root, grown together, would have it.

Winckelmann is the concrete critic. Kant's influence on Goethe, by Goethe's own account, "consisted in a severe limitation to the concrete", and Goethe adds that in born antiquaries like Winckelmann, the eighteenth-century historian of ancient art, a constant handling of the antique "maintains that limitation as effectually as a critical philosophy" (WIN §7; see Limitation to the concrete). Where Lessing had theorised on poetry and sculpture, "By a happy, unperplexed dexterity, Winckelmann solves the question in the concrete" (WIN §9). The Preface's demand can be read as fulfilled there: the question is answered not by a better definition but by the objects themselves, seen and handled.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §1** Beauty is to be defined not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible.

**PRE §7** The fifteenth century is to be studied for its concrete works of art and its personalities, and for its general spirit.

**GIO §20** The highest dramatic poetry presents some brief and wholly concrete moment into which a long history has condensed itself; Giorgione's school selects such instants.

**WIN §7** Kant's influence on Goethe was a severe limitation to the concrete, which the handling of the antique maintained in Winckelmann.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann solves in the concrete the question of poetry and sculpture on which Lessing had theorised.

## See also

Abstractness; Beauty; Ideal instant; Limitation to the concrete; Relative; Special manifestation; Universal formula.

# Courting impressions

*courting new impressions*

Attested: *courting new impressions* (CON §5; C73 §6). To court is to pay suit, as a lover courts, from the court of a prince where favour was sought; the word asks for something that must be won and may be refused. Pater puts it in the sentence that gives the Conclusion its programme: we are to be "for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions" (CON §5; see Facile orthodoxy). The two participles are paired. Opinions are tested, as metal is tried; impressions are courted, as a lover is. The first is the intellect's part and the second the senses', and "curiously", in its old

sense of carefully as well as with curiosity, governs both. The impression of the Preface was something received, and the critic's first step was to know it as it really is (PRE §2; see Impression); here the impression is sought, and the sentence makes a suitor of the critic. The Leonardo essay had already told of a temperament for which "the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself" (LEO §24; see Novel impression), and the Conclusion asks of every life what it found in one genius. The word "new" carries the weight. An impression courted again for its sameness can be read as a habit, and the Conclusion ventures that "in a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits" (CON §5; see Habit).

## See also

Facile orthodoxy; Habit; Impression; Novel impression.

## Creative act

*a single creative act*; *creative*; *creativeness*

Attested: *creative act* (WIN §36); *creative*, in three further paragraphs (PIC §10; GIO §2; BEL §8); *creativeness* (PIC §3). A creative act is a single act of making, the work felt as one thing made at once. Pater uses the phrase at the end of his account of Robert Browning's poem "Dîs Aliter Visum; or, Le Byron de nos Jours" ("the gods saw it otherwise; or, the Byron of our day"), in *Dramatis Personae* (1864). Browning's poetry is a poetry "of situations" (WIN §36; see Situation), and the poem builds round two "jaded Parisians" a "cobweb of allusions" and "double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself" (WIN §36; see Pause in time). "Yet, in spite of this intricacy, the poem has the clear ring of a central motive. We receive from it the impression of one imaginative tone, of a single creative act" (WIN §36). The intricacy and the unity are the point. However many refinements a poem has, it must strike the reader as made in one act, with one tone, and Pater's praise of Browning can be read as a test that he applies to modern art at large: complexity is allowed if it does not divide the effect. The phrase looks back to the Giorgione essay's ideal of a work whose elements are "so welded together" that they present "one single effect" to the imaginative reason (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason), and forward to the last paragraphs of the Winckelmann essay, where modern art must rearrange the details of modern life "so to reflect it, that it may satisfy the spirit" (WIN §53; see Freedom).

## See also

Centrality; Freedom; Imaginative reason; Pause in time; Situation.

# Curiosity

*One of the two forces of Leonardo's genius: the desire to know, often at odds with the desire of beauty · The Renaissance*

*curiosity*, *curiosities*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The desire to know, to look into things; also, a rare or curious object.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Curiosity and the desire of beauty—these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius" (LEO §16).

**In this edition.** The note on the essay's epigraph (LEO §1) says that "Pater will characterize Leonardo's artistic curiosity as an inquiry into natural processes".

**A place to read.** LEO §§15–16, with LEO §36.

## Meaning

The Latin *curiositas* comes from *curiosus*, careful, inquisitive, and so from *cura*, care. For most of Christian history the word carried blame. Augustine counted curiosity among the temptations, the "desire of the eyes" of the First Epistle of John, which seeks to know for the sake of knowing.[13] Matthew Arnold could still complain in 1864 that in English, unlike other languages, the word had "no sense but a rather bad and disparaging one".[14] The Renaissance and the new science had turned it toward praise, and the plural came to mean the rare objects that collectors kept, the "curiosities" of a cabinet. Pater uses both senses, and his praise of the first is deliberate.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passages are in the Leonardo essay, which makes curiosity half of his genius. At Milan, "it suited the quality of his genius, composed, in almost equal parts, of curiosity and the desire of beauty, to take things as they came" (LEO §15). The next paragraph, a single sentence, names the two forces and their relation: curiosity often in conflict with the desire of beauty, but in union with it generating "a type of subtle and curious grace" (LEO §16; see Elementary forces; Subtle and curious grace). The essay then gives curiosity its object. In the return to nature Leonardo "was seeking to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises" (LEO §17; see Finesse; Return to nature). And it gives curiosity its danger, a pull "too far below that outside of things in which art really begins and ends" (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty).

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[13] Augustine, *Confessions* X.35.54–57.

[14] Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864), in *Essays in Criticism* (1865).

The essay ends on the word. Pater sets aside the questions about Leonardo's deathbed, the form of his religion and the presence of the king, and closes "in speculating how one who had been always so desirous of beauty, but desired it always in such precise and definite forms, as hands or flowers or hair, looked forward now into the vague land, and experienced the last curiosity" (LEO §36). On one reading the two forces part at the end. The desire of beauty needs definite forms, and there are none in "the vague land"; curiosity alone can go there, and death is its last object.

Elsewhere in the book curiosity is a mark of the age and a measure of value. The Pico essay finds that what really belongs to the revival of the fifteenth century "is but the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea" (PIC §3; see Initiatory idea): curiosity is the Renaissance's own force, as it is Leonardo's. In the Du Bellay essay it is a lower interest. If a poet's work "is to do something more than satisfy curiosity, if it is to have an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value", it must show the impress of the writer's own temper (BEL §21). Curiosity there is the historian's interest, which the æsthetic critic must go beyond. Between them the two uses give what may be called the book's double judgement on the word: curiosity starts the Renaissance and drives Leonardo, but a work that satisfies it only is not yet art.

The plural keeps its concrete sense. Michelangelo at fifteen worked "among the curiosities of the garden of the Medici" (MIC §6), and the last of the Buonarroti left the city "the curiosities of his family" (MIC §9); the Rome of Du Bellay had "all the curiosities of the Renaissance still fresh in it" (BEL §12). The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century is one too, "a curiosity of the human mind" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "curiosity" or "curiosities" occurs, in the order of the book; the adjective "curious" is not listed.

**PIC §3** What really belongs to the revival of the fifteenth century is the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea.

**PIC §5** The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century has its interest as a curiosity of the human mind.

**MIC §6** At fifteen Michelangelo was at work among the curiosities of the Medici garden.

**MIC §9** The last of the Buonarroti bequeathed the curiosities of his family to Florence.

**LEO §15** Leonardo's genius was composed in almost equal parts of curiosity and the desire of beauty.

**LEO §16** Curiosity and the desire of beauty are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius.

**LEO §17** In the return to nature Leonardo sought to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises.

**LEO §20** Curiosity sometimes came in conflict with the desire of beauty, and tended to make him go too far below the outside of things.

**LEO §36** At his death Leonardo looked forward into the vague land, and experienced the last curiosity.

**BEL §4** Ronsard's variety of metre keeps the curiosity always excited.

**BEL §12** Rome had all the curiosities of the Renaissance still fresh in it.

**BEL §21** A poet's work must do more than satisfy curiosity if it is to have an æsthetic value.

**WIN §21** Goethe awaited Winckelmann with a curiosity of the worthiest kind.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater gave the pairing its formula in the essay on romanticism of 1876, later the Postscript to *Appreciations*, where the addition of curiosity to the desire of beauty constitutes the romantic temper (see Desire of beauty; Strangeness).[15]

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Desire of beauty; Elementary forces; Finesse; Initiatory idea; Return to nature; Strangeness; Subtle and curious grace.

# Data

*What a painter is given to see, and what genius does with it · The Renaissance*

*data*

## At a Glance

**The word.** *Data* is the Latin for "things given", the plural of *datum*: the facts from which a problem, an argument or a work begins.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Where other painters transcribe what they see, "the genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own" (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward".

**A place to read.** BOT §4, with PRE §2.

[15] Walter Pater, "Romanticism", *Macmillan's Magazine*, November 1876; "Postscript", *Appreciations* (1889).

## Meaning

*Datum* is the past participle of *dare*, to give. In geometry and the sciences the data are what a problem supplies, and the first rule of the method is to leave them as they are: the observer who alters his data has ceased to observe. Pater keeps the Latin plural ("those data") and with it the word's scientific air. He borrows the vocabulary of the discipline that may not change what it is given in order to describe a genius that must.

## Use in the book

The word comes twice. In the Preface the critic's impressions are "primary data", to be realised "for one's self, or not at all" (PRE §2; see Primary data): there the given is to be received faithfully. In the Botticelli essay it is seized. The painters Giotto (about 1267–1337), Masaccio (1401–1428) and Ghirlandajo (Domenico Ghirlandaio, 1449–1494) "do but transcribe, with more or less refining, the outward image" (BOT §4; see Dramatic painter). Then comes the sentence on Botticelli's kind, quoted above, which goes on: "in this interest it plays fast and loose with those data, rejecting some and isolating others, and always combining them anew" (BOT §4).

The verbs carry the argument. "Usurps" is a word from politics: a usurper takes a throne that belongs to another by right, and the figure grants the visible world a right to be painted as it is. "Plays fast and loose" was the name of a cheating game played with a belt at fairs, and Shakespeare's Antony uses it of the woman he believes has betrayed him.[16] Pater keeps both charges and then describes the offence as a method. Rejecting, isolating and combining are selection, emphasis and composition, the three acts of any design. The sentence praises in the words of blame, and the reader is left to feel that the blame is part of the praise: the visionary's licence is a real liberty taken with a real world.

The two uses of the word can be read as a pair. The critic must not usurp his data; the painter of Botticelli's kind must. Yet the critic's data are impressions, already worked by a temperament, and Pater's essay does with Botticelli's pictures what its sentence says Botticelli does with the world. It passes over the painter's commissions and patrons, isolates the faces, the wan colour and the cold light, and combines them anew into a single sentiment (see Wistfulness of exiles). The sentence on the visionary painter can be read as a portrait of the aesthetic critic too, and it states the risk of both callings: what is given may be served or may be seized.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

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[16] Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra* IV.12: "Like a right gipsy, hath at fast and loose / Beguiled me to the very heart of loss."

**PRE §2** The critic must realise the primary data of his impressions for himself, or not at all.

**BOT §4** The genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it, rejecting some, isolating others, and combining them anew.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward", and that "Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects".

## See also

Dramatic painter; Exponent; Mood; Primary data; Visionary painter; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Development

*Growth by stages, in religion, art and the mind · The Renaissance*
*development*, *developments*; *developed*, *developing*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Development is gradual growth from a simpler to a fuller state, through stages each of which prepares the next.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The fifteenth-century scholars "had no idea of development, of the differences of ages, of the process by which our race has been 'educated.'" They reconciled the religions "not as successive stages in a regular development of the religious sense, but as subsisting side by side" (PIC §4). The Winckelmann essay ranges the arts in "a series, which corresponds to a series of developments in the human mind itself" (WIN §32).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §4 describes Pater's "historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

**A place to read.** PIC §§3–4, with WIN §§32 and 52.

## Meaning

To develop is literally to unwrap, from the French *développer*; development is the unfolding of what was folded within. In the nineteenth century the word carried the weight of every theory of growth: the historian's, the biologist's after Darwin, the theologian's in Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845). Pater uses it of the mind and its products, religion and art, as things that grow and have a history.

## Use in the book

The word first defines what Pico's age lacked. A modern scholar, Pater says, "might go on to observe that each has contributed something to the development of the religious sense, and ranging them as so many stages in the gradual education of the human mind, justify the existence of each" (PIC §3). The scholars of the fifteenth century "had no idea of development, of the differences of ages", and so fell back on allegory (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation). "The religions of the world were to be reconciled, not as successive stages in a regular development of the religious sense, but as subsisting side by side, and substantially in agreement with one another" (PIC §4; see Historic sense). Development replaces agreement. Where the allegorist must make all religions say the same thing, the historian can let them differ, as stages of one growth.

The Winckelmann essay applies the idea to the arts: "as the mind itself has had an historical development, one form of art, by the very limitations of its material, may be more adequate than another for the expression of any one phase of that development", and "The arts may thus be ranged in a series, which corresponds to a series of developments in the human mind itself" (WIN §32). The last pages return to it: "the development of the various forms of art has corresponded to the development of the thoughts of man concerning humanity, to the growing revelation of the mind to itself", sculpture to Hellenic humanism, painting to the middle age, music and poetry to the modern world (WIN §52; see Correspondence). The book's own order, from medieval France through Italy to Winckelmann's Greece and the modern Conclusion, can be read as a development of this kind.

The word keeps a double edge. Development is the modern scholar's key, but it can also be one-sided, as in the forms of culture "arising out of the intense, laborious, one-sided development of some special talent", in which the instinct of self-culture seeks "to find in them its own strength" (WIN §51; see Self-culture), and Winckelmann's single interest was "The development of this force", "unembarrassed by anything else" (WIN §10). The idea that saves the religions of the past from forced agreement also asks the critic to see each stage as partial. Pater's tolerance of Pico's failure can be read as resting on it: the fifteenth century was a stage, "in many things, great rather by what it designed than by what it achieved" (PIC §3).

## Places to read

The paragraphs on which the argument turns, six of the sixteen in which the word or its verb occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §3** Each religion has contributed to the development of the religious sense, a stage in the education of the human mind.

**PIC §4** Pico's age had no idea of development, and reconciled the religions as subsisting side by side, not as stages of a development.

**WIN §10** The development of a single force was Winckelmann's one interest.

**WIN §32** The arts may be ranged in a series corresponding to a series of developments in the human mind.

**WIN §51** The intense, one-sided development of a special talent produces the brightest enthusiasms.

**WIN §52** The development of the arts has corresponded to the development of man's thoughts concerning humanity.

## Pater's sources

Pater's quotation marks round "educated", with "our race" beside them, can be read as pointing to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (*The Education of the Human Race*, 1780), which holds that what education is to the individual, revelation is to the whole human race, and reads the Old and New Testaments as successive primers of that education; Pater's "gradual education of the human mind" (PIC §3) fits the figure.[17] In England Frederick Temple's essay "The Education of the World", which opened *Essays and Reviews* (1860), had applied the same figure to the history of mankind.[18]

## In this edition

The note at PIC §4 contrasts "Pico's search for truths he believed traditions shared" with "Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times" (see Historic sense).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Correspondence; Historic sense; Self-culture.

# Discipleship

*Michelangelo as heir, not founder: the tradition he received and finished · The Renaissance*

*discipleship*; *disciple*, *disciples*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of being a disciple, a learner who follows a master or a tradition.

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[17] G. E. Lessing, *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (Berlin, 1780).

[18] Frederick Temple, "The Education of the World", in *Essays and Reviews* (London, 1860).

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This discipleship of Michelangelo, this dependence of his on the tradition of the Florentine schools, is nowhere seen more clearly than in his treatment of the Creation" (MIC §18).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §§17–18, with MIC §20.

## Meaning

The Latin *discipulus*, a learner, is traditionally derived from *discere*, to learn, and the English "disciple" came through the Gospels, where it names the followers of Christ. Discipleship is thus a religious word for a relation of learning and loyalty. Pater turns it round: the great master is the disciple, and the tradition is his master.

## Use in the book

The Michelangelo essay builds to the word. The seventeenth paragraph places Michelangelo at the end of a line, "the last of the Florentines", up to whom "the tradition of sentiment is unbroken" (MIC §17; see Tradition of sentiment); his own "professed disciples", by contrast, "are in love with his strength only" (MIC §17; see Theatricality). The eighteenth paragraph opens with the word itself: "This discipleship of Michelangelo, this dependence of his on the tradition of the Florentine schools, is nowhere seen more clearly than in his treatment of the Creation" (MIC §18).

The example is the Creation of Man. The subject "had haunted the mind of the middle age like a dream"; the Italian sculptors had woven it "into a hundred carved ornaments of capital or doorway", and its treatment, "handed on from artist to artist", came "to have almost an independent and abstract existence of its own" (MIC §18; see Pregnancy of expression; Conventionalism). The sentence that follows draws the conclusion: "it is a sign of the medievalism of Michelangelo, that he thus receives from tradition his central conception, and does but add the last touches, in transferring it to the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel" (MIC §18; see Medievalism; Fresco). The Creation of Adam is on this account a medieval image finished.

The word carries a revision of the common view. The Michelangelo of the popular imagination is the solitary titan, the founder of the grand manner; Pater's is a pupil of the Tuscan workshops, whose savour is known "not through his followers, but through his predecessors" (MIC §17; see Savour). The essay twice more makes him an heir or a disciple: of "another tradition of those earlier, more serious Florentines", the preoccupation with death, of which he is "the inheritor" and to which he "gives the final expression" (MIC §19; see Outre-tombe); and of the Platonists in his thought of the dead: "Here, again, Michelangelo is the disciple not so much of Dante as of the Platonists" (MIC §20). Elsewhere the word keeps its first sense: Botticelli "became the disciple of Savonarola" (BOT §5), the

Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola, whose preaching held Florence in the 1490s; and in the last words of the tale of Amis and Amile it is God "who gave to His disciples power to remove mountains" (FRE §36).

The word can be read as a statement of Pater's historical method. Genius, for him, is not an origin but a culmination: the great man receives a conception that many hands have shaped, "and does but add the last touches". The disciples who imitate the master's manner, his strength, miss what he inherited; the critic who wishes to understand him must go back, as he did, to the tradition.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "discipleship" or "disciple" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §36** God gave to His disciples power to remove mountains.

**BOT §5** Botticelli became the disciple of Savonarola.

**MIC §17** Michelangelo's professed disciples are in love with his strength only.

**MIC §18** This discipleship of Michelangelo, his dependence on the Florentine tradition, is seen most clearly in his treatment of the Creation.

**MIC §20** Here again Michelangelo is the disciple not so much of Dante as of the Platonists.

## See also

Conventionalism; Death in its distinction; Fresco; Medievalism; Outre-tombe; Pregnancy of expression; Savour; Theatricality; Tradition of sentiment.

# Discriminate

*To tell apart, the critic's act and the art of living · The Renaissance*
*discriminate*, *discriminated*; *discrimination*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To discriminate is to perceive a difference and to mark it, to tell one thing from another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface asks the critic to know his impression, "to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly" (PRE §2), and faults abstract definitions for helping little "to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent" (PRE §1). The Conclusion makes the act a condition of being alive: "Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us … is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The notes at CON §5 and C73 §6 compare the two wordings of the sentence on habit, which in both makes distinct things appear alike.

**A place to read.** CON §5, from "To burn always" to "to sleep before evening".

## Meaning

The Latin *discriminare* is to divide, from *discrimen*, the line or interval that separates two things. In English "discriminate" was first to distinguish, and "discrimination" the act of marking a difference, then the faculty of fine distinction, as of a palate or an ear; the sense of unjust distinction between persons is not Pater's.

## Use in the book

The word opens and closes the method. Abstract definitions of beauty, the Preface begins, help us little "to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent" in art or poetry (PRE §1). The critic's first step is to know his own impression, "to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly", and whoever experiences impressions strongly "drives directly at the discrimination and analysis of them" (PRE §2; see Impression). To discriminate an impression is to tell it from its neighbours, the particular pleasure of this picture from the general pleasure of pictures; the next paragraph calls the same act distinguishing and analysing (PRE §3).

The essays apply it to the work and to its reputation. The quality of the French tale is to be discriminated "from the sort of borrowed interest" that an old story may acquire through antiquarianism (FRE §23; see Borrowed interest). With Giorgione, "all is not done when the real and the traditional elements in what concerns him have been discriminated", since the legend too is stimulating (GIO §18). And the art of the poet Robert Browning lies in isolating a moment of passion: "to discriminate that moment, to make it appreciable by us, that we may 'find' it, what a cobweb of allusions, what double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself, what an artificial light is constructed and broken over the chosen situation" (WIN §36).

The Conclusion turns the critic's act into a rule of life. Habit, it says, "is relative to a stereotyped world", and only "the roughness of the eye" makes any two persons, things, situations seem alike (CON §5; see Habit). Habit sees likeness where there is difference; discrimination sees the difference. "Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening" (CON §5; see Tragic dividing of forces). The objects are now persons, and what is to be told apart is the passing attitude and the forces that will part. The word can be read as the thread between Preface and Conclusion: the

critic who discriminates his impressions becomes the person who discriminates his moments.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the verb or the noun occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §1** Abstract definitions help little to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent.

**PRE §2** The first step is to know one's impression, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly; the critic drives at the discrimination and analysis of impressions.

**FRE §23** The artistic quality of an old work is to be discriminated from the borrowed interest antiquarianism gives it.

**GIO §18** With Giorgione the work is not done when the real and the traditional elements have been discriminated.

**WIN §36** To discriminate the moment of passion in Browning's poem needs a cobweb of allusions.

**CON §5** Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us is to sleep before evening.

**C73 §6** The 1873 sentence is the same, with "the brilliance of their gifts".

## In this edition

The note at CON §5 records that the 1873 sentence "starts abruptly" with "Failure is to form habits", and that "Both versions explain why a habit may make unlike encounters seem the same"; the note at C73 §6 adds that in both versions habits are troubling "insofar as they make distinct things appear alike". The 1873 text has "in the brilliance of their gifts" where 1893 has "in the very brilliancy of their gifts".

## See also

Borrowed interest; Failure is to form habits; Habit; Impression; Realise; Relative; Short day of frost and sun; Tragic dividing of forces.

# Disengage

*To set free a virtue from what it is found with · The Renaissance*
*disengage, disengaged*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To disengage is to free a thing from what holds it; chemists of Pater's day used it for setting a gas or an element free from a compound.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Disengaging the virtue of a work is the critic's end (PRE §3), and it often takes "great nicety", since the virtue is found mixed with commoner elements (PRE §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the note at PRE §3 on the chemist's image is given under Chemist.

**A place to read.** PRE §5, on disengaging Wordsworth's virtue.

## Meaning

English "disengage", from the French *désengager*, is to free, to detach, to set loose. Chemistry used it of what a reaction releases, as heat or a gas is disengaged when two substances combine or one is decomposed. Pater uses the word as the chemist did, of a property drawn out of a mixture, and once of a face left clear by a head-dress.

## Use in the book

In the Preface the verb names the critic's goal. Having separated the virtue of a work "from its adjuncts", "His end is reached when he has disengaged that virtue, and noted it" (PRE §3; see Chemist; Virtue).

The fifth paragraph says why the work is hard: the virtue must be disengaged "from the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination", and few artists "work quite cleanly" (PRE §5; see Chemist; Débris). In Wordsworth the critic must "follow up that active principle, to disengage it, to mark the degree in which it penetrates his verse" (PRE §5; see Active principle). Disengaging is not discarding. The critic must also measure how far the virtue reaches through the rest.

Once the word is used of sight. Leonardo's heads of women, "Daughters of Herodias", wear "fantastic head-dresses knotted and folded so strangely to leave the dainty oval of the face disengaged" (LEO §23). The face can be read as set free by what surrounds it, as the virtue is by the critic.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** The critic's end is reached when he has disengaged the virtue and noted it, as a chemist notes an element.

**PRE §5** The virtue must be disengaged from the commoner elements it is found with; the critic of Wordsworth disengages its active principle.

**LEO §23** The head-dresses of Leonardo's women leave the oval of the face disengaged.

## See also

Active principle; Adjunct; Chemist; Débris; Element; Virtue.

*The distaste for a perfection reached, by which the artist is driven on to the next · The Renaissance*

*disgusts*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Distaste, a turning away of relish; in Pater's plural, each of the dissatisfactions by which an artist moves beyond what he has done.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For the way to perfection is through a series of disgusts" (LEO §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §9, with LEO §8.

## Meaning

The word came from the French *desgoust*, now *dégoût*, from *goût*, taste, and the Latin *gustus*. From the late sixteenth century "disgust" could mean anything from loathing to a mere want of relish, a distaste, as one tires of a dish. Pater's use keeps the milder sense. A disgust in his sentence is a loss of taste for something, and the plural counts such losses one after another.

## Use in the book

The sentence comes at the end of Leonardo's Florentine apprenticeship. The lost cartoon of Paradise, prepared for tapestry, was "the perfection of the older Florentine style of miniature-painting" (LEO §8; see Cartoon; Miniature-painting). The ninth paragraph draws the consequence: "And because it was the perfection of that style, it awoke in Leonardo some seed of discontent which lay in the secret places of his nature. For the way to perfection is through a series of disgusts; and this picture—all that he had done so far in his life at Florence—was after all in the old slight manner. His art, if it was to be something in the world, must be weighted with more of the meaning of nature and purpose of humanity" (LEO §9).

The logic is unexpected. The discontent is awakened not by a failure but "because it was the perfection of that style". On one reading, to have done a thing perfectly is to see its limits, and the perfection of a slight manner shows that the manner is slight. Each disgust is with a perfection reached, and the way to a higher perfection runs through a series of them. The discontent was already there, a "seed" in "the secret places of his nature"; the finished cartoon awakes it. What follows is the plunge into the study of nature, with Nature "the true mistress of higher intelligences" (LEO §9; see The true mistress of higher intelligences).

The essay has shown a disgust of this kind a few paragraphs earlier, in another man. When Leonardo painted his angel in the Baptism of his master, the Florentine sculptor, painter and goldsmith Andrea del

Verrocchio (about 1435–1488), "the pupil had surpassed the master; and Verrocchio turned away as one stunned, and as if his sweet earlier work must thereafter be distasteful to him" (LEO §7). "Distasteful" is "disgust" in English dress. On this reading the series of disgusts is the motion of the whole history the essay tells, in which a perfection, once surpassed or once reached, becomes distasteful: Verrocchio's after Leonardo's angel, the old Florentine manner after Leonardo had perfected it in the Paradise. The Leonardo of Milan, with "his endless re-touchings" and all he must leave unfinished and recommence (LEO §20; see Ennui), looks like a man in whom the disgusts never ceased.

The idea has a counterpart in the Winckelmann essay, where even a perfect life breeds weariness. Man had to pass beyond the Hellenic ideal, if he "was to be saved from the ennui which ever attaches itself to realisation, even the realisation of the perfect life" (WIN §44; see Ennui). Ennui and disgust can be read as the same discovery, that a perfection attained is not enough. In the Winckelmann essay it is the fate of a race; in Leonardo it is a discipline.

## Places to read

The word occurs once; the "distasteful" of LEO §7 is not listed.

**LEO §9** The perfection of the old Florentine style awoke discontent in Leonardo, for the way to perfection is through a series of disgusts.

## See also

Cartoon; Ennui; Miniature-painting; The true mistress of higher intelligences.

# Divinatory power

*divinatory power*; *divines*; *divining*

Attested: *divinatory power* (WIN §14); *divines*, *divining* (LEO §13; WIN §§9, 22, 31); *divination*, *divinations* (FRE §1; LEO §§13, 20; see Divination). Divination is the art of foreseeing or discovering what is hidden, from the Latin *divinatio*, and in Greek religion it was the seer's gift, inspired by the god. Pater uses the phrase for Winckelmann's insight into Greece: enthusiasm, in the Platonic sense, was the secret of "his divinatory power over the Hellenic world" (WIN §14; see Enthusiasm). The word joins the critic to the seer. In the *Phaedrus* Socrates sets the madness of prophecy beside the madness of love as gifts of the gods,[19] and Pater's sentence can be read as claiming both for Winckelmann: he divines Greece because he loves it. The verb carries the claim through the essay, from the

[19] Plato, *Phaedrus* 244a–245c.

words of Greek poetry to the channels of ancient art and the temperament of the antique world (WIN §§9, 22, 31; see Divination). Divination, here, is knowledge reached by sympathy rather than inference, and the essay values it above method.

## See also

Classical tradition; Divination; Enthusiasm; Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst.

## Double meaning

*double meanings*

Attested: *double meanings* (PIC §13); *double* in nine further paragraphs and *doubles* in one (BEL §3), in other senses. A sense beyond the plain one, carried by the same word or sign. "In explaining the harmony between Plato and Moses, Pico lays hold on every sort of figure and analogy, on the double meanings of words, the symbols of the Jewish ritual, the secondary meanings of obscure stories in the later Greek mythologists" (PIC §13; see Analogue; Secondary meaning). The double meaning is the allegorist's tool: a word that means two things can be made to join two traditions (see Allegorical interpretation). The essay tells a double meaning that came true. Camilla Rucellai, one of the prophetic women raised up in Florence by the preaching of Savonarola, foretold that Pico "would depart in the time of lilies" (PIC §11), and he died on the day the French king entered Florence, in the time of the lilies of the French shield (PIC §12; see Time of lilies). The edition's note at PIC §11 calls it a pun, and says that "The coincidence prepares the essay's account of Pico reading the world as a system of signs".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Analogue; Secondary meaning; Time of lilies.

## Ein Lebendiges für die Lebendigen geschrieben

*ein Lebendiges für die Lebendigen geschrieben, ein Leben selbst*

Attested: *ein Lebendiges für die Lebendigen geschrieben, ein Leben selbst* (WIN §19). German, "a living thing written for the living, a life itself", as the note at WIN §19 renders it. Pater ends his account of Winckelmann's way of knowing with Goethe's judgement: "And so comes the truth of Goethe's judgments on his works; they are a life, a living thing, designed for those who are alive—ein Lebendiges für die Lebendigen geschrieben, ein Leben selbst" (WIN §19). Pater gives the English first, and puts first what the German puts last: "a life, a living thing, designed for those who are alive". Goethe's own sentence says more. All that Winckelmann left is

written as a living thing for the living, "not for those dead in the letter", and his works, joined with his letters, are a portrait of a life, a life itself.[20] Pater drops the dead in the letter, and the omission can be read as his own emphasis: he wants the life, not the polemic against pedants. The note at WIN §19 says that the phrase "gives a work of criticism the status of a living activity that can continue in the people who read it", and the book's Preface can be read as asking the same of criticism, which is to disengage the "active principle" of a work (PRE §5; see Active principle).

## See also

Active principle; Anti-natal state; Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst.

# End in itself

*What is valued for its own sake and not as a means: for Leonardo, the impression and the effect; for all art, the handling · The Renaissance end in itself*, *ends in themselves*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A thing pursued for its own sake, not as a means to something further.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For him, the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself—a perfect end" (LEO §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §24, with GIO §5.

## Meaning

The phrase belongs to the language of philosophy. Aristotle opens the *Ethics* by distinguishing the ends sought for the sake of others from the end sought for its own sake, which is the good;[21] Kant made the human person "an end in itself", never to be used merely as a means.[22] Pater takes the moral phrase into art, where it names what a work or a life is for when it is for nothing beyond itself (see In itself).

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[20] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Skizzen zu einer Schilderung Winckelmanns", in *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1805), "Unternommene Schriften": *Und so ist alles, was er uns hinterlassen, als ein Lebendiges für die Lebendigen, nicht für die im Buchstaben Toten geschrieben. Seine Werke, verbunden mit seinen Briefen, sind eine Lebensdarstellung, sind ein Leben selbst*.

[21] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I.2, 1094a18–22.

[22] Immanuel Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785), second section.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the twenty-fourth paragraph of the Leonardo essay, after Pater has described the pupils and the solitary life at Milan. Pater has set Leonardo apart from other artists careless of applause, his "solitary culture of beauty" seeming "to have hung upon a kind of self-love" (LEO §24; see Solitary culture of beauty). "Out of the secret places of a unique temperament he brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown; and for him, the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself—a perfect end" (LEO §24; see Novel impression).

The two sentences can be read as playing on the word "end". Other artists set "moral or political ends above the ends of art"; Leonardo set no end above the effect itself. "A perfect end" completes the play, for "perfect", from the Latin *perfectus*, is what is finished and wants nothing more. The phrase is not offered without cost. The sentence before ties Leonardo's devotion to art to "a kind of self-love", and the hedge "seems to have hung" is Pater's. The end in itself is a doctrine and a temperament at once, and the essay does not separate them.

The Giorgione essay states the doctrine as a law of all art. The mere matter of a poem or a picture should be "nothing without the form", and "this mode of handling, should become an end in itself, should penetrate every part of the matter" (GIO §5; see Matter and form). In Leonardo the end in itself is the effect; in the Giorgione essay it is the handling, the form, and the end is not set apart from the matter but made to "penetrate" it. Three paragraphs later the phrase reaches beyond art, in quotation marks: the fashion of a time elevates the trivialities of speech, manner and dress "into 'ends in themselves'" (GIO §8; see Fashion).

The uses can be read as rising degrees of one idea. A temperament treats its effects as ends; all art strives to make its handling an end; a whole society, in its fashions, treats the trifles of manner the same way. The Conclusion gives the idea its last form, for life itself: experience itself "is the end" (CON §4; see Fruit of experience).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "end in itself" or "ends in themselves" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §24** For Leonardo the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself.

**GIO §5** All art strives to make the form, the mode of handling, an end in itself.

**GIO §8** The fashion of a time elevates the trivialities of speech, manner and dress into "ends in themselves".

## See also

Art for its own sake; Condition of music; Fashion; For their own sake; Fruit of experience; In itself; Matter and form; Novel impression; Solitary culture of beauty.

### Engaging personality

*engaging personality*

Attested: *engaging personality* (PRE §§2, 3). A person who attracts and holds others, considered, as a work of art is, for the effect he produces. The Preface puts persons among the objects of criticism: "What is this song or picture, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to me?" (PRE §2), and again "the picture, the landscape, the engaging personality in life or in a book" (PRE §3), with "a fair personality in life or in a book" in the same paragraph. Pico of Mirandola, the fifteenth-century Italian philosopher, is the Preface's example (PRE §3), and the book bears it out: Pico, Leonardo and Winckelmann are studied as personalities as much as for their work, and the fifteenth century is praised for "its special and prominent personalities, with their profound æsthetic charm" (PRE §7; see Æsthetic charm).

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Impression; Virtue.

### Enthusiasm

*The state of one possessed by a god, which Pater takes in the Platonic sense: the secret of Winckelmann's insight into Greece · The Renaissance*

*enthusiasm*; *enthusiasms*; *enthusiast*; *enthusiastic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** In Greek, possession by a god; in English, an intense, absorbing ardour for something.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Enthusiasm, taken "in the broad Platonic sense of the Phaedrus", is the secret of Winckelmann's insight into Greece (WIN §14).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §14 says that Pater borrows the maxim "to argue that sympathetic understanding requires a personal investment in the ideas one puts into practice".

**A place to read.** WIN §14.

## Meaning

The Greek *enthousiasmos* comes from *entheos*, "with the god inside": the state of the prophet, the poet or the lover whom a god has entered. In Plato's *Phaedrus* Socrates distinguishes four kinds of divine madness, prophetic, purifying, poetic and erotic, and makes the last, the lover's, the best, since it recalls the soul to the beauty it once saw.[23] English took the word about 1600 for inspiration, and by the middle of the seventeenth century, in the quarrels with the Puritan sects, it had a bad sense, for the religious zealot who claimed private revelation; the eighteenth century kept the suspicion: the English critic Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) defined enthusiasm as "a vain belief of private revelation".[24] Pater's "broad Platonic sense" reclaims the word from that suspicion and gives it back its Greek dignity.

## Use in the book

The word is the Winckelmann essay's own. It appears eleven times, in eight of the essay's paragraphs, and it names the quality the essay most admires. The Greek historian Herodotus and Homer win, with their "vowelled" Greek, the boy's "warmest enthusiasm" (WIN §3); at Halle he becomes "the enthusiastic translator of Herodotus" (WIN §5); at Seehausen nothing was "to enter into his life unpenetrated by its central enthusiasm" (WIN §6). The enthusiasm is narrow and hot. "Within its severe limits his enthusiasm burns like lava" (WIN §10), and the image joins confinement and fire: the narrower the channel, the fiercer the heat.

The fourteenth paragraph gives the word its sense. The French writer Madame de Staël (1766–1817) has said that no one before Winckelmann had made himself a pagan to understand antiquity, and Pater adds a maxim from Charlotte Corday, who killed the revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat in 1793, *On exécute mal ce qu'on n'a pas conçu soi-même*, "One is always a poor executant of conceptions not one's own", and both sayings, he says, "are true in their measure of every genuine enthusiasm" (WIN §14). Then: "Enthusiasm,—that, in the broad Platonic sense of the Phaedrus, was the secret of his divinatory power over the Hellenic world" (WIN §14). The sentence makes enthusiasm a means of knowledge. Winckelmann understands Greece because Greece possesses him; he is the critic as Plato's lover, whose madness is a way of seeing. The next sentence ties it to the body: this enthusiasm, "dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament", reinforces the purer emotions of the intellect "with an almost physical excitement" (WIN §14; see Temperament). The *Phaedrus* allows the same, since its lover's madness begins in the sight of a beautiful body, and the essay can be read as taking Plato's account in full, both the vision and the body that occasions it.

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[23] Plato, *Phaedrus* 244a–245c, 249d–e, 265b.

[24] Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London, 1755), "Enthusiasm".

The rest of the essay keeps the double value. The impression that Winckelmann gave was "that of excitement, intuition, inspiration", and he is "the quick, susceptible enthusiast" (WIN §19; see Temperament). In the countries of the classical tradition national pride might light up "an enthusiasm" for it, which aliens might imitate, and "classicism become from time to time an intellectual fashion" (WIN §22; see Artificial classicism): enthusiasm copied becomes fashion. At the end the word is set in its place within a larger culture. The intense, one-sided developments of special talents "are the brightest enthusiasms the world has to show", but the proper instinct of self-culture cares less to reap all they can give than "to find in them its own strength" (WIN §51; see Self-culture). Goethe, on this account, is the enthusiast's heir, who learns from enthusiasms without being possessed by any one of them.

The Preface had already made the word Winckelmann's. He belongs to an earlier age by his "enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake" (PRE §9; see For their own sake), and Michelangelo's Bacchus expresses the god's "enthusiasm, his capacity for profound dreaming" (MIC §7; see Inspired sleep), the old sense of possession by the god returned to the god himself.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "enthusiasm", "enthusiasms", "enthusiast" or "enthusiastic" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §9** By his enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination, Winckelmann belongs to an earlier age.

**MIC §7** The Bacchus expresses the god's sleepy seriousness, his enthusiasm, his capacity for dreaming.

**WIN §3** Herodotus and Homer win the boy's warmest enthusiasm.

**WIN §5** At Halle he becomes the enthusiastic translator of Herodotus.

**WIN §6** Nothing was to enter into his life unpenetrated by its central enthusiasm.

**WIN §10** Within its severe limits his enthusiasm burns like lava.

**WIN §14** Enthusiasm, in the broad Platonic sense of the Phaedrus, was the secret of his divinatory power.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann, the quick, susceptible enthusiast, apprehended the Hellenic manner by instinct.

**WIN §22** National pride might light up an enthusiasm for the classical tradition, which aliens might imitate.

**WIN §51** The developments of special talents are the brightest enthusiasms the world has to show.

**CON §6** Great passions may give a quickened sense of life, among them the various forms of enthusiastic activity.

**C73 §7** High passions include political or religious enthusiasm, or the enthusiasm of humanity.

## In this edition

The Conclusion of 1873 counted "political or religious enthusiasm" among the high passions that give a quickened sense of life (C73 §7; see Political or religious enthusiasm), and added "the enthusiasm of humanity", the phrase of the historian J. R. Seeley's life of Christ, *Ecce Homo* (1865; see Enthusiasm of humanity); the revised text has instead "the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise" (CON §6).

Pater's own note at WIN §14 gives the maxim on conception and execution as "Words of Charlotte Corday before the *Convention*", and the edition's note follows it. Corday was tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal in July 1793, not before the Convention.

## See also

Artificial classicism; Centrality; Classical tradition; Divinatory power; Enthusiasm of humanity; Exigent intellectualism; For their own sake; Inspired sleep; Political or religious enthusiasm; Self-culture; Temperament.

# Essence

*What a thing is at its centre, drawn off like an extract · The Renaissance*
*essence*, *essences*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The being of a thing, what makes it what it is; also the concentrated extract of a substance, as of a flower.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The whole essence of their work is expression" (ROB §4); the Greek works "came to be like some subtle extract or essence, or almost like pure thoughts or ideas" (ROB §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §§4, 8, with GIO §6.

## Meaning

*Essentia* was coined in Latin from *esse*, to be, to render the Greek *ousia*; Seneca names Cicero as its author.[25] Philosophy made it the opposite of accident: the essence is what a thing cannot lose and remain itself (see Accident). The chemists gave the word a second life, and an essence came to

[25] Seneca, *Epistulae morales* 58.6.

mean the extract distilled from a plant, its scent or virtue in concentrated form. Pater's uses lean on the second sense even when they invoke the first.

## Use in the book

The della Robbia essay uses the word twice, and each time it is a claim about what a school of sculpture is at bottom. Of the Tuscan sculptors: "The whole essence of their work is expression" (ROB §4; see Passing of a smile). Of the Greeks: "In this way their works came to be like some subtle extract or essence, or almost like pure thoughts or ideas" (ROB §8; see Breadth of humanity). The two essences mark two points in the essay's scheme: the Greeks sacrifice expression to generality (ROB §9), and the Tuscans, whose essence is expression, stand midway between the Greeks and Michelangelo (ROB §11; see Pure form).

The image in ROB §8 is the chemist's. The Greek sculptor has done to the individual what the distiller does to a flower: removed the bulk and kept the virtue, so that what remains is "subtle", strong in small compass, almost immaterial, "almost like pure thoughts or ideas". The comparison fits the Preface, where the critic is compared to a chemist who notes a natural element (PRE §3; see Chemist). In both, essence is what is left when the accidents are taken away.

The Giorgione essay gives the word its fullest pictorial use. An etching by the French-born painter Alphonse Legros is "informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression" which he "maintains as the very essence of the thing, throughout his work" (GIO §6; see Indwelling solemnity), and the Venetian painters present "the spirit or essence only of a certain sort of landscape" (GIO §6). The school of Venice has conceived "the essence of what is pictorial in a picture" more justly than any other (GIO §11). Here essence is the quality that makes a picture a picture and not a poem, the thing the critic must "disengage" (see Disengage).

The word has its warnings too. The abstracted gods of Greece are, in words Pater quotes, "ready to melt out their essence fine into the winds" (WIN §45), and the danger is that an essence too refined evaporates. Elsewhere the uses are plainer: "the essence of humanism" is the belief that nothing which has interested men can wholly lose its vitality (PIC §16; see Humanism); the old French chanson was "often, in its essence, something rude and formless" (BEL §4); Goethe learned the Hellenic element "in its true essence" from Winckelmann (WIN §48).

Pater's essence may be taken as one of the book's quiet bridges between philosophy and the senses. Pater uses the metaphysician's term and gives it the perfumer's meaning: an essence is not a definition reached by thought but an extract the senses can still perceive, the scent of the flower without the flower.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "essence" or "quintessence" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §16** The essence of humanism is the belief that nothing which has interested men can wholly lose its vitality.

**ROB §4** The whole essence of the Tuscan sculptors' work is expression.

**ROB §8** The Greek works came to be like some subtle extract or essence, almost like pure thoughts.

**GIO §6** Legros maintains an indwelling solemnity as the very essence of the thing; the Venetians present the essence only of a certain sort of landscape.

**GIO §11** No school has conceived the essence of what is pictorial in a picture so justly as the Venetian.

**GIO §20** The pauses Giorgione's school selects are like some consummate extract or quintessence of life.

**BEL §4** The old French chanson was often, in its essence, something rude and formless.

**WIN §45** The abstracted gods seem ready to melt out their essence fine into the winds.

**WIN §48** Goethe learned the Hellenic element in its true essence from Winckelmann.

## See also

Abstract; Accident; Breadth of humanity; Chemist; Disengage; Humanism; Indwelling solemnity; Indwelling soul; Passing of a smile; Pure form.

# Excellence

*excellence*; *excellent*

Attested: *excellence* (PRE §1); *excellent* (PRE §§1, 4; ROB §7; WIN §53). Superior quality, what surpasses. Abstract theories of beauty help us little "to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent" in art or poetry, "or to use words like beauty, excellence, art, poetry, with a more precise meaning than they would otherwise have" (PRE §1; see Discriminate). Excellence is not confined to a period: "In all ages there have been some excellent workmen, and some excellent work done" (PRE §4; see The ages are all equal). Elsewhere the adjective is used of "the most excellent Greek sculptors, of Pheidias and his pupils" (ROB §7), and of "some excellent work done after" the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo (WIN §53).

## See also

Discriminate; The ages are all equal; Universal formula.

### Exigent intellectualism

*a watchful, exigent intellectualism*

Attested: *exigent intellectualism* (WIN §51). Exigent is demanding, exacting, from the Latin *exigere*, to drive out, to require; intellectualism is the life led by the intellect. Pater uses the phrase for Goethe's Hellenism, which "was of another order, the Allgemeinheit and Heiterkeit, the completeness and serenity, of a watchful, exigent intellectualism" (WIN §51). The problem of culture could no longer be solved through the body, as by the courtesan Phryne rising naked from the water, nor by one talent, as by the statesman Pericles or the sculptor Pheidias (WIN §51; see Bodily form); for the modern man it must be reached through the mind, and the mind must be watchful and demanding. The paragraph describes the demand. Such a mind "struggles with those forms till its secret is won from each, and then lets each fall back into its place, in the supreme, artistic view of life", and such natures pass their former selves with "a kind of passionate coldness" (WIN §51; see Passionate coldness), which can be read as the phrase's gloss: the intellect is exigent because it takes from each enthusiasm what it needs and then moves on. Goethe's line as Pater gives it, *Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren, resolut zu leben*, "To live resolutely in the whole, the good, and the true" in the note's English, is the programme of such a mind (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen).

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Bodily form; Centrality; Enthusiasm; Im Ganzen; Passionate coldness.

### Experience

*What is lived through and known by living it: for the Preface the ground of all judgement, for the Conclusion the end itself · The Renaissance*

*experience*, *experiences*; *experienced*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What a person lives through and knows by living it, from the Latin *experientia*, a trial or proof.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The book that begins by calling beauty relative, "like all other qualities presented to human experience" (PRE §1), ends by making experience the end: "Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end" (CON §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.
**A place to read.** PRE §§1–3; CON §§3–5.

## Meaning

*Experientia* is from *experiri*, to try or put to the test, which shares its root with *periculum*, danger, and *peritus*, skilled: experience is what one has been through and come out of knowing. Two senses run together in English. One is the empiricists': experience is the source of all knowledge, as against what is innate or revealed, and for the English philosopher John Locke all our ideas come from it, by sensation or reflection.[26] The other is the ordinary sense of a lived event, "an experience", which the nineteenth century made more and more the measure of a life's worth. Pater uses both, and in the Conclusion he presses the first until it becomes the second: knowledge reduced to experience, and experience reduced to the moment in which it is had.

## Use in the book

The Preface sets the word at the start. "Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative" (PRE §1; see Relative), and the critic must find his primary data for himself: he who "experiences these impressions strongly" drives at their analysis (PRE §2), and he notes "under what conditions" the impression of beauty is experienced (PRE §3). Questions about beauty in itself, or its exact relation "to truth or experience", are dismissed as metaphysical (PRE §2; see Metaphysical question). Experience is where criticism starts and what it must not leave.

The essays use the word for what an age or a person knows by living. In the movement Pater calls the Renaissance, the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life directs men to the divination of fresh sources of enjoyment, "new experiences, new subjects of poetry, new forms of art" (FRE §1; see Renaissance), and Abelard writes as one bent on trying all things "by their congruity with human experience" (FRE §7; see Human experience). The science of Leonardo's age sought "in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences" (LEO §13; see Divination), and the movement in which Leonardo represents the return to nature was partly the coming of the "modern spirit", with "its realism, its appeal to experience" (LEO §17; see Modern spirit). On La Gioconda's face "all the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life). For us of the modern world, with "so bewildering an experience", unity with ourselves is far harder than it was for the Greek (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self), and Goethe's problem, near the end of the Winckelmann essay, is whether the antique ideal can be given to works

[26] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690), Book II, chapter 1, §§2–4.

"which shall contain the fulness of the experience of the modern world" (WIN §52).

The Conclusion gives the word its argument. It comes seven times. First experience is what seems solid: it "seems to bury us under a flood of external objects" (CON §3; see Importunate). Then it is "already reduced to a group of impressions" and ringed round by the wall of personality (CON §3; see Wall of personality), and analysis follows the impressions "to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down" (CON §3; see Divisibility). Having been reduced to almost nothing, it is made the end, not for its fruit but in itself (CON §4; see Fruit of experience). In the next paragraph it is a thing of splendour, felt with "the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity" (CON §5; see Brevity), and the last use defends it against any theory that would require "the sacrifice of any part of this experience" (CON §5; see Conventional orthodoxy).

The sequence can be read as the Conclusion's whole movement. The analysis does not restore what it took away; experience stays as small as analysis left it. What changes is its value. The thing that dwindled to a single moment is declared to be all there is, and so to be worth everything. Pater's empiricism does not lead him to doubt experience, as Hume's led to doubt of the self, but to prize the one thing it leaves. The Preface's critic and the Conclusion's person are the same figure, and both begin and end with the impression as it is had.

## Places to read

The chief paragraphs in which Pater speaks of experience as the ground of knowledge or of life, in the order of the book; the word occurs in eight further paragraphs (FRE §29; PIC §3; ROB §9; LEO §§13, 36; BEL §10; WIN §§40, 53) and in C73 §§3–6.

**PRE §1** Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative.

**PRE §2** He who experiences impressions strongly drives directly at their discrimination and analysis.

**PRE §3** The critic notes under what conditions the impression of beauty is experienced.

**FRE §1** In the Renaissance the desire for a more liberal way of conceiving life directs men to new experiences, new subjects of poetry, new forms of art.

**FRE §7** Abelard writes as one bent on trying all things by their congruity with human experience.

**LEO §17** The movement of the fifteenth century was partly the coming of the modern spirit, with its appeal to experience; Leonardo represents its return to nature.

**LEO §31** All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded La Gioconda's face.

**WIN §50** For us of the modern world, with so bewildering an experience, unity with ourselves is harder than for the Greek.

**WIN §52** Goethe asks whether the antique ideal can be given to works which shall contain the fulness of the experience of the modern world.

**CON §3** Experience seems to bury us under a flood of objects, then dwindles down to impressions.

**CON §4** Experience itself, not its fruit, is the end.

**CON §5** Life is felt with the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity.

## Pater's sources

Pater does not name an empiricist in the Conclusion, but his reduction of experience to impressions and of impressions to the present moment can be read as following the course that Hume had taken in the *Treatise*. The edition of the *Treatise* by the Oxford philosopher Thomas Hill Green and T. H. Grose (1874), with Green's long introduction against its conclusions, came the year after *The Renaissance*.[27]

## See also

Brevity; Conventional orthodoxy; Divination; Divisibility; Fruit of experience; Human experience; Importunate; Impression; Metaphysical question; Modern spirit; Perpetual life; Relative; Renaissance; Unity with one's self; Wall of personality.

# Exponent

*The visible thing that carries an inward one · The Renaissance exponent*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An exponent is one who sets something forth: an interpreter or representative of a doctrine, and in mathematics the small figure that raises a number to a power.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The genius of which Botticelli is the type "usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own" (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward".

[27] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. T. H. Green and T. H. Grose, 2 vols. (London, 1874).

**A place to read.** BOT §4.

## Meaning

The Latin *exponere* is to set out, to put on view, and so to explain: the same verb gives "expound" and "exposition". In nineteenth-century English the word was often used of a person who represents a cause or a school, as one speaks of the leading exponent of a doctrine. Algebra had given the word a second, exact sense: in $2^3$ the exponent 3 does not change the number 2 but tells the power to which it is raised.

## Use in the book

The word occurs once, at the turn of the Botticelli essay's central sentence (see Data). Its grammar allows two readings. The genius may usurp the data in its capacity as the exponent of its own ideas, so that the painter is the exponent; or it may usurp them to serve as their exponent, so that the visible scene becomes the vehicle of what is inward. The edition's note, which glosses the word as "the visible expression of something inward", suits the second, and the rest of the paragraph confirms it. The scene, the colour, the outward image awaken in the painter "a mood" which the scene "clothes ... with visible circumstance" (BOT §4; see Mood). The data are the exponent; the mood is what they set forth.

Pater could have written "expression", the word he uses elsewhere for the outward bearing of an inner life, from the della Robbia school's "profound expressiveness" (ROB §13; see Expressiveness) to Leonardo's "seventh heaven of symbolical expression" (LEO §29). "Exponent" is a cooler word and a more exact one. It makes the visible scene an instrument, not an overflow: the painter does not pour out his feeling but finds, among the given things of the world, those that can carry it. The algebraic sense can be read in the same direction. An exponent leaves its number recognisable and alters only its power; Botticelli's lawns, pools and flowering reeds remain lawns, pools and reeds, raised to the power of a mood.

The sentence makes a claim about Botticelli and a claim about art. About Botticelli it says that his pictures are to be read for what they set forth, not for what they record, and the essay that follows reads them so, finding the same wistful sentiment in Madonnas, Venus and Truth (BOT §9; see Complexion of humanity). About art it says that the visible world can be made to speak for what is not visible in it without ceasing to be the visible world. That is the faith of the whole book, from the Preface's "virtue" in a herb or a picture (PRE §3; see Virtue) to Giorgione's school, where the subject is absorbed into the form (see Matter and form). The word "exponent" states it in its most deliberate form.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**BOT §4** The genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward. Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Data; Expression; Expressiveness; Matter and form; Mood; Virtue; Visible circumstance.

### Eye of the fancy

*eye of the fancy*

Attested: *eye of the fancy* (FRE §23). The inward eye of the imagination, which sees what a story describes. The adventures of Aucassin and Nicolette "are of the simplest sort, adventures which seem to be chosen for the happy occasion they afford of keeping the eye of the fancy, perhaps the outward eye, fixed on pleasant objects, a garden, a ruined tower, the little hut of flowers which Nicolette constructs in the forest" (FRE §23). "Fancy", shortened from "fantasy", goes back to the Greek *phantasia*, the power of making images. "Perhaps the outward eye" can be read as allowing that the tale, if it was acted as the French scholar Claude Fauriel (1772–1844) supposed (FRE §22; see Cantefable), showed its objects as well as told them. The phrase can be read as Pater's account of where the tale's charm lies: not in plot but in things held before the mind, as "All the charm of the piece is in its details" (FRE §23). The two cups of Amis and Amile do the same work, "kept constantly before the eye in a story or poem" (FRE §10; see Handiwork). The noun "fancy" comes in seven further paragraphs, three of them in the essay on Du Bellay, where the jaded audience of the school of Ronsard, the Pleiad, wants something "to warm their creeping fancy a little" (BEL §17).

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Cantefable; Handiwork.

### Facile orthodoxy

*A belief taken up because it is easy: the system, Comte's or Hegel's or our own, in which the mind comes to rest · The Renaissance*

*facile orthodoxy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An orthodoxy is right opinion, the doctrine held by authority; a facile one is held because it is easy.

**In *The Renaissance*.** We are to be "for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §5 says that Auguste Comte and Hegel "stand for distinct nineteenth-century systems of thought", and that "our own" makes the risk "a habit of mind rather than the property of a particular doctrine".

**A place to read.** CON §5.

## Meaning

*Orthodoxy* is the Greek *orthodoxia*, right opinion, and from the fourth century the name for the faith of the councils against heresy. *Facile* is the Latin *facilis*, easy to do, from *facere*: in English it came to mean easy in a bad sense, too easily done or too easily won. The phrase joins the two so that the fault lies not in the doctrine but in the ease with which it is held. An orthodoxy can be hard-won; a facile one is a resting-place.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes once, at the centre of the Conclusion's programme: "What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5; see Courting impressions). The verb carries the charge. To acquiesce is to come to rest, from the Latin *quiescere*, and the sentence sets two endless activities, testing and courting, against one settled state. The two named systems were among the most ambitious of Pater's century. The French philosopher Auguste Comte's positivism ranged all the sciences in a hierarchy and gave humanity a religion of its own (see Positive knowledge). G. W. F. Hegel's philosophy made all history the self-unfolding of spirit. Each claimed to have found the law of the whole. The third name is the one that matters: "or of our own". The orthodoxy most to be feared is the one we have made, because it is the easiest to hold.

The sentence comes four sentences after the one on habit (CON §5; see Habit), and the two can be read as one rule for the senses and for the mind. Habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and only "the roughness of the eye" makes things seem alike (CON §5; see Roughness of the eye); an orthodoxy does the same for ideas, and makes every new one look like an instance of the old. Against both the Conclusion sets attention, and in the sentences that follow it shows what place theories may still have. Philosophical theories, as points of view, may serve as "instruments of criticism" to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded (CON §5; see Instruments of

criticism). A system is not forbidden. It is demoted from a dwelling to a tool.

The word "orthodoxy" runs through the book in other settings, and the Conclusion's use gathers them. Botticelli is "far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5; see Conventional orthodoxy); the Roman Church, fixing itself in "a frozen orthodoxy", had passed beyond Michelangelo (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy); and the Winckelmann essay calls the classical tradition that Raphael commemorates in his Parnassus "the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22; see Orthodoxy of taste). The Conclusion applies to philosophy what the essays had found in art and religion: a doctrine received is dead in the hand, and only a doctrine tested is alive.

Pater's note of 1888, which explains why he withdrew the Conclusion for a time, can be read beside the sentence (CON §1; see πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει). He changed only its punctuation when he restored it. The refusal of a facile orthodoxy can be read as the one doctrine the Conclusion holds without qualification.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "facile orthodoxy" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraphs on the conventional orthodoxy of Botticelli and the orthodoxy of taste, in the order of the book.

**BOT §5** Botticelli is far from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante.

**WIN §22** In the Parnassus Raphael commemorates the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste.

**CON §5** We are to be for ever testing new opinions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own.

**C73 §6** In 1873 the sentence is the same, without the commas after "orthodoxy" and "Comte".

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Consciousness of ignorance; Conventional orthodoxy; Courting impressions; Frozen orthodoxy; Habit; Instruments of criticism; Orthodoxy; Orthodoxy of taste; Positive knowledge; Roughness of the eye.

### Failure is to form habits

*The bare maxim of 1873 that answers the definition of success: the revision kept its claim and set it about with qualifications · The Renaissance*

*Failure is to form habits*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A maxim: to fall into settled ways of seeing and doing is to fail at living.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Failure is to form habits; for habit is relative to a stereotyped world; meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike" (C73 §6).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §6 says that the final version makes the sentence more tentative by prefacing it with "In a sense it might even be said", and that in both versions habits are troubling insofar as they make distinct things appear alike.

**A place to read.** C73 §6.

## Meaning

A maxim is a rule short enough to be remembered and general enough to be applied. This one turns the moralists' praise of habit, told under Habit, into a definition of failure in five words, and its reason follows after the semicolon: habit "is relative to a stereotyped world", and the opening paragraphs have shown that nothing stays as it was (C73 §§2–4; see Stereotyped world).

## Use in the book

In 1873 the maxim is the second half of a pair. "To burn always with this hard gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. Failure is to form habits" (C73 §6; see Hard, gem-like flame). Success is defined by two long infinitives, failure by one short one, and the two sentences stand like the two columns of a ledger.

The sentence is then built of three clauses joined by semicolons: the maxim, its reason, and an aside beginning "meantime" that moves the fault from the world to "the roughness of the eye" (C73 §6; see Roughness of the eye); what the aside and the call to discriminate two sentences later make of habit is told under Habit (see Discriminate).

The revised sentence keeps all three parts and breaks the symmetry. It begins "In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits", and a colon and "after all" slow the argument (CON §5; see Habit). The definition has become a thing that "might even be said". "Failure" no longer answers "success in life" from the head of the next sentence.

The Conclusion of 1873 is a chain of such sentences: the Greek saying of its epigraph, a German saying on philosophy, and Hugo's French twice, the microscope of thought and the condemned, each set down as a saying (C73 §§1, 5, 6, 7; see πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Philosophiren; Microscope of thought; Condamnés). Among these borrowed sayings the maxim on habit is Pater's own, and it is the one he afterwards qualified (CON §5).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the maxim occurs, with the revised sentence, in the order of the book.

**CON §5** In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits.

**C73 §6** In 1873: "Failure is to form habits".

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Condamnés; Discriminate; Habit; Hard, gem-like flame; Microscope of thought; Paradox; Philosophiren; Roughness of the eye; Stereotyped world.

# Finite image

*The visible form of a Greek statue, in which the spiritual meaning is wholly present and nothing points beyond · The Renaissance*

*the finite image*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An image with limits, complete in itself, as against a sign that points to something beyond it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Before the Venus of Melos, "in no sense a symbol", the mind rests in the finite image and loses nothing of what it means (WIN §28).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §28 says that with the Venus of Melos Pater "supplies his own example of an ideal in which meaning seems to reside entirely in the visible figure".

**A place to read.** WIN §§27–29.

## Meaning

*Finite*, from the Latin *finitus*, bounded, is what has limits: the opposite of the infinite of theology and of Romantic longing. An image is finite when it is wholly there, contained in its outline, and asks for no completion from outside. Pater uses the phrase in an argument that comes, in its broad lines, from Hegel's lectures on aesthetics.

## Use in the book

The phrase is the hinge of a contrast between two kinds of art. On one side is the Coronation of the Virgin by the Florentine friar and painter Fra Angelico (about 1395–1455), a fresco in a friar's cell of the convent of San Marco, in which all that is outward is only "the symbol or type of a really inexpressible world" (WIN §27; see Symbol), and the many-headed gods of the East, "at best overcharged symbols" (WIN §27; see Mystic). "Such forms of art, then, are inadequate to the matter they clothe; they remain

ever below its level" (WIN §27). On the other side is the Venus of Melos, "in no sense a symbol" (WIN §28; see Symbol), before which the mind "begins and ends with the finite image, yet loses no part of the spiritual motive" (WIN §28), since that motive saturates the form instead of hanging on it like an allegory's meaning (WIN §28; see Allegorical interpretation).

The finite image is thus not a lesser thing than the symbol but a fuller one. The symbol fails because it must point beyond itself; the statue succeeds because it need not. The phrase can be read as Pater's answer to the religious art the book has admired, Angelico's and Botticelli's: they reach toward a world they cannot show, while the Greek sculptor shows all that he means. The next paragraph names the art that results, an ideal art in which the thought does not "outstrip" its sensible embodiment (WIN §29; see Ideal art).

The rest of the twenty-eighth paragraph says why the finite image was possible, and why it could not last. "The Greek mind had advanced to a particular stage of self-reflexion, but was careful not to pass beyond it" (WIN §28). In the East humanity is still confused with the life of the animal and vegetable world; in Greece the "lordship of the soul" is recognised and gives divinity to the human body (WIN §28; see Lordship of the soul). "But just there Greek thought finds its happy limit; it has not yet become too inward; the mind has not yet learned to boast its independence of the flesh" (WIN §28). The finite image depends on that pause, on a mind that has mastered the body without despising it. The paragraph ends with the warning that the train of reflexion "must end in defiance of form, of all that is outward, in an exaggerated idealism", though "that end is still distant" (WIN §28; see Idealise). The essay's history of the arts, sculpture for the Greeks, painting for the middle age, music and poetry for the modern world (WIN §52; see Correspondence), follows from it: the finite image belongs to one moment of the mind, and the moment passed.

The example is Pater's own, and it is late. The Venus of Melos was found in 1820, more than fifty years after Winckelmann's death, and the most famous Greek figure of Pater's day stands at the centre of an essay on a critic who never saw it. The anachronism can be read as Pater's way of continuing Winckelmann's work rather than reporting it.

## Places to read

The paragraphs of the Winckelmann essay that set the finite image of Greek art against the symbol, in the order of the book.

**WIN §27** Angelico's Coronation, like the gods of the East, is a symbol of a world it cannot express.

**WIN §28** The Venus of Melos is no symbol: the mind begins and ends with the finite image.

**WIN §29** This ideal art, in which the thought does not outstrip its sensible embodiment, needed a perfect animal nature.

## Pater's sources

The essay quotes Hegel three times, on Winckelmann, on the Greek plastic character and on the religious spirit that "smiled through its tears" (WIN §§2, 41, 46), and borrows his comparison of Egyptian art to Memnon (WIN §32); and the contrast of the finite image with the symbol follows Hegel's lectures on aesthetics. There classical art is the art in which the idea has found the shape adequate to it, the human form, and symbolic art, the art of the East, is the art in which the idea is still indeterminate and the shape only alludes to it.[28] Pater's "overcharged symbols" of the East (WIN §27) and his finite image of Greece can be read as Hegel's symbolic and classical forms in English, and his "exaggerated inwardness" of the middle age (WIN §27) as Hegel's romantic form seen from the side of its loss.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Correspondence; Ideal art; Idealise; Lordship of the soul; Mystic; Sensible analogue; Symbol; Symbolism.

# First impression

*The freshness of a culture's first meeting with Greece · The Renaissance first impression*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A first impression is the effect a thing makes on the mind at the first meeting, before familiarity has dulled it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's Venus is "a record of the first impression made by" the Hellenic spirit "on minds turned back towards it, in almost painful aspiration, from a world in which it had been ignored so long" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus, although it shows the goddess being carried to shore after her birth".

**A place to read.** BOT §8.

## Meaning

An impression is a mark pressed into something soft, as a seal into wax, and Plato had already used the wax tablet as an image of memory.[29] The printer's first impression is the first printing of a book, the copies pulled at one time from the type. The phrase in ordinary English joins the two senses: the first mark, made while the surface is fresh. For Pater "impression" is the

[28] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), part II, sections 1–2, on the symbolic and the classical art forms.

[29] Plato, *Theaetetus* 191c–e.

critic's word of words, the particular effect of a work on a particular person (see Impression), and "first" adds the time at which that effect is strongest.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes once, in the paragraph on the Birth of Venus, and it answers a paradox. Botticelli knew far less of the Greeks than we do: "we know far more than Botticelli, or his most learned contemporaries" (BOT §8; see Hellenic spirit). Yet his "quaint design" is "a more direct inlet into the Greek temper" than Greek work itself (BOT §8; see Greek temper). The reason is the first impression, in the sentence quoted above (BOT §8).

Knowledge and impression move in opposite directions. Ours has grown, and the words "long familiarity has taken off the edge of the lesson" say what it has cost (BOT §8; see Hellenic spirit); theirs was scant, and the edge was whole. "Almost painful aspiration" is the price and the proof of the freshness: the minds turned back towards Greece with an effort that almost hurt, and the effort is recorded in the picture as sadness. The cold light and the sorrow in the goddess's face (see Goddess of pleasure) can be read as the marks of a culture meeting beauty it had been taught to fear.

The diagnosis can be read as the Conclusion's, applied to a culture instead of a person. There "In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits" (CON §5; see Relative), softened from the 1873 "Failure is to form habits" (C73 §6), and the remedy is to keep the senses as fresh as at a first meeting. "Long familiarity" is habit in a civilisation. Pater does not ask for less knowledge; he grants that "we know far more". He asks that knowledge recover the edge it has worn off, and he finds the means in a picture that knew little and felt much. The phrase can be read as a programme for the book's own criticism: to make the reader see the Renaissance as if for the first time, which is why the essays dwell so long on a single face or a single picture.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §8** Botticelli's Venus is a record of the first impression made by the Hellenic spirit on minds turned back towards it in almost painful aspiration.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus, although it shows the goddess being carried to shore after her birth", and that "The Uffizi identifies the winds at left and compares Venus's pose to antique statues of the modest Venus". The edition's Outline says that Pater's "Venus brings inherited pagan beauty into contact with a melancholy he also finds in the painter's sacred figures".

## See also

Goddess of pleasure; Greek temper; Hellenic spirit; Impression; Relative.

# Fruit of experience

*What experience leaves behind when it is over: the reward that the Conclusion sets aside for the having of experience itself · The Renaissance*

*the fruit of experience*; *fruit*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The fruit of a thing is its yield, what it produces and what is left of it when the work is done.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end" (CON §4).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §4 says that "fruit" means "the result or reward that survives an activity", and that Pater puts weight "on the activity of perception while it is happening".

**A place to read.** CON §4.

## Meaning

*Fruit* is the Latin *fructus*, from *frui*, to enjoy: the fruit of a thing was first what one has the use and enjoyment of, and only then the produce of a tree. The figure of life as a tree known by its fruits is old (Matthew 7:16–20), and the sentence that the Conclusion denies is the common one: that what an experience leaves, a lesson, a character, a work or a merit, is worth more than the experience. Wisdom, on this view, is the fruit of experience, and so are virtue, skill and the reward of a good life. Pater's sentence reverses the order. The tree is not for the fruit; the fruit is incidental to the tree.

## Use in the book

The sentence stands in the middle of the fourth paragraph of the Conclusion, between the form, tone and mood that are real "for that moment only" (CON §4; see Moment) and the "counted number of pulses" given to us (CON §4; see Pulsation). "Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end" (CON §4). Its position explains it. If every form, tone and mood is real "for that moment only", nothing can be kept from it, and to live for what is kept is to live for what does not exist. And if the pulses are counted, what matters is how many are lived, not what they yield. The sentence is the hinge on which the Conclusion turns from analysis to ethics.

The word "fruit" returns at the end, changed. Great passions may give us a quickened sense of life, and Pater adds a condition: be sure that the passion yields "this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness" (CON §6; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness). The fruit has moved inside

the experience. It is no longer what remains when the experience is over but what the experience is while it lasts: consciousness raised and multiplied. The last paragraph can be read as answering the objection that the fourth paragraph invites. Pater does not say that experience bears no fruit, but that its only fruit worth having is more experience.

Elsewhere the book uses the word in its ordinary senses, and some of them stand near the doctrine. Winckelmann is "the last fruit of the Renaissance" (PRE §9; see Hellenism), the yield of an age. Out of a unique temperament Leonardo brought "strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown", and for him the novel impression conveyed counted as an end in itself (LEO §24; see Novel impression; End in itself), which is already the Conclusion's doctrine in one life. Du Bellay's genius yielded its best fruits in the years of homesick service at Rome (BEL §12), and Winckelmann gathered the "first-fruits" of Pompeii (WIN §20). In the others the fruit is a work or a person, and the Conclusion's sentence sets aside the kind of fruit that the rest of the book praises.

The sentence is the one most easily misread. It does not counsel the collection of sensations, and the next sentences ask how we may see in our pulses "all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses" (CON §4; see Pulsation), which is a discipline. The end is the having, in number and in quality: the Conclusion asks that we get "as many pulsations as possible into the given time", and its last sentence names art as the thing that gives "the highest quality to your moments as they pass" (CON §6; see Art for its own sake).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "the fruit of experience" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of the fruit of a quickened consciousness, in the order of the book.

**CON §4** Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end.

**CON §6** Be sure it is passion, that it does yield this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness.

**C73 §5** In 1873, without the comma: "experience itself is the end".

## Elsewhere in Pater

*Marius the Epicurean* (1885), which Pater's note names as the fuller treatment of the Conclusion's thoughts (CON §1), gives the sentence its philosophical setting. In the chapter "Animula Vagula" Marius takes from the teaching of the Greek philosopher Aristippus of Cyrene, a pupil of Socrates, the maxim of "Life as the end of life", and the practical ideal it points to is not pleasure but "a general completeness of life".[30]

[30] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

## Later readings

The Irish writer Oscar Wilde gave the sentence to Dorian Gray. The "new Hedonism" of the eleventh chapter of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) was "never to accept any theory or system that would involve the sacrifice of any mode of passionate experience", and its aim, indeed, "was to be experience itself, and not the fruits of experience, sweet or bitter as they might be".[31] Wilde's novel lets the doctrine end in ruin, and the use it makes of Pater's words can be read as the misreading that Pater's note of 1888 feared (CON §1).

## See also

Art for its own sake; End in itself; Experience; Hellenism; Human experience; Moment; Novel impression; Pulsation; Quickened, multiplied consciousness.

# General criticism

*Criticism for the cultivated reader, set above the technical and the antiquarian · The Renaissance*

*general criticism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** General criticism is criticism that speaks to the educated reader at large about an artist's place in culture, as distinct from criticism of technique or of documents.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater writes that, "over and above mere technical or antiquarian criticism, general criticism may be very well employed in that sort of interpretation which adjusts the position of these men to general culture" (BOT §10).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §10 says that "Pater's question registers a nineteenth-century hierarchy of reputation".

**A place to read.** BOT §10, with FRE §23.

## Meaning

"General" is from *genus*, kind: what concerns the whole kind and not a part of it, as in "the general reader" and "general culture" (see General culture). Pater's phrase defines itself by two neighbours. Technical criticism is the craftsman's and the connoisseur's, concerned with handling and attribution; antiquarian criticism is the historian's, concerned with dates and documents (see Antiquarian criticism). In Pater's decade both were growing fast. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *A New History of Painting in Italy* (1864–66) had set the history of Italian painting on documents and

[31] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (London, 1891), chapter XI.

attributions,[32] and the method of attributing by the painter's habits in small details, which Giovanni Morelli was soon to publish, belongs to the technical side. General criticism claims a third ground.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes twice in the last paragraph of the Botticelli essay, first in its question, whether "a secondary painter" is "a proper subject for general criticism" (BOT §10; see Secondary painter), then in its answer. The work of great painters "like Michelangelo or Leonardo" has become "a force in general culture" (BOT §10; see General culture), and general criticism may adjust their position to it, as the sentence quoted above says, "whereas smaller men can be the proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment" (BOT §10).

The words "adjusts the position" are a surveyor's phrase, or a judge's: general criticism, on this account, assigns rank. Pater accepts the account and then adds a class it does not foresee. Some artists have "a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere" (BOT §10; see Peculiar quality of pleasure), "and these too have their place in general culture, and must be interpreted to it by those who have felt their charm strongly, and are often the object of a special diligence and a consideration wholly affectionate, just because there is not about them the stress of a great name and authority" (BOT §10). The second task is not ranking but interpretation, and the qualification for it is not learning but feeling: "those who have felt their charm strongly". Affection, which the antiquarian and the connoisseur set aside, becomes a credential.

The first essay had drawn the same line from the other side. An old text may have "an antiquarian interest", and antiquarianism "may often add greatly to the charm", but only where there is "a real, direct, æsthetic charm in the thing itself" (FRE §23; see Æsthetic charm). There the aesthetic critic needs the antiquarian; here the antiquarian is not enough. The two passages can be read as one doctrine: knowledge serves criticism, and criticism begins where something is felt. Pater's "general criticism" is the Preface's aesthetic criticism (see Æsthetic criticism) addressed to a public, and the Botticelli essay is its demonstration, a study of a secondary painter written by one who has felt his charm strongly.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which antiquarian or technical criticism is set against general or æsthetic criticism, in the order of the book; the phrase "general criticism" occurs only in BOT §10.

**FRE §23** No merely antiquarian effort can give a work æsthetic value unless it has a real, direct, æsthetic charm in itself.

[32] J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols (London, 1864–66).

**BOT §10** Over and above technical or antiquarian criticism, general criticism may well adjust the position of the great painters to general culture; artists of a peculiar quality of pleasure must be interpreted to it by those who have felt their charm.

**LEO §3** Mere antiquarianism has little more to do with Leonardo's legend, but a lover of strange souls may still analyse the impression his works make.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §10 says: "Pater's question registers a nineteenth-century hierarchy of reputation. The essay's answer shifts the criterion toward an artistic faculty that produces a particular experience even when its practitioner stands outside the conventional first rank."

## See also

Æsthetic charm; Æsthetic criticism; Antiquarian criticism; General culture; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Secondary painter.

### Genius

*genius*

Attested in the Preface: *genius* (PRE §§4, 5). Elsewhere the word comes in twenty-five further paragraphs, from FRE §1 to WIN §51, eight of them in the essay on Leonardo. Pater uses it in two senses. In the older one, a genius is the spirit of a time or place: the critic asks, "In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the period find itself?" (PRE §4). In the modern one, genius is exceptional creative power, as in the saying of William Blake which the Preface quotes at once, "genius is always above its age" (PRE §4; see The ages are all equal), and in "the heat of his genius" which crystallises part of Wordsworth's verse (PRE §5; see Crystallise). The essays use the second sense for the person whose effect is to be defined: "the chief elements of Leonardo's genius" (LEO §3), "Curiosity and the desire of beauty—these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius" (LEO §16; see Desire of beauty).

## See also

Crystallise; Desire of beauty; Sentiment; Temperament; The ages are all equal.

### Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst

*Goethe's phrase for Winckelmann's discovery of Greek art, not by theory but by sight · The Renaissance*

*Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst*; *his finding of Greek art*; *finding Greek art*

## At a Glance

**The word.** German, "the becoming aware of Greek art": a perception that dawns, as when one notices something that was there all along.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann solves the question of Greek art "in the concrete", by sight and touch rather than theory (WIN §9).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §9 renders the phrase "Becoming aware of Greek art" and says that "Pater's own 'finding' makes the encounter active and concrete."

**A place to read.** WIN §9.

## Meaning

*Gewahr werden* is to become aware of, to perceive, from *gewahr*, aware, a word related to English "ware" and "beware". *Gewahrwerden* is the noun made from the phrase, the act of becoming aware. It names a perception rather than a search: one becomes aware of what one did not look for, or of what had been before one's eyes. The phrase is Pater's form of the heading of one of Goethe's sketches for a portrait of Winckelmann (1805), *Gewahrwerden griechischer Kunst*. Pater translates it as "finding", and the note at WIN §9 marks the difference: Goethe's word is a dawning, Pater's a discovery.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the ninth paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, the paragraph in which Winckelmann first sees Greek sculpture. Until then he had known Greece only in words; at Dresden "a new channel of communion with the Greek life was opened for him", and suddenly he is "in contact with that life, still fervent in the relics of plastic art" (WIN §9; see Plastic art). Pater makes the moment a repetition of the Renaissance, when "the buried fire of ancient art rose up from under the soil" (WIN §9; see Buried fire), and gives the imagination's exclamation in its own voice: "How facile and direct, it seems to say, is this life of the senses and the understanding, when once we have apprehended it!" (WIN §9). Then the image from Shakespeare: "Hermione melts from her stony posture, and the lost proportions of life right themselves" (WIN §9). The statue in *The Winter's Tale* comes to life, and the note at WIN §9 reads it as "the sudden return of a life thought irrecoverable".

Then the method. Lessing in the *Laocoon* "has theorised finely on the relation of poetry to sculpture", and philosophy may give reasons why sculpture should be the truest expression of the Greek ideal; but Winckelmann, with "a happy, unperplexed dexterity", solves the question "in the concrete" (WIN §9; see Concrete terms). "It is what Goethe calls his

Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst, his finding of Greek art" (WIN §9). The phrase is set against theory. Winckelmann's discovery is a perception, made with the eyes and the hands, Winckelmann's "native tendency" to escape from theory "to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch" (WIN §9; see Realisation). The essay can be read as making this the model of Pater's own criticism, as the Preface defines it: the critic begins with his own impression of the object, not with an abstract definition of beauty (PRE §§1–2; see Impression).

The English "finding" returns later in the essay, for Goethe. "In early manhood, just as he too was finding Greek art, the rumour of that true artist's life of Winckelmann in Italy had strongly moved him" (WIN §13). The repetition makes the finding a succession: Winckelmann finds Greek art at Dresden, Goethe finds it in his turn, and Winckelmann's example is part of what he finds. The essay's last pages say that the Hellenic element "in its true essence, was made known to him by Winckelmann" (WIN §48; see Hellenism).

The pairing of theorist and finder has a second echo in the book. In the Winckelmann essay the theorist Lessing is set against the finder Winckelmann, and in the Giorgione essay Lessing's *Laocoon* is "an important contribution" to a philosophy of the arts that Pater carries further, into each art's passing into the condition of another (GIO §§2–3; see Anders-streben). The pairing can be read as Pater's own choice of sides: he admires the theorist and follows the finder.

## Places to read

The two paragraphs in which Pater uses the phrase or its English, the "finding" of Greek art, in the order of the book.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann solves the question in the concrete; it is his Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst, his finding of Greek art.

**WIN §13** In early manhood, just as he too was finding Greek art, Goethe was moved by the rumour of Winckelmann's life in Italy.

## Pater's sources

Goethe's section under that heading tells of a slower passage, in which Winckelmann at Dresden still needed artists as go-betweens and soon found his first writings inadequate; Pater can be read as gathering it into a single moment.[33]

## See also

Anders-streben; Buried fire; Concrete terms; Hellenism; Impression; Plastic art; Realisation; Relic.

[33] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Skizzen zu einer Schilderung Winckelmanns", in *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1805), "Gewahrwerden griechischer Kunst".

*What we do and see without attending: for the Conclusion the form failure takes, since it makes different things look alike · The Renaissance*

*habit*, *habits*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A settled way of acting or perceiving, done without thought because it has been done before.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §5 says that the qualified wording is a change from 1873, "where the sentence starts abruptly with 'Failure is to form habits'".

**A place to read.** CON §5.

## Meaning

*Habit* is the Latin *habitus*, from *habere*, to have or hold: how one holds oneself, a condition, a bearing, and so also a dress, which is why a monk's robe is a habit. Aristotle's *hexis*, translated *habitus*, was the settled state in which virtue consists: we become just by doing just acts, until justice is a habit.[34] The tradition from Aristotle to the moralists of Pater's day held habit the ground of character, and the work of education the forming of good ones. Pater's sentence can be read as turning against that tradition.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the sentence after the gem-like flame. "In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits: for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike" (CON §5). The argument has three steps. Habit is "relative to", made for, a world that stays the same; the world does not stay the same, as the whole Conclusion has argued, and the sentence can be read as saying that habit is made for a world that does not exist (see Stereotyped world). And the likeness on which habit rests is in the eye, not the things: only a coarse eye sees two persons or situations as alike (see Roughness of the eye). Habit is thus a failure of perception before it is a failure of conduct. It stops us seeing.

The sentence follows the one that makes it success in life to burn always "with this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame), and the two are a pair: success is to burn, failure to form habits. A flame that burns always never burns the same, since it lives by consuming what changes. Two sentences later comes the positive rule: not to discriminate is

[34] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II.1, 1103a14–b25.

"to sleep before evening" (CON §5; see Discriminate). Habit is sleep; discrimination is waking.

The 1873 text had the bare maxim (C73 §6; see Failure is to form habits), and the qualifiers of the revision can be read as Pater's answer to the readers who took the maxim as advice to live without rule. They do not withdraw the claim. They mark it as a paradox, true of perception in a world of flux and not a programme for conduct (see Paradox). The Winckelmann essay just before had praised a culture "minute, severe, constantly renewed" (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit), and the renewing is the point: the discipline Pater admires is one that never becomes habitual.

Elsewhere in the book the word keeps its older senses. Pico lies down to rest "in the Dominican habit", the dress of the order (PIC §13; see Dominican habit), and Leonardo's pupils included men "of birth and princely habits of life" (LEO §24). Neither use is moral. The Conclusion's is the only place where habit is a theme, and its force comes from the weight of the tradition it contradicts.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which habit is the subject, with its 1873 text and the paragraphs in which the word means a dress or a way of life, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Pico lies down to rest in the Dominican habit, amid thoughts of the older gods.

**LEO §24** Leonardo's usual choice of pupils included men of birth and princely habits of life.

**CON §5** In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits.

**C73 §6** In 1873: failure is to form habits.

## Later readings

The psychology of Pater's last years can be read beside the sentence. Independently of Pater, the American philosopher William James made habit "the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent", the thing that keeps each man in his station.[35] Pater's sentence and James's chapter can be read as the two faces of the same observation: habit makes the world look stable, and James valued it for that reason, Pater distrusted it.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Discriminate; Dominican habit; Failure is to form habits; Hard, gem-like flame; Paradox; Relative; Roughness of the eye; Stereotyped world.

[35] William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (New York, 1890), vol. I, chapter IV, "Habit".

## High indifference

*high indifference*

Attested: *high indifference* (LEO §2; WIN §45). “Indifference” is the state of not leaning either way, from the Latin *indifferens*, making no difference; “high” makes it lofty, the indifference of one who stands above. Pater uses the phrase twice, of a man and of a sculpture. Leonardo’s suspected unbelief, he says, was only “the time-honoured mode in which the world stamps its appreciation of one who has thoughts for himself alone, his high indifference, his intolerance of the common forms of things” (LEO §2; see Bold speculator; Common forms). The same paragraph shows the indifference in conduct: he “passes unmoved through the most tragic events, overwhelming his country and friends, like one who comes across them by chance on some secret errand” (LEO §2), and late in the essay it becomes politics: “No one had ever carried political indifferentism further” (LEO §34; see Political indifferentism). In the Winckelmann essay the phrase belongs to the Greek gods. The “supreme and colourless abstraction” of their forms is “a premonition of the fleshless, consumptive refinements of the pale, medieval artists”, and that “high indifference to the outward”, the gods’ impassivity, has “a touch of the corpse in it” (WIN §45; see Impassivity). The two uses may be taken as the same quality seen from inside and out. In Leonardo the high indifference is the freedom of a mind given wholly to its own work; in the Greek forms it is a repose so complete that it already looks like death.

### See also

Bold speculator; Common forms; Impassivity; Political indifferentism.

## Higher life

*The life of the spirit and the intellect at its fullest, which the Winckelmann essay finds reached by three roads: selection, beauty and wholeness · The Renaissance*

*the higher life*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The life of the mind and spirit at its best, as against routine, mediocrity or mere existence.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann reaches it by selection, the Greek youth by beauty, Goethe by living “in the whole” (WIN §§12, 31, 51).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §51 renders Goethe’s line on his own higher life “To live resolutely in the whole, the good, and the true”.

**A place to read.** WIN §12, from "But then the artistic interest" to the end.

## Meaning

The comparative ranks lives. One life is higher than another as the spirit is above the appetites, or the intellect above habit, and the phrase assumes a scale on which a man may rise or sink. Pater keeps the scale but changes what stands at the bottom of it. The enemy of the higher life, in the essay, is neither the flesh nor the world but dullness: "a mediocrity, which, breaking through no bounds, moves ever in a bloodless routine, and misses its one chance in the life of the spirit and the intellect" (WIN §12). The phrase comes three times, each time at a turn of the essay's argument, and each time it names a different road to the same height.

## Use in the book

The first road is Winckelmann's. The twelfth paragraph has weighed his conversion to Rome and found it insincere, and then turns the judgement round. "But then the artistic interest was that, by desperate faithfulness to which Winckelmann was saved from a mediocrity, which, breaking through no bounds, moves ever in a bloodless routine, and misses its one chance in the life of the spirit and the intellect" (WIN §12). The ideal, Pater grants, is a culture "as intense" and "as complete" as possible (WIN §12; see Many-sided intellectual culture). "But often the higher life is only possible at all, on condition of the selection of that in which one's motive is native and strong; and this selection involves the renunciation of a crown reserved for others" (WIN §12). The higher life here is narrow by choice: it is bought by giving up every gift but one. Pater sets the choice as a question, whether it is better to open "a new organ for the human spirit" or to cultivate many perfections short of their power (WIN §12; see New organ), and answers it by refusing to choose. "Savonarola is one type of success; Winckelmann is another; criticism can reject neither, because each is true to itself" (WIN §12). The friar and the antiquary, who stand for opposite things in the book, are joined by the one quality they share, faithfulness to a single motive (see Intellectual integrity; Narrow perfection).

The second road is the Greek youth's. In the thirty-first paragraph the Greek worshipper makes himself "fleet and fair" for his gods, and Pater quotes the boast of Critobulus in the *Symposium* of the Athenian writer Xenophon, that he would rather have a fair body than a king's crown: "that is the form in which one age of the world chose the higher life" (WIN §31; see Fleet and fair). The higher life of the Greeks is the perfection of the body, chosen over power, and the essay allows it its full dignity before it lets it pass: the youth of humanity passed, "at the due moment, into a mournful maturity" (WIN §31).

The third road is Goethe's. "Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren, resolut zu leben:—is Goethe's description of his own higher life" (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen). The modern higher life can no longer be the Greek's bodily perfection, for "the shadows had grown too long, the light too solemn, for that" (WIN §51; see Bodily form), nor, as in Pericles or Pheidias, "the direct exercise of any single talent", which "amid the manifold claims of our modern intellectual life" could only have ended "in a thin, one-sided growth" (WIN §51; see Centrality). It is a life in the whole, which tries each form of culture and passes on.

The three uses can be read as the essay's argument in small. The higher life is first a sacrifice, then a beauty, then a balance, and the last is offered as the modern answer. Yet the first is never withdrawn. Pater's ideal is Goethe's wholeness, but the man he chose to write about is the one who gave up everything for a single passion, and the twelfth paragraph's refusal to reject him stands to the end.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §12** The higher life is often possible only by the selection of one's native motive; Savonarola and Winckelmann are two types of success.

**WIN §31** The Greek youth's preference of a fair body to a king's crown is the form in which one age chose the higher life.

**WIN §51** Goethe describes his own higher life as living resolutely in the whole, the good and the true.

## See also

Bodily form; Centrality; Fleet and fair; Im Ganzen; Intellectual integrity; Many-sided intellectual culture; Narrow perfection; New organ.

# Historic sense

*The faculty Pico's age lacked, and Pater's possesses · The Renaissance historic sense*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The historic sense is the power to understand the past in its own terms, judging each belief or work of art by the age and people that produced it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The scholars of the fifteenth century "lacked the very rudiments of the historic sense, which, by an imaginative act, throws itself back into a world unlike one's own, and estimates every intellectual creation in its connexion with the age from which it proceeded" (PIC §4).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §4 calls the sentence "a Victorian judgment about the past", marking "a difference between Pico's search for truths he believed traditions shared and Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

**A place to read.** PIC §§3–4.

## Meaning

"Historic" is from the Greek *historia*, inquiry, and so a narrative of what has been learned; a "sense" is a faculty of perception. The phrase treats the understanding of history as a kind of perception, quick and immediate, like a sense for colour or music. It belongs to the nineteenth century, which made the historical method the key to religion, law, language and art, and which prided itself, against earlier ages, on having it.

## Use in the book

Pater defines the phrase by contrast. A "modern scholar" occupied with the reconciliation of the religions "might observe that all religions may be regarded as natural products", that "they arise spontaneously out of the human mind, as expressions of the varying phases of its sentiment concerning the unseen world; that every intellectual product must be judged from the point of view of the age and the people in which it was produced" (PIC §3). He might range them "as so many stages in the gradual education of the human mind" (PIC §3; see Development). "Far different was the method followed by the scholars of the fifteenth century", who "lacked the very rudiments of the historic sense" (PIC §4; see Imaginative act).

The definition joins two things not always joined: imagination and judgement. The historic sense first "throws itself back", an act of sympathy, and then "estimates", an act of criticism. Without it, Pater says, Pico's age had no choice but to make the religions agree by force: they "were thus thrown back upon the quicksand of allegorical interpretation", and "Plato and Homer must be made to speak agreeably to Moses" (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation). The lack of the historic sense is the cause of the allegorist's method.

The book can be read as written with the faculty Pico lacked, and as aware of its cost. The Preface's critic asks what a work is "to me" (PRE §2), and the essays set each artist in his age, as the historic sense requires. Yet Pater does not despise the age without it. The allegorical method "has its interest" as "an element in the local colour of a great age" (PIC §5; see Local colour), and the Renaissance's share was "the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea" which later ages, with better method, carried out (PIC §3; see Initiatory idea). The historic sense of the nineteenth century is the fulfilment of what the fifteenth designed; it can also be read as the relative

spirit that, in his first essay on Coleridge, Pater made the mark of modern thought (see Relative).[36]

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph that describes the modern scholar's method.

**PIC §3** A modern scholar would judge every religion from the point of view of its age and people, as a stage in the education of the human mind.

**PIC §4** The scholars of the fifteenth century lacked the historic sense, which by an imaginative act throws itself back into a world unlike one's own; they fell back on allegorical interpretation.

## Later readings

The phrase had a long life in criticism after Pater. The poet and critic T. S. Eliot, in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), made the historical sense the condition of a poet's tradition: it "involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence".[37] Eliot asks the sense to make the past present; Pater asks it to keep the past different.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §4 reads the sentence as "a Victorian judgment about the past", and says that it "marks a difference between Pico's search for truths he believed traditions shared and Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Development; Imaginative act; Initiatory idea; Local colour; Relative.

# Human experience

*human experience*

Attested: *human experience* (PRE §1; FRE §7). The sphere in which qualities are known by being met, as against what is known by reason alone. "Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative" (PRE §1; see Relative): beauty is "presented" to experience, and known in it. Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher and teacher of the Paris schools, is the type of a philosophy tested the same way, "one bent on trying all things by their congruity with human experience, who had felt the hand of Heloïse", his pupil and lover, "and looked into her eyes" (FRE §7). The

[36] Walter Pater, "Coleridge's Writings", *Westminster Review* (January 1866); revised as "Coleridge" in *Appreciations* (London, 1889).

[37] T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent", *The Egoist* (1919), part I.

Conclusion takes the theme to its end, where experience itself, not its fruit, is "the end" (CON §4; see Fruit of experience).

## See also

Fruit of experience; Impression; Relative.

# Idealise

*To lift a feeling or a scene above its actual condition, and so to calm it · The Renaissance*

*idealise*; *idealising*, *idealised*; *idealist*, *idealism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To represent as ideal: to raise a thing above its actual state toward a perfect form.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In this effort to tranquillise and sweeten life by idealising its vehement sentiments, there were two great traditional types, either of which an Italian of the sixteenth century might have followed" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §14, with MIC §13 and GIO §12.

## Meaning

The Greek *idea* was Plato's word for the form that a thing imitates, and "ideal" in English first meant belonging to the archetypes or forms, and from the seventeenth century also perfect, and existing only in the mind. To idealise is to give a thing the character of its ideal: to remove its accidents and show it as it might be. The word can praise or blame, as the idealised portrait is either nobler or less true than its sitter. Pater uses it of feelings as well as of images.

## Use in the book

The verb's chief passage is the first sentence of the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "In this effort to tranquillise and sweeten life by idealising its vehement sentiments, there were two great traditional types, either of which an Italian of the sixteenth century might have followed" (MIC §14; see Traditional friendship). The paragraph before has described the effort: Michelangelo's lifelong attempt "to tranquillise his vehement emotions by withdrawing them into the region of ideal sentiment" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment). The two types are Dante's love in the *Vita Nuova* and the Platonic tradition (MIC §14; see Imaginative love).

In this use, to idealise is a means of calm. The feeling is "vehement"; idealising it does not deny it but lifts it into a region where it can be borne, as a strong man might "adorn and attune" his nature (MIC §9; see Attune).

The verbs that surround it are all of soothing: tranquillise, sweeten, withdraw. Idealisation is the discipline by which Michelangelo's strength finds its sweetness (see Ex forti dulcedo).

The Giorgione essay gives the word to painting. Giorgione's genre pictures are "morsels of actual life, conversation or music or play, but refined upon or idealised, till they come to seem like glimpses of life from afar" (GIO §12). Here idealising works by distance: the scene is not made nobler but further off, as if seen through a glass. The two uses agree in their effect, which is a calming; they differ in their object, a passion in the one, a scene of ordinary life in the other.

The noun and the agent noun show the word's limits. Plato is "the great idealist" whose name the Florentines had on their lips (PIC §6); Michelangelo is "The idealist who became a reformer with Savonarola" (MIC §8), and the essay at once adds the vehemence his idealism had to master. The Winckelmann essay shows where idealism ends when it is carried too far: even Greek thought, at its "happy limit", "has indeed committed itself to a train of reflexion which must end in defiance of form, of all that is outward, in an exaggerated idealism", though "that end is still distant" (WIN §28; see Inwardness).

The word can be read as marking the line Pater draws through all his subjects. To idealise within the senses, as Giorgione does and as Michelangelo's sonnets try to do, is to make life bearable and lovely; to idealise against the senses, toward the "exaggerated idealism" in which the Winckelmann essay sees reflexion ending, is to lose the world. The Platonic tradition, with its "passionate haste to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether" (MIC §14; see Bodily form), stands close to that line; in old age Michelangelo falls back on "that divine ideal" above the creeds (MIC §16; see Divine ideal), and the essay leaves him near it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "idealise", "idealist" or "idealism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §6** The Florentines had the name of the great idealist, Plato, often on their lips.

**MIC §8** Michelangelo, the idealist who became a reformer with Savonarola, had a secret spring of indignation or sorrow.

**MIC §14** The effort to tranquillise life by idealising its vehement sentiments had two great traditional types.

**GIO §12** Giorgione's genre pictures are morsels of actual life refined upon or idealised.

**WIN §28** Greek thought has committed itself to a train of reflexion that must end in an exaggerated idealism, though that end is still distant.

## See also

Attune; Bodily form; Divine ideal; Ex forti dulcedo; Ideal sentiment; Imaginative love; Inwardness; Traditional friendship.

# Im Ganzen

*Goethe's "in the whole", which Pater reads as a life that tries every form of culture and lets each fall back into its place · The Renaissance*

*im Ganzen*; *life in the whole*

## At a Glance

**The word.** German, "in the whole": the first term of Goethe's line on living resolutely in the whole, the good and the true.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater glosses the phrase as "life in the whole", the life of one who outgrows what he once prized (WIN §51).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §51 renders the line "To live resolutely in the whole, the good, and the true" and says that *Ganzen* means "the whole".

**A place to read.** WIN §51.

## Meaning

*Das Ganze* is the whole, and *im Ganzen* is "in the whole", or, in ordinary German, "on the whole", "altogether". The line comes from Goethe's poem "Generalbeichte" (1802), a mock confession sung in company, where the singers vow to break themselves of half-measures, *vom Halben zu entwöhnen*, and to live resolutely in the whole, the good and the beautiful.[38] Pater writes *Wahren*, "the true", where Goethe wrote *Schönen*, "the beautiful", and the note's English follows Pater. Whether a slip of memory or not, the change turns Goethe's triad from the beautiful to the true, and so toward the intellect; it can be read as fitting the essay's account of Goethe's Hellenism as "a watchful, exigent intellectualism" (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism).

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the turn of the fifty-first paragraph, after Pater has said that the modern problem of culture can no longer be solved by the body or by a single talent. "Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren, resolut zu leben:—is Goethe's description of his own higher life; and what is meant by life in the whole—im Ganzen? It means the life of one for whom, over and over again, what was once precious has become indifferent" (WIN §51). The answer is unexpected. Wholeness is defined not by gathering but by

[38] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Generalbeichte" (1802), in *Gedichte* (Ausgabe letzter Hand, 1827), "Gesellige Lieder": *Uns vom Halben zu entwöhnen / Und im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen / Resolut zu leben*.

outgrowing: the whole life is the one that has passed through many things and been held by none.

The rest of the paragraph explains. "Every one who aims at the life of culture is met by many forms of it, arising out of the intense, laborious, one-sided development of some special talent" (WIN §51). These are the world's "brightest enthusiasms", and "it is not their part to weigh the claims which this or that alien form of genius makes upon them" ; the self-cultivating mind seeks in them its own strength (WIN §51; see Enthusiasm). "The demand of the intellect is to feel itself alive. It must see into the laws, the operation, the intellectual reward of every divided form of culture; but only that it may measure the relation between itself and them" (WIN §51). It wins each form's secret and lets it fall back into its place (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism), and it passes its former selves with "a kind of passionate coldness" (WIN §51; see Passionate coldness).

Pater gives three examples of what such a life refuses. "It would have been easy for Goethe, with the gift of a sensuous nature, to let it overgrow him" (WIN §51), and the gentle pietism of the "beautiful soul" in *Wilhelm Meister* was to him a phase to be felt all round and left behind (WIN §51; see Pietism). The third is philosophy's own temptation. "Again, it is easy to indulge the commonplace metaphysical instinct. But a taste for metaphysics may be one of those things which we must renounce, if we mean to mould our lives to artistic perfection" (WIN §51). Philosophy serves culture not by "absolute or transcendental knowledge" but by questions that sharpen the sense of life (WIN §51; see Transcendental knowledge). Life in the whole renounces the sensuous, the devout and the metaphysical as ruling passions, and keeps each as an experience.

The phrase can be read as the bridge from the Winckelmann essay to the Conclusion that follows it. The Conclusion's suggestion that, in a sense, "our failure is to form habits", and its refusal of "a facile orthodoxy" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame) are the same discipline: what was once precious must become indifferent, so that the mind stays free for the next impression. The cost is plain in Pater's own word for it. A life in the whole, on his account, is not warm; its coldness is the price of its breadth.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**WIN §51** Goethe's life in the whole: the intellect passes through every divided form of culture, and renounces the sensuous, the devout and the metaphysical as ruling passions.

## See also

Enthusiasm; Exigent intellectualism; Hard, gem-like flame; Higher life; Passionate coldness; Pietism; Transcendental knowledge.

## Imaginative act

*imaginative act*; *imaginative*

Attested: *imaginative act* (PIC §4); *imaginative* in nineteen further paragraphs. An act of the imagination, by which the mind enters what it does not see. It is the means of the historic sense, which "by an imaginative act, throws itself back into a world unlike one's own" (PIC §4; see Historic sense). The historian's understanding begins in the imagination and ends in judgement. The same essay gives imagination to the artists: "For that age the only possible reconciliation was an imaginative one" (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation). The book can be read as joining the two. The historian of a later age and the painter of the fifteenth century reconcile the past by the same faculty, the one by entering it, the other by assimilating it; only Pico's method, which argued, failed. Art addresses "the 'imaginative reason' through the senses", the Giorgione essay says (GIO §1).

### See also

Artistic reconciliation; Historic sense.

## Imaginative order

*The realm of works made by imagination, and the one quality that makes them worth having · The Renaissance*

*imaginative order*

### At a Glance

**The word.** An order is a rank or class of things; the imaginative order is the class of works that belong to imagination, as distinct from those of use or of fact.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The personal quality of *intimité* is, "essentially, perhaps", "the quality which alone makes work in the imaginative order really worth having at all" (ROB §13).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §13 says that *intimité* "is the culmination of the essay's discussion of expression".

**A place to read.** ROB §13.

### Meaning

"Order" here has the sense it has in "the natural order" or "the moral order": a domain or rank of being, a kind of things governed by its own laws. The Winckelmann essay speaks of "the intricacy, the universality of natural law, even in the moral order" (WIN §53). The imaginative order is the realm of what imagination makes, poems, pictures, sculpture, and the phrase sets it beside the other orders as a world with its own standard of worth.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, at the climax of the della Robbia essay. Pater has defined *intimité*, "the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension" (ROB §13; see Intimité). He goes on: "That characteristic is rare in poetry, rarer still in art, rarest of all in the abstract art of sculpture; yet essentially, perhaps, it is the quality which alone makes work in the imaginative order really worth having at all. It is because the works of the artists of the fifteenth century possess this quality in an unmistakable way that one is anxious to know all that can be known about them, and explain to one's self the secret of their charm" (ROB §13).

The first sentence is built as a scale, rare, rarer, rarest, and it can be read as ranking the arts by their resistance to the personal. Poetry, made of words that a man chooses, takes the print of a temperament most easily; the other arts less; sculpture, the "abstract art" (see Abstract), least, because its material and its law push toward the general (see Allgemeinheit; Special limitation). The claim that follows is large: the quality that is hardest to find in sculpture is the only one that makes any imaginative work worth having. "Alone" and "at all" leave no room for craft, subject, beauty of form or moral weight as sufficient on their own. "Essentially, perhaps" softens the claim without withdrawing it.

The second sentence turns the claim into a reason for criticism. The fifteenth-century artists have the quality "in an unmistakable way", and so "one is anxious to know all that can be known about them". The curiosity about lives follows from the presence of the person in the work. The essay began with the same wish, to know the lives of the men who expressed "so much power and sweetness" (ROB §1; see Power and sweetness), and with its frustration: their histories "are for the most part lost" (ROB §1; see Austere dignity). The last paragraph answers the frustration in part. The characteristic "even in the absence of much positive information about their actual history, seems to bring those workmen themselves very near to us" (ROB §13; see Expressiveness).

On one reading, the phrase defines the field of the whole book. The Preface asks what each song or picture, or "engaging personality", is "to me" (PRE §2; see Engaging personality); the della Robbia essay answers that what makes a work matter in the imaginative order is the person in it. The Renaissance, on this reading, is a book about works of the imaginative order in which the person shows through, and its essays are portraits as much as studies.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**ROB §13** Intimité is rarest of all in sculpture, yet essentially, perhaps, it alone makes work in the imaginative order really worth having at all.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §13 glosses *intimité* as "Intimacy or inwardness", and says that "In Pater's use the word suggests a work's capacity to convey something inward and individual about its maker. It is the culmination of the essay's discussion of expression."

## See also

Abstract; Allgemeinheit; Austere dignity; Engaging personality; Expressiveness; Intimité; Power and sweetness; Special limitation.

# Imaginative reason

*The faculty to which art addresses itself through the senses, for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible symbol · The Renaissance imaginative reason*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Reason that works by images: thought and sense acting as one.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The ideal examples of poetry and painting are those in which "form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect to the 'imaginative reason,' that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol" (GIO §9).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that "Pater names a faculty in which sensory experience and thought act together", and that "He defines it more fully later in the essay, when the viewer perceives form and matter as a single effect".

**A place to read.** GIO §§1, 9–10.

## Meaning

The phrase joins two faculties that philosophy had commonly set apart, the reason, which judges and infers, and the imagination, which makes images. Pater puts it in quotation marks, as a borrowed phrase, and gives it a narrower work: it is the faculty that art addresses.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes three times in the Giorgione essay, each time in quotation marks. In the first paragraph it grounds the differences between the arts: "For, as art addresses not pure sense, still less the pure intellect, but

the ‘imaginative reason’ through the senses, there are differences of kind in æsthetic beauty, corresponding to the differences in kind of the gifts of sense themselves” (GIO §1; see Aesthetics). The argument is short and strict. If art spoke to the intellect alone, all the arts would say the same thing in different languages; because it speaks to a faculty reached “through the senses”, the eye’s art and the ear’s art differ in kind.

In the ninth paragraph Pater defines the faculty. “Art, then, is thus always striving to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception, to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject or material; the ideal examples of poetry and painting being those in which the constituent elements of the composition are so welded together, that the material or subject no longer strikes the intellect only; nor the form, the eye or the ear only; but form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect to the ‘imaginative reason,’ that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol” (GIO §9; see Analogue; Matter and form). “Twin-born” is the essential word. For this faculty a thought does not come first and find its image afterwards; the thought and the image are born together, and neither is prior. The faculty is the reader’s counterpart of the work’s perfection. A work in which matter and form are one is received by a mind in which thought and image are one.

The tenth paragraph completes the circle: each art has “its unique mode of reaching the ‘imaginative reason’” (GIO §10; see Incommunicable faculty). The phrase holds together the essay’s two claims, that the arts differ and that they all aspire to music. They differ because they reach the faculty by different senses; they converge because the faculty asks the same thing of all of them, a single effect in which nothing is left over for the intellect alone.

The phrase can be read beside the Preface’s question, “What is this song or picture ... to me?” (PRE §2; see Æsthetic criticism). The Preface’s critic receives impressions; the Giorgione essay names the faculty that receives them, and it is neither sense nor intellect. Pater’s word “complex” is the right one: the imaginative reason is not a third faculty beside the others but the two working together, as in the work they meet in.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “imaginative reason” occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Art addresses not pure sense nor pure intellect but the imaginative reason through the senses.

**GIO §9** Form and matter in union present one single effect to the imaginative reason, for which thought and feeling are twin-born with their sensible symbol.

**GIO §10** Each art has its unique mode of reaching the imaginative reason.

## Pater's sources

The quotation marks point to Matthew Arnold. In "Pagan and Mediaeval Religious Sentiment" (1864), collected in *Essays in Criticism*, Arnold had said that the poetry of later paganism lived by the senses and understanding, and the poetry of medieval Christianity by the heart and imagination, but that "the main element of the modern spirit's life is neither the senses and understanding, nor the heart and imagination; it is the imaginative reason".[39] For Arnold it is the faculty of a modern culture; for Pater it is the faculty that art addresses.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Aesthetics; Analogue; Incommunicable faculty; Matter and form; Modern spirit.

# Impression

*The critic's first fact and the last unit of experience · The Renaissance*
*impression*, *impressions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An impression is the mark a thing leaves by pressing on another, and so the effect an object makes on a mind. Philosophy had given the word a stricter sense: the perception in its first and liveliest form, as against the fainter idea that thought keeps of it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface makes the impression the first thing the critic must know: "the first step towards seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is" (PRE §2). The essays ask what impression a painter leaves and where it comes from (LEO §3, GIO §25). In the Conclusion the word takes in experience itself: under reflexion "each object is loosed into a group of impressions" (CON §3), and the task becomes "courting new impressions" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** Impression is the first of the edition's Key Words and has a Glossary entry; the note at C73 §3 sets the 1873 "swarm of impressions" beside the 1893 "group of impressions".

**A place to read.** PRE §§2–3, where the critic's questions are put and the impression of pleasure is traced to its source.

[39] Matthew Arnold, "Pagan and Mediaeval Religious Sentiment" (1864), in *Essays in Criticism* (London, 1865).

## Meaning

The Latin *impressio* is a pressing in, and the printer's impression, a sheet pulled from an inked plate, keeps the physical sense; Pater uses it in this sense in one passage only, of the Florentine Dante of 1481, a few copies of which have the blank spaces filled with "impressions of engraved plates" (BOT §3). Carried over to the mind, an impression is the effect a thing makes on someone, and in common speech an opinion not yet tested: words of Leonardo "trenchant enough to justify this impression, are not recorded" (LEO §2). Philosophy had sharpened the word. David Hume began the first book of his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) by dividing all perceptions into impressions and ideas, the impressions being the sensations, passions and emotions in their first and most forceful arrival, the ideas their fainter copies in thought.[40] Pater's Conclusion uses the word close to that sense, for what remains when objects have been dissolved into "colour, odour, texture" (CON §3).

## Use in the book

The Preface begins with the impression as a fact to be known. To the aim of criticism Matthew Arnold had set, to see the object as it really is, Pater adds a first step, "to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly" (PRE §2; see To see the object as in itself it really is). The questions that follow are questions about the impression: what the song or picture is "to me", what effect it really produces, whether it gives pleasure and of what sort (PRE §2; see Pleasure). Pater prints "me" in italics, and the stress carries the Preface's relativism: the critic's object is a relation. Their answers are "the original facts with which the æsthetic critic has to do", and whoever experiences impressions strongly need not ask "what beauty is in itself" (PRE §2; see Metaphysical question).

The next paragraph says what the critic does with the fact. Each object affects one "with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure"; our education "becomes complete in proportion as our susceptibility to these impressions increases in depth and variety"; and the critic must separate the virtue by which a picture or a person "produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure, to indicate what the source of that impression is, and under what conditions it is experienced" (PRE §3; see Susceptibility; Virtue). The impression is where criticism starts, not where it ends. It is felt in the viewer, but the critic follows it back to a property of the object which another reader can go and find.

The essays keep this order, and lean on it where history gives out. Many works long given to Leonardo are not his, "But a lover of strange souls may

[40] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* 1.1.1: the perceptions of the mind fall into two kinds, impressions and ideas, which differ in force and liveliness; under impressions Hume ranks sensations, passions and emotions as they first appear in the soul, and calls ideas their faint images in thinking.

still analyse for himself the impression made on him by those works, and try to reach through it a definition of the chief elements of Leonardo's genius" (LEO §3). The Giorgionesque grew partly "out of the immediate impression he made upon his contemporaries" (GIO §18), and the truth about Giorgione lies in "those more liberal and durable impressions" which go beyond the ascertained facts, above all in "a just impression" of his indirect influence (GIO §25; see Indirect influence). In the same essay each art has "an order of impressions distinct in kind", and to grasp this "is the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism" (GIO §1; see Æsthetic criticism). Here the word names the kind of effect that belongs to an art, not one viewer's experience of one work.

The word also measures the people of the book, each defined by what impressed them most. In Botticelli's Venus there is "a record of the first impression" made by the Hellenic spirit on minds that had turned back to it (BOT §8; see First impression). Two things touched Leonardo "beyond the depth of other impressions—the smiling of women and the motion of great waters" (LEO §10), and for him "the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself" (LEO §24; see Temperament). Greek breadth comes of a culture "rectifying and concentrating its impressions into certain pregnant types" (WIN §35). In each case the impression received shapes what is made.

The Conclusion carries the word from criticism into experience as a whole. When reflexion plays on the objects that seem to press on us, "each object is loosed into a group of impressions—colour, odour, texture—in the mind of the observer" (CON §3). These impressions are "unstable, flickering, inconsistent", they "burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them", and they shut each mind in, so that every impression is "the impression of the individual in his isolation" (CON §3; see Solitary prisoner). Analysis then divides each impression in time, until what is real in our life "fines itself down" to "a single sharp impression" (CON §3; see Tremulous wisp). Pater does not answer the dissolution with a doctrine. What we have to do, he says, is to be "for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions" (CON §5; see Courting impressions).

The two ends of the book can be read as one word under two lights. In the Preface the impression is a datum, held still long enough to be discriminated and traced to its source; in the Conclusion analysis shows that it never stands still. The discipline asked for is the same in both: to discriminate (see Discriminate).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** The first step in æsthetic criticism is to know one's own impression as it really is; whoever experiences impressions strongly need not ask what beauty is in itself.

**PRE §3** Each object gives a special, unique impression of pleasure; education becomes complete as susceptibility to impressions increases; the critic shows the source of the impression and its conditions.

**BOT §3** In a few copies of the 1481 Dante the spaces left for the illuminator hold impressions of engraved plates; in the Bodleian copy one of the three is printed upside down.

**BOT §5** Botticelli's picture may be one of the compositions in which religious reverie recorded its impressions of the forms of beatified existence.

**BOT §8** Botticelli's Venus is a record of the first impression made by the Hellenic spirit on minds turned back towards it.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo's pressing from outward to unseen beauty gives the impression of something flitting and unfixed.

**MIC §20** No one, Pater supposes, would come to the sacristy of San Lorenzo for consolation; for dignity of impression, perhaps.

**LEO §2** No words of Leonardo are recorded that would justify the impression, given in Vasari's first edition, that he set philosophy above Christianity.

**LEO §3** A lover of strange souls may analyse the impression made on him by the works given to Leonardo and reach through it a definition of his genius.

**LEO §10** The smiling of women and the motion of great waters touched Leonardo beyond the depth of other impressions.

**LEO §13** To think of Leonardo as a mere reasoner is to miss the impression he made on those around him.

**LEO §14** Ludovico Sforza was susceptible of religious impressions and blended earthly passion with religious sentimentalism.

**LEO §24** For Leonardo the novel impression conveyed counted as an end in itself.

**GIO §1** The sensuous material of each art brings an order of impressions distinct in kind, and to grasp this is the beginning of æsthetic criticism.

**GIO §3** Each art has its own specific order of impressions, yet passes into the condition of another.

**GIO §10** Each art has its untranslatable order of impressions, yet all struggle after the law of music.

**GIO §18** The Giorgionesque grew out of the immediate impression Giorgione made on his contemporaries.

**GIO §25** The essential truth about Giorgione lies in the liberal and durable impressions that go beyond the ascertained facts.

**WIN §6** Voltaire's impression on Winckelmann was never effaced.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's literary life gave those about him the impression of excitement, intuition and inspiration.

**WIN §35** Greek breadth comes of a culture that concentrates its impressions into pregnant types.

**WIN §36** Browning's poem gives the impression of one imaginative tone, a single creative act.

**CON §3** Objects are loosed into a group of impressions; each is the impression of the individual in his isolation; analysis fines experience down to a single sharp impression.

**CON §5** What we have to do is to be for ever testing new opinions and courting new impressions.

**C73 §3** In 1873 experience is reduced to "a swarm of impressions".

**C73 §4** Analysis tells us that the impressions of the individual are in perpetual flight and infinitely divisible, and leaves off with their passage and dissolution.

**C73 §6** The 1873 text has the same call to be for ever courting new impressions.

## In this edition

The edition makes Impression the first of its Key Words. In the Preface, it says, the impression is "the particular effect of a work on a particular person", which the critic must distinguish precisely; in the Conclusion the word "has a wider reach", impressions being "what experience resolves into when the apparent permanence of things falls away". The Glossary has "A felt effect to be discriminated and examined. In the Conclusion, an element of ever-changing experience." The note at CON §3 reads "personality" there as "the boundary of an individual point of view", the condition under which "every impression must be received and distinguished"; the note at C73 §3 sets the 1873 "swarm of impressions" beside the 1893 "group of impressions", the earlier word making the sensations "more visibly active and unstable". The 1873 text also has "tells us that those impressions of the individual" (C73 §4) where 1893 has "assures us that those impressions of the individual mind" (CON §3), and gives analysis a paragraph of its own.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Courting impressions; Discriminate; First impression; Indirect influence; Metaphysical question; Pleasure; Solitary

prisoner; Susceptibility; Swarm of impressions; Temperament; To see the object as in itself it really is; Tremulous wisp; Virtue; Wall of personality.

## In itself

*in itself*; *in themselves*

Attested in the Preface: *in itself* (PRE §2, twice), *in themselves* (PRE §4). Elsewhere the phrase comes in eleven further paragraphs, most often in the ordinary sense "by its own nature" (BEL §§3, 28; WIN §§36, 44). The philosopher's phrase for a thing as it is apart from any relation to us. The Preface quotes it in Matthew Arnold's aim, "To see the object as in itself it really is", and drops it in restating the aim (PRE §2; see To see the object as in itself it really is); the critic need not ask "what beauty is in itself" (PRE §2; see Metaphysical question). The fourth paragraph's periods, types and schools of taste "in themselves equal" (PRE §4; see School of taste) use the phrase without the philosopher's weight. "An end in itself" is Pater's phrase for what is valued for its own sake (LEO §24, GIO §5; see End in itself).

### See also

End in itself; Metaphysical question; Relative; School of taste; To see the object as in itself it really is.

## In recessu divinius aliquid

*The diviner meaning held in reserve beneath a text · The Renaissance*
*in recessu divinius aliquid*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Latin, "something more divine in the recess", or, as the note at PIC §4 renders it, "something more divine hidden within": a hidden, higher meaning kept back beneath the surface of a text.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The allegorists must "go below the surface, and bring up the supposed secondary, or still more remote meaning,—that diviner signification held in reserve, in recessu divinius aliquid, latent in some stray touch of Homer, or figure of speech in the books of Moses" (PIC §4).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §4 translates the phrase and says that Pater "characterizes the method he is about to illustrate".

**A place to read.** PIC §4, with PIC §13.

### Meaning

*Recessus* is a withdrawing, and so a recess, an inner or hidden place; *divinius* is the comparative, more divine; *aliquid*, something. The phrase

can be read as picturing a text as a temple with an inner sanctuary, where the surface meaning is the outer court and the diviner sense is kept in the recess. Pater gives his own English first, "that diviner signification held in reserve", and then the Latin as if quoting a formula of the allegorists.

## Use in the book

The phrase is the end-point of a passage that describes the method step by step (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation). The religions were to be reconciled as subsisting side by side; their language had therefore to be misrepresented; and since "the mere surfaces could never unite in any harmony of design", one must "go below the surface, and bring up the supposed secondary, or still more remote meaning" (PIC §4). "Supposed" carries the judgement. The diviner meaning is not found but supposed, and it is made necessary by the failure of the surfaces to agree.

The Latin can be read as Pater's irony. A phrase in the scholars' own language names their method, with the comparative *divinius* doing the work: whatever lies beneath must be more divine than what is on top. The Heptaplus, as Pater describes it, puts the method into practice. Pico explains why Moses "seems in his writings simple and even popular" by the custom of the ancient philosophers of speaking of divine things "dissemblingly", and he seizes on "the secondary meanings of obscure stories in the later Greek mythologists" (PIC §13; see Dissemblingly; Double meaning). The "secondary meanings" of PIC §13 answer the "supposed secondary" meaning of PIC §4.

Pater's own criticism has a recess of its own, and the difference is instructive. The Preface's critic looks for "the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair personality in life or in a book, produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure" (PRE §3; see Virtue), a quality in the work, felt in the impression. The allegorist looks for a meaning behind the work, found by argument. The book can be read as setting the two beside each other: Pico's search for the diviner thing in reserve is a false method, but the desire behind it, that nothing should be merely what it seems, is close to the critic's own.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph in which Pico's Heptaplus applies the method.

**PIC §4** The allegorists must bring up the diviner signification held in reserve, in recessu divinius aliquid, in Homer or Moses.

**PIC §13** Pico lays hold on every figure, double meaning and secondary meaning to show the harmony of Plato and Moses.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §4 gives the English "something more divine hidden within", and says that the interpreters "seek a higher meaning behind the surface sense of Homer or Moses".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Dissemblingly; Double meaning; Virtue.

### Incommunicable faculty

*incommunicable faculty*; *incommunicable*

Attested: *incommunicable faculty* (PRE §5); *incommunicable element* (GIO §10). A power that cannot be shared, taught or passed to another. In Wordsworth's verse "we trace the action of his unique, incommunicable faculty, that strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things, and of man's life as a part of nature" (PRE §5; see Active principle; Life in natural things). The faculty cannot be communicated, but the critic can point to its action and "mark the degree in which it penetrates his verse" (PRE §5). In the School of Giorgione the word passes from the poet to the arts: "each art has its incommunicable element, its untranslatable order of impressions" (GIO §10).

## See also

Active principle; Life in natural things; Virtue.

### Indirect influence

*The influence by which an artist enlarges his permanent efficacy beyond his authentic works, and in which lies the real truth about him · The Renaissance*

*indirect influence*; *indirect*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An influence that works at second hand, through others and through tradition, rather than through the artist's own works.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Properly qualified, such exceptions are but a salt of genuineness in our knowledge; and beyond all those strictly ascertained facts, we must take note of that indirect influence by which one like Giorgione, for instance, enlarges his permanent efficacy and really makes himself felt in our culture" (GIO §25).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §25 renders *vraie vérité* "The real truth" and says that "The truth he has in view is a durable impression of an artist's influence that historical facts can refine".

**A place to read.** GIO §25.

## Meaning

Influence, in its oldest English sense, was the flowing of an ethereal fluid from the stars upon men and things (see Influence). An indirect influence is one that does not flow straight from the source: it passes through other painters, copies, traditions, the memory of a reputation. Pater's phrase makes such influence a part of the artist's reality. Giorgione is not only what he painted but what he caused others to paint and to imagine.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the essay's last paragraph, where Pater draws his general lesson. He has accepted the "new Vasari"'s reduction of Giorgione's works to almost one picture, and he has set beside it the Giorgionesque, "an influence, a spirit or type in art" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque). Now he names the principle: the *vraie vérité* about Giorgione, the French expression for the impressions that "lie beyond, and must supplement, the narrower range of the strictly ascertained facts" (GIO §25; see Ascertained facts). At first sight the "new Vasari" "seems merely to have confused our apprehension of a delightful object". "Properly qualified, such exceptions are but a salt of genuineness in our knowledge; and beyond all those strictly ascertained facts, we must take note of that indirect influence by which one like Giorgione, for instance, enlarges his permanent efficacy and really makes himself felt in our culture" (GIO §25). The essay ends: "In a just impression of that, is the essential truth, the vraie vérité, concerning him" (GIO §25; see Impression).

The paragraph is careful to keep both kinds of knowledge. The critics' exceptions are not set aside but "properly qualified", and they are "a salt of genuineness" (see Salt of genuineness). What Pater adds is a second truth that the first cannot reach: the efficacy of a name. "Enlarges his permanent efficacy" is a strong phrase. The artist's power grows after his death, through everything that was done in his name, and the indirect influence can be read as larger than the direct.

The principle is "a valuable general caution we may abide by in all criticism" (GIO §25), and the book can be read as applying it throughout. In the Leonardo essay the legend, "as corrected and enlarged by its critics, may now and then intervene to support the results of this analysis" (LEO §3; see Legend); the Botticelli essay chooses a secondary painter for the impression he makes (BOT §10; see Secondary painter); and the Winckelmann essay opens with Goethe's tribute to "the teacher who had made his career possible, but whom he had never seen" (WIN §2; see Suggestiveness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "indirect" occurs, with GIO §18, where the Giorgionesque is introduced, in the order of the book.

**GIO §18** Over and above the real Giorgione there remains the Giorgionesque, an influence, a spirit or type in art.

**GIO §25** Beyond the strictly ascertained facts we must take note of the indirect influence by which Giorgione makes himself felt in our culture.

**WIN §37** Painting has its power of indirect expression, of subordinate but significant detail.

## Later readings

Pater's own reputation can be read as proving the principle against him. T. S. Eliot, in "Arnold and Pater" (1930), doubted that the book had influenced "a single first-rate mind of a later generation", and judged that its view of art had spread among lesser writers a confusion between life and art "not wholly irresponsible for some untidy lives".[41] On his account the book worked at second hand, and unhappily.

## See also

Æsthetic philosopher; Ascertained facts; Giorgionesque; Impression; Influence; Legend; Salt of genuineness; Secondary painter; Suggestiveness.

# Influence

*influence*, *influences*

Attested in the Preface: *influence* (PRE §§2, 3, 8), *influences* (PRE §5). Elsewhere the word comes in twenty-six further paragraphs. Its first sense was astrological, a fluid flowing from the stars upon men, and Pater's use can be read as keeping the image of a power acting at a distance. In the Preface influence is the work's action on the critic, who asks how his nature is modified "under its influence" (PRE §2; see Pleasure), and who feels it and "wishes to explain" it by analysis (PRE §3; see Æsthetic criticism). It is also nature's action on man, in Wordsworth's sense "of man's life as a part of nature, drawing strength and colour and character from local influences" (PRE §5; see Local influences), and the reach of an art: the art of fifteenth-century Italy owes much "of its grave dignity and influence" to its alliance with mind (PRE §8). The School of Giorgione makes a theory of it, the "indirect influence" by which a painter "enlarges his permanent efficacy" (GIO §25; see Indirect influence).

[41] T. S. Eliot, "Arnold and Pater", *The Bookman* (New York), September 1930; reprinted in *Selected Essays* (1932), from which the words are quoted.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Indirect influence; Local influences; Pleasure; Powers or forces; Virtue.

## Initiatory idea

*initiatory idea*; *initiate*, *initiated*, *initiation*, *initiator*, *initiators*

Attested: *initiatory idea* (PIC §3); *initiate*, *initiated*, *initiation*, *initiator*, *initiators* in eight further paragraphs (FRE §29; LEO §24; GIO §§12, 17; WIN §§2, 6, 12, 25). The idea that begins a thing which others carry out. The Renaissance of the fifteenth century was, "in many things, great rather by what it designed than by what it achieved"; much of what it aspired to do was accomplished later, "and what really belongs to the revival of the fifteenth century is but the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea" (PIC §3; see Revival of classical antiquity; Éclaircissement). The word has a second sense: to initiate is to admit into mysteries, and "the initiated" of the first essay are those who know the passionate experiences Dante expresses (FRE §29). Pater's adjective can be read as holding both: the fifteenth century began the work and was admitted to its secret, without finishing it. Elsewhere the word praises. Giorgione is "the initiator" of a whole kind of art (GIO §12), and Hegel, quoted in the Winckelmann essay, counts Winckelmann among those who "have known how to initiate a new organ for the human spirit" (WIN §2).

## See also

Éclaircissement; Revival of classical antiquity.

## Insight

*insight*

Attested: *insight* (LEO §7; WIN §§19, 41, 45; CON §4; C73 §5). Insight is sight into a thing, the seeing of its inside, a Middle English compound of *in* and *sight*, formed like the German *Einsicht*. The book uses it for knowledge that reaches the nature of a subject. Beneath Verrocchio's cheerful exterior as a well-paid craftsman lay the desire to expand the destiny of Italian art by a larger knowledge and "insight into things" (LEO §7). Winckelmann remodels his writings "with constant renewal of insight" (WIN §19; see Intuition), and Greece itself cannot be conceived from a central point unless one brings "an insight into the ideal forms of sculpture" (WIN §41); yet his insight into "the typical unity and repose of the highest sort of sculpture seems to have involved limitation in another direction", and he failed to see the preparation for the romantic temper within the Greek ideal itself (WIN §45; see Hellenic ideal). In the Conclusion insight is

one of three moods that are real "for that moment only": "some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us" (CON §4; see Moment). The list is a level one. Insight, which in the Winckelmann essay was the work of a lifetime, is here a mood among moods, as passing as a passion. Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) returns to the word and gives it a capital: the most direct auxiliary of the life Marius sought "must be, in a word, Insight".[42]

## See also

Hellenic ideal; Intellectual excitement; Intuition; Moment; Rapid intuition.

## Instinct

*instinct*; *instincts*; *instinctively*

Attested: *instinct* (FRE §1; WIN §§12, 19, 42, 51), *instincts* (PIC §1), *instinctively* (GIO §11); *instinct*, in Winckelmann's own words (WIN §§8, 18); *the leading instinct* (PIC §3). *Instinct* in the sense "imbued", "alive with" (GIO §16) is not counted. An instinct, from the Latin *instinctus*, an impulse, is a tendency that acts before and without reasoning. In the Winckelmann essay it is the faculty of discovery. Winckelmann "apprehended the subtlest principles of the Hellenic manner, not through the understanding, but by instinct or touch" (WIN §19), and in morals, as in criticism, he "followed the clue of instinct, of an unerring instinct" (WIN §42). The two sentences make instinct a kind of knowledge, joined to touch and to temperament (see Temperament), and opposed to "abstract theory" (WIN §9; see Realisation). Winckelmann himself speaks of following "my instinct" in a letter (WIN §8) and of the "inborn instinct for beauty in art" that must be trained in youth (WIN §18; see Beauty of art). Pater's other uses are graded: a culture in which "the moral instinct" was merged in the artistic (WIN §12; see Religious sense), "the proper instinct of self-culture" (WIN §51; see Self-culture) and, against it, "the commonplace metaphysical instinct" that a life of culture may have to renounce (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen). Instinct can be read, on this showing, as to be trusted when it is native and refused when it is merely habitual. Elsewhere the word names the impulse of an age: the seeking after the springs of sweetness that a long "dark age" had crushed (FRE §1), "the generous instincts" of Pico's century (PIC §1), the Venetian painters' "instinctively" apprehended limits (GIO §11; see Limits of material).

[42] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

## See also

Beauty of art; Enthusiasm; Im Ganzen; Limits of material; Realisation; Religious sense; Self-culture; Temperament.

# Instruments of criticism

*Theories held not as truths to rest in but as tools for seeing: the Conclusion's place for philosophy · The Renaissance*
*instruments of criticism*; *instrument*, *instruments*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An instrument is a tool, a means to an end other than itself.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §5 says that "The instrument metaphor gives a use for theory consistent with the Preface: it can bring an overlooked feature of experience into view".

**A place to read.** CON §5.

## Meaning

*Instrumentum* is from *instruere*, to build or equip: an instrument is equipment, a thing one works with. The Greek *organon* had the same sense (see New organ). To call a theory an instrument is to deny that it is a result. It is held not because it is true but because it helps.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands among the sentences of the fifth paragraph that make room for thought in a life of impressions. Having refused "a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5; see Facile orthodoxy), Pater says what theories may still be: "Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us" (CON §5). The two appositions define each other. A point of view is a place to stand, and an instrument a means to look; neither is a doctrine. The verb is modest too. Theories "may help", and what they help to do is "gather up" what would "pass unregarded", the stray particulars of experience that a mind without them would miss. The next sentence, "Philosophy is the microscope of thought" (CON §5; see Microscope of thought), gives the instrument its image, and the one after limits it: any theory that asks the sacrifice of part of our experience "has no real claim upon us" (CON §5; see Conventional orthodoxy).

The phrase can be read as the Conclusion's version of the Preface's method. There the critic regarded works of art "as powers or forces" and

asked what they did to him (PRE §3; see Powers or forces); questions about beauty in the abstract were dismissed as unprofitable (PRE §2; see Metaphysical question). The Conclusion makes the same demand of philosophy itself. A system becomes an object of criticism, judged by what it lets us see, and so ceases to be a system.

The book's other instruments make the figure concrete. Leonardo's women are "the clairvoyants, through whom, as through delicate instruments, one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature" (LEO §23; see Clairvoyant): persons used as instruments of perception. The Giorgione essay's paintings are to be used "as one might a poem in manuscript, or a musical instrument", at will, as a means of self-education and stimulus (GIO §12; see Animated presence), and its pictures are full of the tuning and touching of instruments of music (GIO §21; see Pure effect). The hireling ministers of the medieval system, by contrast, would hear of no service to the higher needs of humanity "with instruments not of their forging" (FRE §6). In these the instrument is a means of finer sense, and the Conclusion asks theory to be one.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "instrument" or "instruments" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §6** The hireling ministers of the medieval system would hear of no service to the higher needs of humanity with instruments not of their forging.

**LEO §5** Leonardo's master was a designer of all things for sacred or household use, instruments of music among them.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's women are clairvoyants, through whom, as through delicate instruments, one becomes aware of subtler forces.

**GIO §12** Pictures are to be used as one might a poem in manuscript, or a musical instrument, as a means of self-education.

**GIO §21** The school of Giorgione paints the tuning of instruments and a momentary touch of an instrument in the twilight.

**CON §5** Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might pass unregarded.

**C73 §6** In 1873: "Theories, religious or philosophical ideas".

## Elsewhere in Pater

*Marius the Epicurean* (1885) draws a consequence from the maxim that life is the end of life (see Fruit of experience): it follows "the desirableness of

refining all the instruments of inward and outward intuition", until one's whole nature becomes "one complex medium of reception".[43]

## In this edition

The 1873 text had "Theories, religious or philosophical ideas" (C73 §6; see Religious or philosophical ideas), and the revision dropped "religious", as it dropped religion from the service of philosophy in the paragraph before (CON §4; see Religion and culture).

## See also

Animated presence; Clairvoyant; Conventional orthodoxy; Facile orthodoxy; Fruit of experience; Metaphysical question; Microscope of thought; New organ; Powers or forces; Pure effect; Religion and culture; Religious or philosophical ideas; Speculative culture.

# Intellectual integrity

*Goethe's word for the secret of Winckelmann's influence, which Pater reads as the truth of a single force to its own type · The Renaissance*

*intellectual integrity*; *integrity*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Wholeness and soundness of mind: a mind undivided, true to itself.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Goethe names the secret of Winckelmann's influence "wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity" (WIN §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §10.

## Meaning

*Integrity* is from the Latin *integritas*, wholeness, from *integer*, untouched, entire. The English word kept both senses, the material, a thing whole and unbroken, and the moral, a person sound and honest. "Intellectual integrity" now usually means honesty in argument. Pater uses it in the older sense, nearer to the Latin: a mind that is whole, not divided among motives, and in which nothing is wasted.

## Use in the book

The phrase is Goethe's, as Pater reports him in the tenth paragraph. Winckelmann's influence runs through Goethe's culture "as the strong, regulative under-current of a clear, antique motive" (WIN §10), "One learns nothing from him," Goethe says to his secretary Johann Peter

[43] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

Eckermann, "but one becomes something" (WIN §10).[44] What then was the secret? "Goethe himself will tell us—wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity" (WIN §10).

Pater at once finds a difficulty. "And yet these expressions, because they fit Goethe, with his universal culture, so well, seem hardly to describe the narrow, exclusive interest of Winckelmann" (WIN §10). Wholeness belongs to the many-sided man; Winckelmann was a man of one passion (see Narrow perfection). Pater resolves the difficulty by shifting the meaning of the word. "But what affected Goethe, what instructed him and ministered to his culture, was the integrity, the truth to its type, of the given force. The development of this force was the single interest of Winckelmann, unembarrassed by anything else in him. Other interests, practical or intellectual, those slighter talents and motives not supreme, which in most men are the waste part of nature, and drain away their vitality, he plucked out and cast from him" (WIN §10). Integrity is no longer the wholeness of a life that contains everything but the purity of a force that contains nothing foreign. It is a quality of direction, not of range.

The distinction is the hinge of the essay. Goethe, who had integrity in the first sense, learned it in the second from Winckelmann, and the essay's last paragraphs show him putting the two together, keeping Winckelmann's truth to type within a culture that takes in the whole (WIN §§50–51; see Im Ganzen). The same paragraph adds the sign of the single force: "The protracted longing of his youth is not a vague, romantic longing: he knows what he longs for, what he wills" (WIN §10), and within its limits "his enthusiasm burns like lava" (WIN §10; see Enthusiasm). Integrity, on this reading, is not calm. It is the concentration that lets a narrow passion burn without waste, and the essay can be read as preferring it, in a critic, to a breadth without heat.

The phrase also gives the essay its test of judgement. At the bar of criticism Savonarola and Winckelmann are both types of success, "because each is true to itself" (WIN §12; see Higher life). Truth to type, in a man as in a statue, is what criticism honours.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the word occurs.

**WIN §10** Goethe names the secret of Winckelmann's influence wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity: the truth to its type of a single force.

## See also

Enthusiasm; Higher life; Im Ganzen; Narrow perfection; Type.

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[44] Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens* (Leipzig, 1836), 16 February 1827: *Man lernt nichts, wenn man ihn lieset, aber man wird etwas*.

# Intuition

*Knowledge by direct sight rather than by argument: the gift Pater finds in Leonardo's science and in Winckelmann, and sets against abstract theory · The Renaissance*

*intuition*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Knowledge that sees or grasps its object at once, without a chain of reasoning.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Here, then, in vivid realisation, we see the native tendency of Winckelmann to escape from abstract theory to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch" (WIN §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the note on Pater's Greek phrase at WIN §19 speaks of "Winckelmann's intuitive seeing as recollection" (see φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος).

**A place to read.** WIN §§9, 19.

## Meaning

*Intueri* is to look at, to gaze upon, and *intuitus* a look; intuition is knowledge that has the character of a look. The schoolmen of the fourteenth century, the English philosopher William of Ockham among them, set intuitive knowledge, by which the mind knows a thing directly and can tell at once whether it exists, against abstractive knowledge, which can think of a thing but cannot tell whether it is there.[45] For Locke intuitive knowledge was the highest certainty, in which the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately, "like bright sunshine".[46] Kant made *Anschauung*, which English renders "intuition", the immediate relation of knowledge to its object, given to us in sense, and joined it to the concept in a famous pair: *Gedanken ohne Inhalt sind leer, Anschauungen ohne Begriffe sind blind*, "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind".[47]

Pater's English keeps both strands. Intuition is a gift of the quick mind, insight without argument; it is also knowledge by the senses, the thing seen and handled. The Winckelmann essay joins them in one phrase, where intuition is "the exercise of sight and touch" (WIN §9).

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[45] William of Ockham, *Ordinatio* (Commentary on the *Sentences*, Book I), Prologue, question 1.

[46] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690), Book IV, chapter 2, §1.

[47] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Riga, 1781; 2nd ed. 1787), A19/B33 and A51/B75.

## Use in the book

The word comes three times, and each time it is a person's gift. Leonardo is described by those who can judge as "anticipating long before, by rapid intuition, the later ideas of science" (LEO §17; see Rapid intuition). Winckelmann, meeting Greek life at last "in the relics of plastic art", has the native tendency to escape "from abstract theory to intuition" (WIN §9; see Sight and touch), and the essay sets beside him Lessing, who "has theorised finely" in the *Laocoon* on the relation of poetry to sculpture (WIN §9). And the impression that Winckelmann's literary life conveyed to those about him "was that of excitement, intuition, inspiration, rather than the contemplative evolution of general principles" (WIN §19). In the Leonardo essay the gift stands beside "observations and experiments" that "fill thirteen volumes of manuscript" (LEO §17); in the Winckelmann essay it is quick, personal and sensuous, and its opposite is theory held at a distance from the thing.

The book's other words for the same power stand around it. Winckelmann "divines" the temperament of the antique world from a few stray antiquarianisms (WIN §31; see Divination), and the science of Leonardo's age sought "in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences" (LEO §13; see Divination). The Preface asks the critic to begin from his own impression, known "as it really is" (PRE §2; see Impression), and the Conclusion, gathering all we are "into one desperate effort to see and touch" (CON §5; see Sight and touch), denies any claim upon us to the system that would sacrifice part of experience to "some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves" (CON §5; see Abstract theory). The word "intuition" does not occur in the Conclusion, but its doctrine can be read as Winckelmann's intuition made a rule for every life.

The intuition of the book is not the mystic's. The mystic, as the Platonists derive the word, is one who shuts the eyes, "that one may see the more, inwardly" (PIC §7; see Shutting the eyes; Vision and ecstasy); Winckelmann's intuition is the exercise of sight and touch, and it is fed by the senses rather than freed from them. Pater can be read as taking the philosophers' highest kind of knowledge and placing it in the hand and the eye.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "intuition" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §17** Those who can judge describe Leonardo as anticipating the later ideas of science by rapid intuition.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann's native tendency is to escape from abstract theory to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's literary life conveyed an impression of excitement, intuition, inspiration, rather than the contemplative evolution of general principles.

## Later readings

The word became the centre of two philosophies of the next generation. The Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce's *Estetica* (1902) identified art with intuition, the knowledge of the individual thing, as against the logical knowledge of concepts.[48] The French philosopher Henri Bergson's "Introduction à la métaphysique" (1903) called intuition a kind of intellectual sympathy by which one is carried into the inside of an object, "so as to coincide with what is unique in it and so cannot be put into words".[49] Both can be read beside Pater's Winckelmann, for whom the particular thing, seen and touched, comes before the general principle.

## See also

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Abstract theory; Divination; Impression; Rapid intuition; Shutting the eyes; Sight and touch; Vision and ecstasy.

# Legend

*The story that gathers about a famous name, which criticism corrects and the æsthetic critic may still use · The Renaissance*

*legend*, *legends*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A traditional story about a person or a thing, widely believed and not proved; first, the life of a saint read aloud.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "His legend, as the French say, with the anecdotes which every one remembers, is one of the most brilliant chapters of Vasari" (LEO §3).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §3 says that Amoretti published his *Memorie storiche* on Leonardo in 1804, and that "Pater acknowledges the historical critic's work before claiming a separate task for the interpreter of impressions"; the Introduction observes that Pater "sometimes takes an old story about a painting as a clue to what one sees in it".

**A place to read.** LEO §3.

## Meaning

The Medieval Latin *legenda*, "things to be read", was the name for the lives of the saints read in the night office, and the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, compiled in the thirteenth century, was the most famous

[48] Benedetto Croce, *Estetica come scienza dell'espressione e linguistica generale* (Palermo, 1902), part I, chapters 1–2.

[49] Henri Bergson, "Introduction à la métaphysique", *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 11 (1903), p. 3: *on appelle intuition cette espèce de sympathie intellectuelle par laquelle on se transporte à l'intérieur d'un objet pour coïncider avec ce qu'il a d'unique et par conséquent d'inexprimable*.

collection of them. From the saint's life the word passed to any traditional story, and especially to one that is doubtful. French added a further sense, which Pater flags with "as the French say": the *légende* of a famous person is the image of him that tradition has formed, true or not, and that becomes part of his fame.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage opens the third paragraph of the Leonardo essay. "His legend, as the French say, with the anecdotes which every one remembers, is one of the most brilliant chapters of Vasari. Later writers merely copied it, until, in 1804, Carlo Amoretti applied to it a criticism which left hardly a date fixed, and not one of those anecdotes untouched" (LEO §3; see Antiquarianism). The questions Amoretti raised have since become "subjects of special study", and Pater leaves them to the specialists. His own task is different: "a lover of strange souls may still analyse for himself the impression made on him by those works" (LEO §3; see Impression). The legend keeps a place: "The legend, as corrected and enlarged by its critics, may now and then intervene to support the results of this analysis" (LEO §3).

The essay then uses the legend as promised, now and then, and judges each story as it goes. Verrocchio's turning from painting after Leonardo's angel is "true only in sentiment, for painting had always been the art by which Verrocchio set least store" (LEO §8; see Disgust). The story of the Medusa painted on a shield "is perhaps an invention; and yet, properly told, has more of the air of truth about it than anything else in the whole legend. For its real subject is not the serious work of a man, but the experiment of a child" (LEO §12; see Invention). And the story that the Gioconda's expression was kept on her face by mimes and flute-players is evidence: "That there is much of mere portraiture in the picture is attested by the legend" (LEO §30). Pater's tests are not the antiquarian's. A legend can be true "only in sentiment", or have "the air of truth" when "properly told"; on this reading it is weighed by the impression it agrees with.

The Giorgione essay meets a name that is almost all legend. Criticism has removed most of the works, "Yet enough remains to explain why the legend grew up above the name, why the name attached itself, in many instances, to the bravest work of other men" (GIO §15; see Giorgionesque), and of his death "two quite different legends" agree that a lady was its cause (GIO §17). The Botticelli essay notes the other side, criticism's work of clearing: it "has touched the legend of Lippo and Lucrezia", the friar-painter Filippo Lippi and the nun Lucrezia Buti, but "in Botticelli's case there is no legend to dissipate" (BOT §2).

Elsewhere the word keeps its older sense of a traditional story: the legends of Abelard and of Tannhäuser (FRE §§3, 6, 32), the legends of the pagan religions that Pico studied (PIC §§12, 15), the legend of Leda (MIC

§4). The Michelangelo essay joins the two senses. The medieval mind gave "an independent traditional existence" to an image or a legend, "so that no single workman could claim it as his own, and the book, the image, the legend, had itself a legend, and its fortunes, and a personal history" (MIC §18; see Medievalism). The book's Leonardo can be read as a legend of that kind. Pater receives it from Vasari, corrects it by the critics, and adds his own impression, and his paragraph on La Gioconda became in turn part of the legend (see Beauty wrought from within).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "legend" or "legends" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §3** The legend of Abelard is hardly less passionate than the legend of Tannhäuser.

**FRE §6** In the famous legend of Tannhäuser the erring knight seeks absolution at Rome.

**FRE §32** The antinomian element is found in the history of Abelard and the legend of Tannhäuser.

**PIC §12** Pico is anxious to ascertain the true significance of the obscurest pagan legend.

**PIC §15** It remained for a later age to conceive a scientific reconciliation of Christian sentiment with the legends of pagan poetry.

**BOT §2** Criticism has touched the legend of Lippo and Lucrezia; in Botticelli's case there is no legend to dissipate.

**MIC §4** Michelangelo's favourite pagan subject is the legend of Leda.

**MIC §18** The medieval legend had itself a legend, and its fortunes, and a personal history.

**LEO §3** Leonardo's legend is one of the most brilliant chapters of Vasari, corrected since by Amoretti and others.

**LEO §8** The legend of Verrocchio's turning from painting is true only in sentiment.

**LEO §12** The story of the earlier Medusa has more of the air of truth than anything else in the whole legend.

**LEO §30** The legend of the mimes and flute-players attests the portraiture in La Gioconda.

**GIO §15** Enough remains to explain why the legend grew up above Giorgione's name.

**GIO §17** Two different legends agree that Giorgione came by his death through a lady.

## See also

Antiquarianism; Authentic works; Beauty wrought from within; Disgust; Giorgionesque; Impression; Invention; Medievalism.

# Limitation to the concrete

*The discipline Goethe owed to Kant, and Winckelmann to the constant handling of ancient works: a mind kept to what can be seen and touched · The Renaissance*

*a severe limitation to the concrete*; *that limitation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A restriction of thought to particular, perceptible things, as against abstraction and speculation.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Kant's influence on Goethe "consisted in a severe limitation to the concrete" (WIN §7).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §7.

## Meaning

The concrete, from the Latin *concretus*, grown together, is what exists in a particular thing, as against the abstract, which is drawn off from things by the mind. To limit thought to the concrete is to refuse to go beyond what experience can verify. That was the sense in which Kant's critical philosophy could be called a limitation: it drew the boundary of knowledge at possible experience, and denied the mind its claims to know what lies beyond. Pater reports Goethe's version of that lesson and finds in Winckelmann the same discipline reached by another road.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the seventh paragraph, where Winckelmann, under "this purely literary influence", that of Voltaire and French letters (WIN §6; see Artificial classicism), "protests against Christian Wolff and the philosophers" (WIN §7). The German rationalist philosopher Christian Wolff (1679–1754), who systematised German philosophy in the generation before Kant, stands for the abstract system Winckelmann despised. Goethe, Pater says, "alludes to his own obligations to Emmanuel Kant. Kant's influence over the culture of Goethe, which he tells us could not have been resisted by him without loss, consisted in a severe limitation to the concrete" (WIN §7). The irony can be read as deliberate: a philosopher taught the poet to distrust philosophy's reach. Then Goethe's further claim: "But he adds, that in born antiquaries, like Winckelmann, a constant handling of the antique, with its eternal outline, maintains that limitation as effectually as a critical philosophy" (WIN §7).

The sentence puts two disciplines side by side. Goethe reached the concrete through a critique of reason; Winckelmann reached it through the hand. The antique, "with its eternal outline" (WIN §7), does for him what the critical philosophy did for Goethe: it holds the mind to a form that cannot be argued away (see Antique). The essay comes back to the point at once. At Dresden Winckelmann shows "the native tendency" to escape "from abstract theory to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch" (WIN §9; see Realisation), and by "a happy, unperplexed dexterity" he solves the question "in the concrete" (WIN §9; see Concrete terms). At the end the same discipline returns as a renunciation: a taste for metaphysics may have to be renounced by one who would mould his life to artistic perfection (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen).

The phrase can be read as the method of the whole book. The Preface asks the critic to define beauty "in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1; see Concrete terms), and to deal only with the impression a work makes, leaving metaphysical questions aside as "unprofitable" (PRE §2; see Metaphysical question). The Winckelmann essay gives that method a pedigree: Kant's limitation in Goethe, the antiquary's hand in Winckelmann, and the critic's impression in Pater are three forms of one refusal. Pater's own debt to Kant is not stated, and the book takes the lesson from its effect on Goethe rather than from the philosophy itself.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which Pater speaks of Winckelmann's or Goethe's limitation to the concrete, in the order of the book.

**WIN §7** Kant's influence on Goethe consisted in a severe limitation to the concrete; in Winckelmann a constant handling of the antique maintains that limitation.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann escapes from abstract theory to intuition, and solves the question of Greek art in the concrete.

## See also

Antique; Artificial classicism; Concrete terms; Im Ganzen; Metaphysical question; Realisation.

# Local colour

*local colour*

Attested: *local colour* (PIC §5). In painting, the proper colour of an object apart from light and shadow; in criticism, the features peculiar to a place and time. The second sense came from French Romantic criticism, where Victor Hugo's preface to *Cromwell* (1827) asked that *la couleur locale*

be in the heart of a drama, not on its surface.[50] The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century, with its web of imagery, its quaint conceits and its moralising, "is an element in the local colour of a great age" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation; Conceit). False as a method, it is valued as the colour of its time. This can be read as the historic sense turned to enjoyment: what the scholar rejects, the critic savours as belonging to its age (see Historic sense). The Winckelmann essay uses a near phrase for what time takes away. From Hellenic culture "The local, accidental colouring of its own age has passed" (WIN §49).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Conceit; Historic sense.

## Madhouse-cell

*madhouse-cell*

Attested: *madhouse-cell* (PIC §5). A cell in an asylum, where the mad were confined and, in older times, looked at by visitors. "And yet as a curiosity of the human mind, a 'madhouse-cell,' if you will, into which we may peep for a moment, and see it at work weaving strange fancies, the allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century has its interest" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation). The quotation marks and "if you will" hold the word at arm's length: it can be read as the harshest name the method could be given, offered without being adopted. The image is of a mind still at work, "weaving strange fancies", and the "web of imagery" of the next sentence continues the weaving (PIC §5; see Imagery). The judgement of the previous paragraph, the "quicksand of allegorical interpretation" (PIC §4), is not withdrawn, but the peep into the cell becomes interest, and the interest becomes sympathy with "its generous belief" (PIC §5; see Humanism).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Humanism; Imagery.

## Manner of apprehension

*The way a particular mind takes hold of things, stamped on its work · The Renaissance*

*manner of apprehension*; *apprehension*, *apprehend*

[50] Victor Hugo, *Cromwell* (Paris, 1827), preface.

## At a Glance

**The word.** Apprehension is the mind's taking hold of a thing; a manner of apprehension is one person's way of doing it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** *Intimité* is "the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension" (ROB §13).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §13 says that *intimité* "suggests a work's capacity to convey something inward and individual about its maker".

**A place to read.** ROB §13, with WIN §34.

## Meaning

The Latin *apprehendere* is to lay hold of, to seize, and philosophy used it for the first grasp of an object by the senses or the mind, before judgement. English kept that sense alongside the later one of fear ("apprehensive"). In Pater apprehension is always the first sense: a seizing of the thing, quick and personal, and a "manner of apprehension" is the habit of seizing that belongs to one temperament.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the end of the definition of *intimité*: "the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension" (ROB §13; see Intimité). Moods and manner of apprehension are paired as the two things a man's work can carry of him. Moods are what he feels; manner of apprehension is how he takes things in. The pairing makes expression a matter of perception as well as of feeling: what is most personal in a work is not only the emotion in it but the way the world was first seized.

The verb and noun run through the book's account of art and of experience. Michelangelo, "always pressing forward from the outward beauty", seeks "to apprehend the unseen beauty" (MIC §14; see Unseen beauty). Leonardo's curious beauty "may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully" (LEO §11). The Giorgione essay makes apprehension the beginning of criticism: "a just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism" (GIO §3), and the Venetians "apprehended" the limitations of painting "unerringly though instinctively" (GIO §11; see Essence). The Greeks "apprehended and remained true to these exquisite limitations" of sculpture (WIN §34; see Special limitation), and Winckelmann "apprehended the subtlest principles of the Hellenic manner, not through the understanding" (WIN §19).

At the end of the book apprehension fails. Analysis leaves of experience a single moment, "gone while we try to apprehend it" (CON §3). The word that names the critic's and the artist's grasp names also what slips from it.

The phrase can be read as joining the two ends. If every moment is "gone while we try to apprehend it", what remains of a life is its manner of apprehending, the shape of its grasp rather than what was grasped; and that manner is what the della Robbia school, on Pater's account, set its seal on in stone and clay. The work of art preserves not the moment but the way one person took hold of moments.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "apprehension" or "apprehend" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §13** Intimité is the seal on a man's work of his moods and manner of apprehension.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo presses forward from the outward beauty to apprehend the unseen beauty.

**LEO §11** Leonardo's remote beauty may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully.

**GIO §1** A clear apprehension that each art's sensuous material has its own quality of beauty is the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism.

**GIO §3** A just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism.

**GIO §11** The Venetians apprehended the necessary limitations of painting unerringly though instinctively.

**GIO §12** Giorgione keeps the old Venetian clearness in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art.

**GIO §25** A "new Vasari" seems at first only to have confused our apprehension of a delightful object.

**WIN §9** The imagination, freed at the Renaissance, seems to say how facile is the life of the senses once apprehended.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann apprehended the subtlest principles of the Hellenic manner not through the understanding.

**WIN §27** Angelico would have shrunk from the notion that what the eye apprehended was all.

**WIN §34** The Greeks apprehended and remained true to the exquisite limitations of sculpture.

**WIN §36** Browning apprehends a character in some delicate pause of life.

**WIN §40** In youth the exact degree of development is hard to apprehend.

**CON §3** What is actual in experience is a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it.

**C73 §4** In 1873, the same sentence.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §13 glosses *intimité* as "Intimacy or inwardness", and says that "In Pater's use the word suggests a work's capacity to convey something inward and individual about its maker."

## See also

Essence; Expression; Intimité; Mood; Special limitation; Temperament; Unseen beauty.

### Matter and manner

*matter and manner*; *matter*, *manner*

Attested: *not for its matter only, but chiefly for its manner* (FRE §22). The words *matter* and *manner* are common: *matter* occurs in PRE §5 and in seventeen further paragraphs, *manner* in twenty-one, none of them in the Preface. The matter of a work is what it says, its subject; the manner is how it says it, its form and style. Aucassin and Nicolette, Pater says, "aims at a purely artistic effect. Its subject is a great sorrow, yet it claims to be a thing of joy and refreshment, to be entertained not for its matter only, but chiefly for its manner" (FRE §22; see Cortois et bien assis). The distinction is the old one of Latin rhetoric, in which every speech consists of *res* and *verba*, matter and words (Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* VIII, preface 6), and it runs through the book. In the Giorgione essay the interpenetration of matter and form is the condition to which every art aspires (GIO §§5, 20; see Interpenetration), and the Du Bellay and Winckelmann essays return to the pair in praise of form (BEL §23; WIN §53; see Matter and form). The thirteenth-century tale can be read as claiming, in its own words, the principle the book will make its own.

## See also

Cortois et bien assis; Interpenetration; Lightness and grace; Matter and form; Traditional subject.

### Metaphysical question

*metaphysical questions*; *metaphysical*; *metaphysics*

Attested: *metaphysical questions* (PRE §2, twice); *metaphysical* (WIN §§8, 51); *metaphysics* (WIN §51). Questions about what things are in themselves, beyond experience. The critic who experiences impressions strongly need not ask "what beauty is in itself, or what its exact relation to truth or experience—metaphysical questions, as unprofitable as metaphysical questions elsewhere. He may pass them all by as being, answerable or not, of no interest to him" (PRE §2; see In itself). Pater does

not say they cannot be answered, only that the answer does not concern criticism. The Winckelmann essay goes further for the conduct of life: "a taste for metaphysics may be one of those things which we must renounce, if we mean to mould our lives to artistic perfection", for philosophy serves culture "not by the fancied gift of absolute or transcendental knowledge, but by suggesting questions" (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen; Transcendental knowledge). Winckelmann himself complains of "a metaphysical age, by which humane literature is trampled under foot" (WIN §8).

## See also

Abstractness; Im Ganzen; In itself; To see the object as in itself it really is; Transcendental knowledge.

# Michelangelesque

*The quality proper to Michelangelo, which Pater defines against the popular sense of mere strength · The Renaissance*

*Michelangelesque*

## At a Glance

**The word.** In the manner of Michelangelo: having the qualities by which his work is known.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To the true admirers of Michelangelo this is the true type of the Michelangelesque—sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the Glossary defines its companion, the Giorgionesque.

**A place to read.** MIC §1, with MIC §21.

## Meaning

The suffix *-esque* came into English from French and Italian, where *-esco* makes an adjective of a noun: *pittoresco*, after the manner of painters, *grottesco*, of the grottoes. Adjectives formed from artists' names, Rembrandtesque, Raphaelesque, Michelangelesque, name a manner that can be recognised apart from the man. In common use "Michelangelesque" meant massive, muscular and grand: the colossal figure, the twisted pose, the strength that followers could copy.

## Use in the book

The word occurs once, in the sentence that closes the first paragraph of the Michelangelo essay. Critics have spoken "as if the only characteristic of his genius were a wonderful strength" (MIC §1; see Strength); Pater answers that strangeness must be sweet too, and then defines the word: "And to the true admirers of Michelangelo this is the true type of the Michelangelesque

—sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise," (MIC §1), and the sentence runs on to an energy of conception that strains against comely form (see Energy of conception).

The sentence is a correction, and its weight falls on the repeated "true". The common Michelangelesque is the strength the critics see; the true one, known only to "the true admirers", is a union of opposites. "Type" makes it a pattern that can be found again, in other works and other men. Pater takes over the common adjective and gives it a new content: not a manner of drawing muscles but a balance of qualities, sweetness within strength, pleasure within surprise.

The essay's end shows why the definition matters. Michelangelo's "professed disciples", who copied his manner, "are in love with his strength only" (MIC §17; see Theatricality); the interfusion of sweetness and strength is found not in his followers but in Blake and Victor Hugo, "his true sons" (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength). The Michelangelesque, defined as Pater defines it, belongs to them and not to the imitators. A quality of this kind is one of the "typical standards" of the last paragraph, a combination of qualities that can be recognised wherever it occurs (MIC §21; see Typical standards).

The Giorgione essay, added to the book in 1888, makes the method explicit with a second adjective of the same form: over and above the real Giorgione and his extant works, "there remains the Giorgionesque also—an influence, a spirit or type in art" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque). The criticism that took most of Giorgione's pictures from him, Pater argues, leaves the Giorgionesque intact.

Taken together, the two words give the book's account of what a great artist leaves behind. A name becomes an adjective when its qualities can be separated from the man and found elsewhere, and the critic's task, set out in the Preface, is to disengage such qualities, to find the "virtue" by which a work is unique (PRE §3; see Virtue). The Michelangelesque and the Giorgionesque are such virtues named; the first, as Pater insists, is not the quality the world had given the name to.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**MIC §1** To the true admirers of Michelangelo the true type of the Michelangelesque is sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise.

## In this edition

The Glossary defines "Giorgionesque" as "Sharing qualities associated with Giorgione or his circle. In Pater it can describe an effect even when attribution remains uncertain."

## See also

Energy of conception; Giorgionesque; Strength; Sweetness and strength; Theatricality; Typical standards; Virtue.

## Narrow perfection

*a narrow perfection*

Attested: *narrow perfection* (WIN §10). Perfection is completeness, from the Latin *perficere*, to make thoroughly; a narrow perfection is complete within a small compass. Pater concedes the phrase against Goethe's praise of Winckelmann's wholeness: "Doubtless Winckelmann's perfection is a narrow perfection: his feverish nursing of the one motive of his life is a contrast to Goethe's various energy" (WIN §10). The concession is half a defence. "Feverish nursing" is not a calm phrase, and the narrowness is the cost of the intensity that Goethe learned from (WIN §10; see Intellectual integrity). The aim of culture, for Pater, is to attain "not only as intense but as complete a life as possible" (WIN §12; see Many-sided intellectual culture), and Winckelmann has only the first half of it. Yet the essay will not rank the halves: the higher life is often possible only "on condition of the selection of that in which one's motive is native and strong" (WIN §12; see Higher life). A narrow perfection, on this account, is a perfection still; the Greek statues themselves, which hold colour only by convention and exclude the special situation, are perfect by limitation (WIN §§34, 37; see Pure form), and Winckelmann's life can be read as shaped like the art he studied. The essay's judgement on his limits comes later, when his insight into repose "seems to have involved limitation in another direction" (WIN §45).

## See also

Higher life; Intellectual integrity; Many-sided intellectual culture; Pure form.

## Natural product

*natural products*

Attested: *natural products* (PIC §3). A thing that grows from nature by its own laws, as against one made or revealed. The modern scholar's first observation on the religions: he "might observe that all religions may be regarded as natural products, that, at least in their origin, their growth, and decay, they have common laws, and are not to be isolated from the other movements of the human mind in the periods in which they respectively prevailed" (PIC §3; see Religious sense; Scientific reconciliation). "May be regarded" is a hedge, and "at least in their origin" a limit: the scholar does

not say that religions are nothing but natural products, only that they can be studied so. The phrase can be set beside David Hume's *The Natural History of Religion* (1757), which traced the first religions to the hopes and fears of human life rather than to reasoning on the works of nature.[51] Pater's scholar is gentler than Hume. He "might go on" to range the religions as stages in the education of the human mind, and so "justify the existence of each" (PIC §3; see Development); he does not dismiss them.

## See also

Development; Religious sense; Scientific reconciliation.

# Negative criticism

*The criticism that takes works away from a master, which Pater accepts and then supplements · The Renaissance*

*negative criticism*; *negations*; *negative*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Criticism that proceeds by denial: this picture is not his, this story is not true.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "And now, finally, let me illustrate some of the characteristics of this School of Giorgione, as we may call it, which, for most of us, notwithstanding all that negative criticism of the 'new Vasari,' will still identify itself with those famous pictures at Florence, at Dresden and Paris" (GIO §19).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §14 says that the investigations of Crowe and Cavalcaselle "reshaped the catalog of Giorgione's work that Pater inherited".

**A place to read.** GIO §§19, 25.

## Meaning

"Negative", from the Latin *negare*, to deny, is the quality of a statement that says no. Negative criticism is the scholarship that removes: it denies an attribution, dates a legend late, takes a picture from one name and gives it to another. Its results are real knowledge, but knowledge of a subtracting kind, and it leaves the reader with less than he thought he had.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the opening sentence of the nineteenth paragraph, where Pater turns from the critics' verdict to the school itself. The school "for most of us, notwithstanding all that negative criticism of the 'new Vasari,' will still identify itself with those famous pictures at Florence, at Dresden and Paris" (GIO §19; see New Vasari). "Notwithstanding" admits

[51] David Hume, *The Natural History of Religion* (London, 1757), introduction.

the criticism and declines to be ruled by it. “For most of us” can be read as giving the reason: the association of the school with its pictures is a fact of the mind, and the critics’ denial cannot unmake it. What it can do is change what the association means. The pictures that were Giorgione’s become the pictures of the Giorgionesque (see Giorgionesque).

The essay’s last paragraph returns to the critics with a plural noun. “As regards Giorgione himself, we have indeed to take note of all those negations and exceptions, by which, at first sight, a ‘new Vasari’ seems merely to have confused our apprehension of a delightful object, to have explained away in our inheritance from past time what seemed of high value there” (GIO §25). The sentence grants the negations their place, “we have indeed to take note”, and then limits them twice: “at first sight”, and “seems merely”. Properly qualified, the next sentences say, the exceptions become a salt of genuineness in our knowledge (GIO §25; see Salt of genuineness; Indirect influence). The negative criticism is kept, and what it kept back is restored by another kind of knowledge.

The Leonardo essay had met the same kind of criticism earlier. Carlo Amoretti, in 1804, applied to Vasari’s legend of Leonardo “a criticism which left hardly a date fixed, and not one of those anecdotes untouched” (LEO §3; see Legend), and Pater set his own analysis of impressions beside it. The Winckelmann essay gives “negative” a more surprising use. Winckelmann’s serenity “is, perhaps, in great measure, a negative quality” (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit). There the negative is Winckelmann’s serenity before Greek art, an absence that is a perfection. The two uses can be read together. A negation, in Pater, is not worthless because it denies: the critics’ negations clear the ground, and the absence of shame in Winckelmann’s serenity is itself a kind of fullness.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “negative” or “negations” occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §19** For most of us, notwithstanding the negative criticism of the “new Vasari”, the school still identifies itself with the famous pictures.

**GIO §25** We have to take note of the negations and exceptions by which a “new Vasari” seems at first to have confused us.

**WIN §43** Winckelmann’s serenity is, perhaps, in great measure a negative quality, the absence of want, corruption or shame.

## See also

Ascertained facts; Giorgionesque; Heiterkeit; Indirect influence; Legend; New Vasari; Salt of genuineness.

*Hegel's praise of Winckelmann, which Pater makes the highest that can be said of any criticism: to open a new sense in the human spirit · The Renaissance*

*a new organ*; *a new sense*; *new senses*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A new faculty or instrument of perception: in Hegel's phrase, an organ for the human spirit.

**In *The Renaissance*.** To have given a new sense, to have laid open a new organ, "is the highest that can be said of any critical effort" (WIN §2).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §2 says that an organ "here is a capacity for apprehending something".

**A place to read.** WIN §2.

## Meaning

*Organ* comes through Latin from the Greek *organon*, a tool or instrument, and in the body an organ is the instrument of a function: the eye of sight, the ear of hearing. A new organ for the spirit is a new power of perception, as if the mind grew a sense it did not have. The word had a famous philosophical use before Hegel's: Aristotle's logical works were gathered as the *Organon*, the instrument of thought, and the English philosopher Francis Bacon called his new method the *Novum Organum* (1620). Pater does not connect either with Hegel's phrase, though the motto of the Leonardo essay is the first aphorism of the *Novum Organum* (LEO §1) and he cites Bacon twice more (PIC §9; LEO §17); Hegel's phrase is of another kind; it is not a method but a faculty, opened by contemplation.

## Use in the book

The phrase is Hegel's, quoted in the second paragraph of the Winckelmann essay from the lectures on the philosophy of art: "Winckelmann, by contemplation of the ideal works of the ancients, received a sort of inspiration, through which he opened a new sense for the study of art. He is to be regarded as one of those who, in the sphere of art, have known how to initiate a new organ for the human spirit" (WIN §2).[52] Pater adopts it at once as his own measure: "That it has given a new sense, that it has laid open a new organ, is the highest that can be said of any critical effort. It is interesting then to ask what kind of man it was who thus laid open a new organ. Under what conditions was that effected?" (WIN

[52] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835), Introduction.

§2). The rest of the essay is the answer to that question, and its form follows from it: a life, because the organ was made in a man.

The phrase returns in the twelfth paragraph as one side of a choice. "Which is better?—to lay open a new sense, to initiate a new organ for the human spirit, or to cultivate many types of perfection up to a point which leaves us still beyond the range of their transforming power?" (WIN §12). The question sets Winckelmann's single passion against a culture of many perfections none of them mastered, and Pater does not rank them: he names two types of success, Savonarola and Winckelmann, neither of which criticism can reject (WIN §12; see Higher life). The organ is the reward of the narrow life: it is often opened only by one who has given himself wholly to one thing (see Narrow perfection).

The nineteenth paragraph shows the organ at work. The Greek world, in which others "had moved with so much embarrassment, seems to call out in Winckelmann new senses fitted to deal with it" (WIN §19). The senses are literal: he apprehends the Hellenic manner, not through the understanding, but "by instinct or touch" (WIN §19; see Instinct), and "catches the thread of a whole sequence of laws in some hollowing of the hand, or dividing of the hair" (WIN §19). The new organ, on this account, is a refined eye and hand, trained by love on its objects until it sees what others miss.

The phrase can be read as Pater's definition of criticism at its height. The Preface asks of the critic a "certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects" (PRE §4; see Temperament); the Winckelmann essay names the result when such a temperament meets its proper object. The critic does not add a theory to the stock of knowledge; he adds a way of seeing to the stock of human powers. That is a large claim for criticism, and Pater makes it for a critic whose perfection he himself calls narrow (WIN §10; see Narrow perfection).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater speaks of a new organ or new sense, in the order of the book.

**WIN §2** Hegel says that Winckelmann opened a new sense, a new organ for the human spirit; this is the highest that can be said of any criticism.

**WIN §12** Is it better to initiate a new organ for the human spirit, or to cultivate many types of perfection?

**WIN §19** The Greek world seems to call out in Winckelmann new senses fitted to deal with it.

## See also

Higher life; Instinct; Narrow perfection; Temperament.

*Pater's name for the scholarly history of North Italian painting by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, which reduced Giorgione's works almost to one picture · The Renaissance*

*new Vasari*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A new standard history of Italian painting, as Vasari's *Lives* had been the old one.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "And now, in the 'new Vasari,' the great traditional reputation, woven with so profuse demand on men's admiration, has been scrutinised thread by thread; and what remains of the most vivid and stimulating of Venetian masters, a live flame, as it seemed, in those old shadowy times, has been reduced almost to a name by his most recent critics" (GIO §14).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §14 says that Pater's "new Vasari" is "the history of North Italian painting by Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, named in his own note".

**A place to read.** GIO §§14, 16.

## Meaning

Giorgio Vasari's *Lives* of the Italian artists (1550, enlarged 1568) was for three centuries the standard history of Italian art, the source of its dates, attributions and legends. A "new Vasari" is the book that takes its place. Pater puts the phrase in quotation marks and names the book in a note of his own: Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *A History of Painting in North Italy* (1871), the work of documents and connoisseurship that tested the old attributions one by one.

## Use in the book

The phrase first stands in the fourteenth paragraph, at the end of Pater's account of how Giorgione's fame grew and was lost. The great reputation "has been scrutinised thread by thread" (GIO §14). The figure belongs to the essay's weaving: the reputation was "woven with so profuse demand on men's admiration", and the critics unpick it one thread at a time, as the paragraph's earlier sentence says the science of the subject "has not made the past more real for us, but assured us only that we possess less of it than we seemed to possess" (GIO §14; see Traditional reputation). What remains "has been reduced almost to a name" (GIO §14; see Il fuoco Giorgionesco).

The sixteenth paragraph shows the new Vasari at work. Its standard is the Concert of the Pitti, whose "distinction", its "sustained evenness of perfection", becomes "the standard of Giorgione's genuine work" (GIO §16; see Distinction). The verdicts follow, the first going to the Friulian

painter Pellegrino da San Daniele. “Finding here sufficient to explain his influence, and the true seal of mastery, its authors assign to Pellegrino da San Daniele the Holy Family in the Louvre, in consideration of certain points where it comes short of this standard” (GIO §16; see Liquid air). The Fête Champêtre goes to an imitator of Sebastiano del Piombo, the Venetian painter who later worked in Rome, the Tempest to Paris Bordone, a pupil of Titian, or perhaps to “some advanced craftsman of the sixteenth century”, the Knight embracing a Lady to “a Brescian hand”, Jacob meeting Rachel to a pupil of the Venetian painter Palma Vecchio. “And then, whatever their charm, we are called on to give up the Ordeal, and the Finding of Moses with its jewel-like pools of water, perhaps to Bellini” (GIO §16), Bellini being Giovanni Bellini, the Venetian master under whom Titian trained. The list is long and the tone patient; “whatever their charm” is the one sign of what the giving up costs.

Pater answers the new Vasari without disputing it. Its “negations and exceptions” are granted their place and then qualified into a salt of genuineness (GIO §25; see Negative criticism; Salt of genuineness). The new Vasari establishes the real Giorgione; the æsthetic philosopher keeps the Giorgionesque (GIO §18; see Æsthetic philosopher). The two kinds of knowledge are set side by side, and the essay’s argument is that both are true.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “new Vasari” occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §14** In the “new Vasari” Giorgione’s great traditional reputation has been scrutinised thread by thread.

**GIO §16** For the “new Vasari” the distinction of the Concert becomes the standard of Giorgione’s genuine work.

**GIO §19** For most of us, notwithstanding the negative criticism of the “new Vasari”, the school still identifies itself with the famous pictures.

**GIO §25** A “new Vasari” seems at first sight merely to have confused our apprehension of a delightful object.

## In this edition

The edition’s notes record how the new Vasari’s verdicts have themselves been revised. The Concert, its standard of Giorgione’s genuine work, is now attributed by the Uffizi to Titian (note at GIO §15). The Fête Champêtre, which it gave to an imitator of Sebastiano, the Louvre now catalogues as Titian’s (note at GIO §16). The note on the Fête Champêtre says that the canvas “illustrates how dramatically attributions have shifted since the nineteenth-century debate Pater reports”. The note on the Tempest takes Pater’s picture for Giorgione’s *La tempesta*, which the Gallerie dell’Accademia now holds. That picture entered the gallery only in 1932; the “Tempest, in the Academy at Venice” that the critics gave to Paris

Bordone was the *Storm at Sea* painted for the Scuola Grande di San Marco, now given to Palma Vecchio and Paris Bordone.[53]

## See also

Æsthetic philosopher; Authentic works; Distinction; Giorgionesque; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; Liquid air; Negative criticism; Salt of genuineness; Traditional reputation.

# Novel impression

*The new effect a work conveys, which Leonardo counted an end in itself · The Renaissance*

*novel impression*; *novel*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An effect on the mind that is new, unlike any before it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For him, the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself—a perfect end" (LEO §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §24.

## Meaning

"Novel" comes from the Latin *novellus*, a diminutive of *novus*, new: what is new and of a kind not met before. "Impression" is the Preface's word for the effect a thing makes on the mind, the unit of æsthetic criticism (see Impression). A novel impression is a new effect, and the phrase joins the two things Pater asks of art, that it should affect us and that it should do so in a way no other thing has.

## Use in the book

Pater keeps the phrase for the close of his account of Leonardo's pupils, in the sentence that makes Leonardo's effects an end in themselves (LEO §24; see End in itself). The first half of the same sentence has given the temperament from which they came: "Out of the secret places of a unique temperament he brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown" (LEO §24; see Temperament). The novel impression is the blossom: a unique temperament produces an effect that is new because the temperament is.

The phrase pairs "conveyed" with "woven": the impression is conveyed to someone, the effect woven by the artist. Yet the same paragraph says that

[53] Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, catalogue entry for *La tempesta* (bought from Prince Giovanelli, 1932); J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy* (London, 1871), vol. 2, chapter 3, on the storm picture of the Scuola di San Marco.

Leonardo worked "for the present hour, and for a few only, perhaps chiefly for himself" (LEO §24; see Solitary culture of beauty). The impression, it seems, is conveyed first of all to the painter himself. The artist becomes his own critic, and the effect he waits for is the one the Preface tells the critic to look for, what a work is "to me" and what effect it "really" produces (PRE §2; see Engaging personality).

The adjective has two other uses in the book. In *Aucassin and Nicolette* "A novel art is arising, the music of rhymed poetry" (FRE §21; see Music of rhymed poetry): the medieval Renaissance is the arrival of a new art. And in the Winckelmann essay the basis of all artistic genius lies in "the power of conceiving humanity in a new and striking way", generating around itself "an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction, selecting, transforming, recombining the images it transmits" (WIN §36; see Refraction). The three uses can be read as degrees: a new art, a new impression from one temperament, and the general power of genius to see the world anew. The Conclusion asks the same of every life: "What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions" (CON §5; see Courting impressions).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the adjective "novel" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §21** A novel art is arising, the music of rhymed poetry.

**LEO §24** For Leonardo the novel impression conveyed counted as an end in itself.

**WIN §36** Genius generates around itself an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction.

## See also

Courting impressions; End in itself; Engaging personality; Impression; Music of rhymed poetry; Refraction; Solitary culture of beauty; Temperament.

# Observation

*The attention that watches and notes: dwarfed by analysis to one mind's chamber, and then made the service of philosophy · The Renaissance*

*observation*; *observer*; *observant*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Attentive watching, and what is noted by it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §§3–4.

## Meaning

*Observare* is to watch, keep or heed, from *servare*, to keep: the word carried both the watching of the augur and the keeping of a rite, as in "religious observance". In English "observation" took the first sense and "observance" the second. By Pater's century observation was the method of the natural sciences, set against speculation and authority. Pater takes the scientist's word and gives it a new object: not the world, but the moment of the mind's meeting with it.

## Use in the book

Leonardo is the book's first observer. His "observations and experiments" fill thirteen volumes of manuscript (LEO §17; see Modern spirit), and portraiture, to take a character as it was and delicately sound its stops, suited one "so curious in observation, curious in invention" (LEO §19). The Winckelmann essay sets against this the "lax observation" that has nothing in common with Greek breadth (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit): the breadth of the Greeks was won by minute attention, not by a careless eye.

The Conclusion uses the word three times, and the three uses make an argument. In the third paragraph reflexion dissolves each object into impressions "in the mind of the observer" (CON §3; see Reflexion), and then the world contracts: "the whole scope of observation is dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind" (CON §3; see Flickering). Observation, which in Leonardo reached out to the whole of nature, is shut in a single room. In the next paragraph it is set free again, not by enlarging the room but by intensifying what happens in it. The service of philosophy, Pater says, is "to rouse, to startle" the human spirit "to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4; see Speculative culture). The adjectives say how. Observation is to be constant, never interrupted by habit, and eager, never indifferent. What was the scientist's method becomes a way of living.

The sentences that follow give its objects, a form grown perfect "in hand or face" and a tone "on the hills or the sea" (CON §4; see Moment). They are the objects of a painter's eye, and the Conclusion can be read as asking every life to observe as Leonardo observed, with the difference that the observer knows the thing seen is gone while he looks. Observation here is not the gathering of facts for a system. It is the whole of what remains when the system has been refused (see Facile orthodoxy).

The 1873 wording was "to startle it into a sharp and eager observation" (C73 §5; see Sharp and eager observation); the revision made the

observation a "life", constant as well as eager, and added the verb "to rouse". The change can be read as Pater's own answer to the charge that the Conclusion counselled only the pursuit of excitements. A life of constant observation is a discipline, and it is the observer, not the thing observed, that is to be roused.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "observation", "observer" or "observant" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §17** Leonardo's observations and experiments fill thirteen volumes of manuscript.

**LEO §19** The portrait suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention.

**WIN §18** Winckelmann has noticed that those observant of beauty only in women seldom have an impartial instinct for beauty in art.

**WIN §35** Greek breadth has nothing in common with the lax observation and flaccid execution of a false generality.

**CON §3** The whole scope of observation is dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind.

**CON §4** The service of philosophy is to rouse, to startle the human spirit to a life of constant and eager observation.

**C73 §3** In 1873 the whole scope of observation is dwarfed "to", not "into", the narrow chamber of the individual mind.

**C73 §5** In 1873: "to startle it into a sharp and eager observation".

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Facile orthodoxy; Flickering; Modern spirit; Moment; Reflexion; Self-reflexion; Sharp and eager observation; Speculative culture.

# Order and beauty in knowledge

*The belief that sent Pico from system to system · The Renaissance a spirit of order and beauty in knowledge*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The phrase names a belief: that knowledge, rightly held, has an order and a beauty of its own, and that this order is a power able to unite.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico "had sought knowledge, and passed from system to system, and hazarded much; but less for the sake of positive knowledge than because he believed there was a spirit of order and beauty in knowledge, which would come down and unite what men's ignorance had divided, and renew what time had made dim" (PIC §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.
**A place to read.** PIC §16.

## Meaning

Order and beauty were joined in Greek thought before they were joined in Pater's sentence. The Greek *kosmos* means both order and ornament, and Plato's *Philebus* finds that measure and proportion everywhere turn out to be beauty and excellence.[54] To believe that knowledge has "a spirit of order and beauty" is to believe that the truth, all of it, is a cosmos: that its parts fit, and that their fitting is beautiful.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the last paragraph, between the parable and the verdict. The parable is the story of the forged cabalistic manuscripts, which "might well stand as a parable of all he ever seemed to gain in the way of actual knowledge" (PIC §16; see Cabala). The verdict is humanism. Between them Pater gives Pico's motive, and divides it. He sought knowledge "less for the sake of positive knowledge" (see Positive knowledge) than for its spirit. What Pico wanted was not facts but the order in which facts would agree.

The spirit is given two acts. It "would come down and unite what men's ignorance had divided", and it would "renew what time had made dim". The first can be read as reconciliation, the essay's theme (see Reconciliation), and the second as renaissance, the book's (see Renaissance). The language of a spirit that "would come down" can be read as the language of Pentecost, when the Spirit descended and men of every tongue understood one another: the undoing of Babel, where ignorance had divided them. Pater does not press the echo, but the verb places the spirit above Pico and his systems. Order and beauty are not made by the scholar; they descend on him, if they come at all.

The belief was Pico's, and Pater states it as Pico's. Pater's own judgement follows at once: "And so, while his actual work has passed away, yet his own qualities are still active" (PIC §16). The essay can be read as agreeing that the belief was false as a programme and true as a quality. No system came down to unite Plato and Moses. Pater makes him a humanist by another belief in the same paragraph, one "of which he seems never to have doubted": that nothing which has once interested living men and women can wholly die (PIC §16; see Humanism). The faith in a uniting order can be read as the same faith turned toward knowledge. Order and beauty in knowledge are the humanist's faith in the unity of what he loves.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

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[54] Plato, *Philebus* 64e.

**PIC §16** Pico sought knowledge less for positive knowledge than because he believed in a spirit of order and beauty in knowledge, which would unite what ignorance had divided.

## Pater's sources

Pico's own programme gives the belief its form. The first of his "paradoxical" conclusions reconciling Plato and Aristotle reads: "Nullum est quesitum naturale aut divinum, in quo Aristoteles et Plato sensu et re non consentiant, quamvis verbis dissentire videantur", "There is no question, natural or divine, on which Aristotle and Plato do not agree in sense and substance, though in words they seem to disagree".[55] Agreement beneath the words is the order Pico believed in (see Paradox).

## See also

Cabala; Humanism; Paradox; Positive knowledge; Reconciliation; Renaissance.

# Order of impressions

*The kind of impressions proper to one art and to no other, whose recognition is the beginning of criticism · The Renaissance order of impressions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A kind or class of impressions, belonging to one art alone.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The sensuous material of each art brings with it "a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The Key Words entry on Impression says that in the Preface "the impression is the particular effect of a work on a particular person".

**A place to read.** GIO §§1, 3, 10.

## Meaning

"Order" here is not sequence but kind, as in an order of nature or a religious order: a class of things that belong together and apart from others. An impression, in the language of the Preface, is the effect a work has on the one who receives it (see Impression). An order of impressions is a whole family of such effects, the kind of experience that one art can give and no other can.

[55] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 1486), the seventeen paradoxical conclusions according to his own opinion, no. 1.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs three times in the Giorgione essay: once as a principle, then twice in sentences that grant it and move beyond it. The first paragraph states it as the beginning of criticism: a clear apprehension that the sensuous material of each art brings with it "a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind" is "the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material). The third paragraph repeats it as a concession: "although each art has thus its own specific order of impressions", the arts lend each other new forces (GIO §3; see Anders-streben). The tenth repeats it again: "although each art has its incommunicable element, its untranslatable order of impressions", the arts "may be represented as continually struggling after the law or principle of music" (GIO §10; see Musical law).

The pattern is the essay's method in small. Pater begins from the differences of the arts and never withdraws them; each later step is built on "although". The order of impressions is where criticism starts, and the *Anders-streben* and the condition of music are where it goes. The differences are kept because they are the ground of the higher claim: the arts can strive toward one another only if each is first itself.

The phrase carries the Preface's word into a new kind of question. The Preface asks the critic what a song or a picture is to him (PRE §2; see Æsthetic criticism), and the answer is an impression, one person's experience of one work. The Giorgione essay asks what kind of impression a song gives, and what kind a picture, and finds that they differ "in kind"; the first paragraph grounds the difference in the senses themselves (GIO §1; see Ultimate differences of the arts). The order of impressions can be read as the Preface's relativism given a structure. Impressions are still personal, but they fall into kinds, and the kinds follow the arts. The Du Bellay essay speaks in the same way of the "new order of effects" that painters from Italy drew from glass (BEL §1; see Sensuous material); an order of effects is what a material yields to the maker, an order of impressions what it yields to the one who receives the work.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "order of impressions" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** The sensuous material of each art brings an order of impressions distinct in kind.

**GIO §3** Although each art has its own specific order of impressions, the arts lend each other new forces.

**GIO §10** Although each art has its untranslatable order of impressions, the arts may be represented as struggling after the law of music.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Anders-streben; Imaginative reason; Impression; Musical law; Sensuous material; Ultimate differences of the arts; Untranslatable charm.

# Original sentiment

*The painter's own feeling, running beneath his subject · The Renaissance original sentiment*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An original sentiment is a feeling that belongs to the artist himself, rather than to his subject, his patron or his school.

**In *The Renaissance*.** When Botticelli painted religious incidents he "painted them with an under-current of original sentiment, which touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject" (BOT §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; its Outline says that "Pater follows recurring faces and attitudes through religious, mythological, and allegorical pictures".

**A place to read.** BOT §1, with LEO §25.

## Meaning

"Original" has two senses, and Pater's phrase uses both. The older is "belonging to the origin": an original sentiment springs from the painter, not from the text he illustrates. The newer, which the eighteenth century made a term of praise, is "new, not copied": the feeling has not been felt in that way before. "Sentiment" in Pater is the feeling a work carries beneath what it shows (see Sentiment).

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the essay's first paragraph, in the sentence that maps Botticelli's sources: "Leaving the simple religion which had occupied the followers of Giotto for a century, and the simple naturalism which had grown out of it, a thing of birds and flowers only, he sought inspiration in what to him were works of the modern world, the writings of Dante and Boccaccio, and in new readings of his own of classical stories" (BOT §1), and religious incidents he painted with the under-current quoted above.

Two figures meet in the last clause, one of water and one of cloth. An under-current runs beneath a surface that may be still; a veil hides a face and shows its shape. The subject is the surface and the veil, "ostensible", that which is shown; the sentiment is "the real matter". The sentence can be read as reversing the usual order, in which the subject is the matter and the feeling an ornament, and it gives the critic his task: to read through the veil.

The rest of the essay does so. Madonnas, Venus, Judith and Truth turn out to share one sentiment, "the wistfulness of exiles" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles), and the picture's ostensible subject is, each time, the veil through which it touches you.

The Leonardo essay uses the same word for the same method. In one of his pictures the ostensible subject is "the starting-point of a train of sentiment" (LEO §25; see Ostensible subject). There the sentiment is Leonardo's; it is subtler and more willed. Botticelli's under-current is not a programme. It rises "by some subtle law of his own structure" (BOT §4; see Mood).

The phrase can be read as the book's account of what makes an artist worth a separate study. A painter who paints only his subject belongs to his school; one whose own feeling runs under every subject is a temperament (see Temperament), and the Preface's critic exists to name it. The danger of the method is plain: what is found under the veil may be the critic's own feeling. Pater meets it by multiplying instances. One picture could mislead him, as the edition's notes show one did (see Religious reverie); a sentiment that recurs through religious, mythological and allegorical pictures is harder to invent.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which the "ostensible subject" is set against the sentiment beneath it, in the order of the book; the phrase "original sentiment" occurs only in the first.

**BOT §1** Botticelli painted religious incidents with an under-current of original sentiment, the real matter of the picture beneath its ostensible subject.

**LEO §25** In Leonardo the ostensible subject is the starting-point of a train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music.

## In this edition

The edition's Outline says that "Pater follows recurring faces and attitudes through religious, mythological, and allegorical pictures. His Venus brings inherited pagan beauty into contact with a melancholy he also finds in the painter's sacred figures."

## See also

Mood; Naturalism; Ostensible subject; Religious reverie; Sentiment; Temperament; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Originality

*Not novelty but a source: what is most a man's own in his work · The Renaissance*

*originality*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of being original: in the older sense, springing from its own source; in the modern sense, new.

**In *The Renaissance*.** *Intimité* is "some subtler sense of originality" (ROB §13).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §13 says that *intimité* "suggests a work's capacity to convey something inward and individual about its maker".

**A place to read.** ROB §13, with BEL §21.

## Meaning

Latin *origo* is a source or beginning, and the original was first what comes from the source: the original text against the copy, original sin as the sin of the first parents. Only in the eighteenth century did "originality" come to mean chiefly newness, the power to make what has not been made before, and critics of genius such as Edward Young, in his *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), made it the first virtue of the artist. Pater's two uses lean toward the older sense.

## Use in the book

The word occurs in two paragraphs. In the della Robbia essay it defines *intimité*: the school's work bears "the impress of a personal quality, a profound expressiveness, what the French call *intimité*, by which is meant some subtler sense of originality" (ROB §13; see Intimité). The qualifier is the point. Originality in the common sense, novelty of design or invention, can be read as the one thing the Tuscan sculptors do not need; their subjects are the Madonna, the saint, the tomb, and their means are a convention shared by the whole school (see Conventionalism). The "subtler sense" is originality as origin: the work is original because it comes, unmistakably, from one man, and carries "what is most inward and peculiar" in him.

The second use is in the Du Bellay essay and confirms the reading. The journey to Italy, which Du Bellay "deplored as the greatest misfortune of his life, put him in full possession of his talent, and brought out all its originality" (BEL §21). The same paragraph asks of a poet "something individual, inventive, unique, the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality" (BEL §21), and what came out in Rome was less new subject-matter than the homesick poetry of the *Regrets*, the poetry of his own moods, and the same paragraph, which has reported Sainte-Beuve's ranking of the *Regrets* as *poésie intime*, says that in effect you do find "intimacy, *intimité*, here" (BEL §21; see Intimité). Originality and *intimité* are found together in both places, and in both the original is the personal.

The pairing can be read as Pater's quiet correction of a Romantic idea. The Romantics prized originality as invention, the new world the genius makes; Pater prizes it as the presence of a source, and finds it most moving in schools that invent little. A Tuscan relief of the Madonna, one of hundreds, can be more original in this sense than a novel design, because it bears the seal of the man who made it. The Preface's task for the critic, "to indicate what the source of that impression is, and under what conditions it is experienced" (PRE §3), is answered here: the source is the maker.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "originality" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §13** Intimité is some subtler sense of originality, the seal on a man's work of what is most inward in him.

**BEL §21** The journey to Italy brought out all the originality of Du Bellay's talent.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §13 glosses *intimité* as "Intimacy or inwardness", and says that "In Pater's use the word suggests a work's capacity to convey something inward and individual about its maker." The note at BEL §21 says that Pater uses *poésie intime* "for poetry that lets a reader into the poet's moods and private experience".

## See also

Conventionalism; Expressiveness; Intimité; Manner of apprehension; Original sentiment.

# Orthodoxy of taste

*Pater's name for the classical tradition as a standard: a taste fixed in Greece and handed down as orthodoxy is handed down in a church · The Renaissance*

*the orthodoxy of taste*; *this standard of artistic orthodoxy*; *a standard of taste*; *the standard of taste*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Correct belief in matters of taste: a fixed standard of beauty held as a church holds its creed.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Raphael's Parnassus commemorates "the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §22 says that Pater sees the Vatican room "as giving visual form to the transmission of two traditions".

**A place to read.** WIN §23.

## Meaning

*Orthodoxy* is from the Greek *orthos*, right, and *doxa*, opinion: right belief, as the Church defines it against heresy. "Taste", the faculty of judging beauty, was in the eighteenth century the great subject of criticism, and the question of a "standard of taste" was much debated, whether beauty had a rule common to all or varied with each person.[56] Pater does not mention the debate, but his phrase answers its question by joining the two vocabularies. Taste has a standard, and the standard is an orthodoxy: it was defined once, at a particular time, and handed down.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the twenty-second paragraph, where Raphael's two frescoes in the same Vatican room set the Church's tradition beside the poets'. "In this fresco it is the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste, that Raphael commemorates" (WIN §22; see Castalia). The religious word is chosen to match the other fresco: the Disputation shows the Church's orthodoxy round the Sacrament, the Parnassus the orthodoxy of art round Apollo (see Beatific vision; Classical tradition).

The twenty-third paragraph explains how there can be an orthodoxy of art at all. "Again, individual genius works ever under conditions of time and place: its products are coloured by the varying aspects of nature, and type of human form, and outward manners of life. There is thus an element of change in art; criticism must never for a moment forget that 'the artist is the child of his time.' But besides these conditions of time and place, and independent of them, there is also an element of permanence, a standard of taste, which genius confesses" (WIN §23). The verb "confesses" keeps the religious figure: genius acknowledges the standard as a believer confesses a creed. The standard is kept in "a purely intellectual tradition" passed from work to work (WIN §23; see Conscious tradition). And it has a birthplace. "The standard of taste, then, was fixed in Greece, at a definite historical period. A tradition for all succeeding generations, it originates in a spontaneous growth out of the influences of Greek society" (WIN §23). The paragraph ends by asking what conditions generated "this ideal, this standard of artistic orthodoxy" (WIN §23; see Conscious tradition), and the essay's next twenty paragraphs answer, through Greek religion, the body and sculpture.

The phrase is bolder than it looks in a book so suspicious of orthodoxies. The Conclusion warns against "acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5; see Orthodoxy), and the Michelangelo essay has the Roman Church fixing itself "in a frozen orthodoxy" (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy). Pater keeps his one orthodoxy for taste, and the essay can be read as explaining why that one is different: it is not imposed by authority but "confessed" by genius, and it

[56] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", in *Four Dissertations* (London, 1757).

rests on a spontaneous growth, not on a decree. The two halves of the twenty-third paragraph are held together without being reconciled. The artist is the child of his time; the standard is outside time. Pater's criticism lives between them, attending to the "element of change" in each work and measuring it against the element of permanence.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which Pater names the orthodoxy or standard of taste, in the order of the book.

**WIN §22** In the Parnassus fresco Raphael commemorates the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste.

**WIN §23** Besides the element of change in art there is an element of permanence, a standard of taste, fixed in Greece and kept in an intellectual tradition.

## See also

Beatific vision; Castalia; Classical tradition; Conscious tradition; Frozen orthodoxy; Orthodoxy.

# Passionate coldness

*a kind of passionate coldness*

Attested: *passionate coldness* (WIN §51). The phrase is an oxymoron, joining heat and cold in one temper. Pater uses it of the natures, like Goethe's, that live "in the whole": "With a kind of passionate coldness, such natures rejoice to be away from and past their former selves, and above all, they are jealous of that abandonment to one special gift which really limits their capabilities" (WIN §51). The passion is the intellect's demand "to feel itself alive" (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen); the coldness is its refusal to stay with anything it has mastered. Such a mind loves its own growth more than any of its objects, and it can be read as the counterpart of Winckelmann's opposite temper, the union of ardour and indifference read in his face (WIN §10; see Ardour and indifference): there the coldness was a statue's calm over a burning enthusiasm, here it is a traveller's readiness to leave. The phrase holds the cost of the Goethean ideal that the essay recommends. "Rejoice" is the word for what most men would grieve, the passing of their former selves, and Pater does not soften it.

## See also

Ardour and indifference; Exigent intellectualism; Im Ganzen.

*The kind of pleasure found in one artist and nowhere else · The Renaissance*

*peculiar quality of pleasure*; *peculiar sensation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The phrase names the particular kind of pleasure a work gives, a pleasure that belongs to it and cannot be had from anything else.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "What is the peculiar sensation, what is the peculiar quality of pleasure, which his work has the property of exciting in us, and which we cannot get elsewhere?" (BOT §1).

**In this edition.** The note on the Preface's questions (PRE §2) says that "In 'Sandro Botticelli,' Pater repeats it almost verbatim before turning to the distinctive quality he feels in the painter's work".

**A place to read.** BOT §1 and BOT §10, with PRE §§2–3.

## Meaning

"Peculiar" comes from the Latin *peculium*, the property a son or a slave held as his own, and so means "one's own, belonging to one thing only". The sense "odd" grew from it, but Pater uses the older one. "Quality" is Cicero's coinage: he made *qualitas*, "what-kind-ness", to render the Greek philosophers' *poiotēs*, and gave the word to Varro in the *Academica*.[57] The phrase asks of what kind a pleasure is, on the assumption that the kind belongs to one artist alone.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens and closes the Botticelli essay. At the opening Pater puts the Preface's question to a painter, in the words quoted above, and adds: "For this, especially when he has to speak of a comparatively unknown artist, is always the chief question which a critic has to answer" (BOT §1). The Preface had asked of every object whether it gives pleasure, and "what sort or degree of pleasure" (PRE §2; see Pleasure), and had valued each work for "a special, a unique, impression of pleasure" (PRE §3). The essay can be read as narrowing the question in two steps. "Peculiar sensation" comes first, the bare effect felt; "peculiar quality of pleasure" follows, the effect discriminated and named. The order is the Preface's method in small: to know one's impression, then to analyse it.

At the close the phrase becomes a principle of rank. Besides the great painters "there is a certain number of artists who have a distinct faculty of their own by which they convey to us a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere" (BOT §10), and such artists have their own claim on criticism (see General criticism). The words "which we cannot get

[57] Cicero, *Academica* I.25.

elsewhere" can be read as the language of the market, of a good that is scarce because it has no substitute, and it joins the Preface's comparison of works to "a herb, a wine, a gem" (PRE §3; see Virtue). A master may be greater; he cannot give this.

Between the question and the principle stands the essay's answer, and it is a surprise. The peculiar pleasure of Botticelli can be read as a pleasure in sadness: the wistfulness of figures "conscious of a passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles), the Madonnas who attract "more and more" though "conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty" (BOT §7; see Abject), the goddess of pleasure herself conceived with sadness (BOT §8; see Goddess of pleasure). The phrase that seemed to promise delight discovers melancholy, and Pater does not treat that as a contradiction. A quality of pleasure is defined by its difference from other pleasures, and the difference of Botticelli's is its shadow.

The question has a plain weakness: the critic who asks what a work does to him may find only himself. Pater's answer is the essay itself. It does not stop at "I feel"; it traces the feeling through a run of pictures and a philosophical legend until it can be named, and it ends by giving the name a place in culture.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §1** The chief question a critic has to answer is the peculiar sensation, the peculiar quality of pleasure, which an artist's work excites.

**BOT §10** A certain number of artists convey a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere.

## In this edition

The note on the Preface's questions (PRE §2) says: "This question supplies a practical test for the ensuing essays. In 'Sandro Botticelli,' Pater repeats it almost verbatim before turning to the distinctive quality he feels in the painter's work." The note at BOT §10 says that the essay's answer "shifts the criterion toward an artistic faculty that produces a particular experience even when its practitioner stands outside the conventional first rank".

## See also

Abject; General criticism; Goddess of pleasure; Pleasurable sensation; Pleasure; Virtue; Wistfulness of exiles.

## Permanent efficacy

*permanent efficacy*

Attested: *permanent efficacy* (GIO §25). Efficacy, the Latin *efficacia*, is the power to produce an effect, a word long at home in theology and medicine, of the working of a sacrament or a remedy. Pater uses it in the last paragraph of the Giorgione essay for an artist's power to act beyond his authentic works: beyond the ascertained facts "we must take note of that indirect influence by which one like Giorgione, for instance, enlarges his permanent efficacy and really makes himself felt in our culture" (GIO §25; see Indirect influence). "Permanent" stands against the essay's account of how Giorgione's fame was first won. "Much of the work on which Giorgione's immediate fame depended, work done for instantaneous effect, in all probability passed away almost within his own age" (GIO §14; see Instantaneous effect). The two phrases can be read as the two halves of the essay's history. The immediate fame was made by works and lost with them; the permanent efficacy is made by influence and grows.

### See also

Indirect influence; Instantaneous effect; Salt of genuineness; Vraie vérité.

## Philosophiren

*Philosophiren*

Attested: *Philosophiren* (CON §4; C73 §5). The German verb "to philosophise", in the older spelling, opens the fourth paragraph of the Conclusion: "Philosophiren, says Novalis, ist dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren" (CON §4). The edition's note renders it "To philosophize, says Novalis, is to dispel sluggishness, to bring to life", and says that Novalis was the pen name of the early German Romantic Friedrich von Hardenberg, who lived from 1772 to 1801. The saying comes from his notebooks, where it is followed by a complaint that philosophy had hitherto been studied by first killing it and then dissecting and dissolving it.[58] Pater keeps only the first sentence, and puts it at the turn of his argument. The paragraph before can be read as having done what Novalis complained of: analysis has dissected experience and left it dissolved (CON §3; see Analysis). The German sentence announces that philosophy is something else, an activity that wakes and quickens, and the English sentence after it gives the same claim in Pater's words: the service of philosophy, "of speculative culture", is to rouse the human spirit "to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4; see

[58] Novalis, *Fragmente*, among the notes headed "Die Kunst Philosophien zu machen", in the spelling of a modern edition: *Philosophieren ist dephlegmatisieren, vivifizieren. Man hat bisher in der Untersuchung der Philosophie die Philosophie erst totgeschlagen und dann zergliedert und aufgelöst.*

Speculative culture). To philosophise is no longer to arrive at a system but to be made more alive. The first of the two verbs that define it comes from the distiller's laboratory (see Dephlegmatisiren; Vivify).

## See also

Analysis; Dephlegmatisiren; Observation; Speculative culture; Vivify.

# Positive knowledge

*Ascertained fact, and the measure Pico fails · The Renaissance*
*positive knowledge*; *positive*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Positive knowledge is knowledge of what is laid down as fact and can be shown: the ascertained results of observation, as against speculation.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico sought knowledge "less for the sake of positive knowledge than because he believed there was a spirit of order and beauty in knowledge" (PIC §16), and his thoughts, "however little their positive value may be, are connected with springs beneath them of deep and passionate emotion" (PIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PIC §§14, 16.

## Meaning

The Latin *positivus* is "laid down", from *ponere*, to place; positive law is law laid down by authority, as against natural law. In the nineteenth century the word took a new sense from Auguste Comte, whose *Course of Positive Philosophy* (1830–42) held that every branch of knowledge passes through three stages, the theological, the metaphysical and the positive, and that in the last the mind gives up the search for causes and confines itself to observed facts and the laws that connect them.[59] "Positive" became the word for what the sciences could prove, and positivism the creed of those who would know nothing else.

## Use in the book

The Pico essay twice measures its hero by the positive standard, and twice turns from it. Pico's thoughts, "however little their positive value may be", are "connected with springs beneath them of deep and passionate emotion" (PIC §14; see Unseen beauty). The last paragraph is plainer. The story of the forged cabalistic manuscripts "might well stand as a parable of all he ever seemed to gain in the way of actual knowledge" (PIC §16; see Cabala), and he sought knowledge "less for the sake of positive knowledge"

[59] Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophie positive* (Paris, 1830–42), lesson 1.

than for the spirit of order and beauty he believed was in it (PIC §16; see Order and beauty in knowledge). "Actual knowledge" and "positive knowledge" can be read as the same thing seen twice, and Pico has little of either.

Pater grants the verdict. He does not argue that Pico's learning was sound, or that the Heptaplus is true. What he refuses is to let the positive standard be the last word on a man. The essay can be read as using Comte's word against Comte's creed: positive knowledge is what Pico lacked, but the qualities that make him "still active" (PIC §16) are of another order. The book's other uses keep the word in its plain sense. The fifteenth century is to be studied "not merely for its positive results in the things of the intellect and the imagination", but "for its general spirit and character" (PRE §7); in the della Robbia school a characteristic of the work "seems to bring those workmen themselves very near to us", "even in the absence of much positive information about their actual history" (ROB §13; see Expressiveness). In each place the positive is set beside something it cannot reach.

The Conclusion names Comte himself, among the systems the mind must not rest in: we are to be "never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5; see Impression; Orthodoxy). Positivism is one more orthodoxy. Pater keeps positive knowledge as a measure and declines it as a faith.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "positive" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §7** The fifteenth century is to be studied not merely for its positive results but for its general spirit and character.

**PIC §14** However little the positive value of Pico's thoughts, they are connected with springs of deep and passionate emotion.

**PIC §16** Pico sought knowledge less for the sake of positive knowledge than for a spirit of order and beauty in it.

**ROB §13** Even without much positive information about their history, the della Robbia workmen seem very near to us.

## See also

Cabala; Expressiveness; Impression; Order and beauty in knowledge; Orthodoxy; Unseen beauty.

Primary data

*The critic's given facts, known only at first hand · The Renaissance primary data*; *data*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Data are things given, the facts from which reasoning starts; primary data are those behind which one cannot go.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The answers to the critic's questions about his own impressions are his "original facts", primary data that, as in the study of light, morals or number, must be realised at first hand (PRE §2). The word "data" returns once, for what the visible scene gives Botticelli (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PRE §2.

## Meaning

The Latin *data*, "things given", is the plural of *datum*. In geometry and the sciences the data are what a problem supplies, the known quantities from which the unknown is found; in philosophy, what is given to the mind before inference. "Primary" marks them as first in order: they are not reached by argument, and no argument can supply them to someone who lacks them.

## Use in the book

Pater puts the phrase at the end of the critic's questions. What is this song or picture "to me"? Does it give me pleasure, and what sort? "The answers to these questions are the original facts with which the æsthetic critic has to do; and, as in the study of light, of morals, of number, one must realise such primary data for one's self, or not at all" (PRE §2). The three comparisons have this in common. Light must be seen, the claims of morals felt, and the truths of number grasped by one's own understanding; in none of them can a report stand in for the experience. So with beauty: the critic's data are given only to the one who has the impression, and must be realised, made real to oneself (see Realise).

The sentence can be read as the Preface's answer to the charge that such criticism is merely private. The data are first-hand, but they are data, facts to be analysed, not opinions; and the next paragraph shows the critic working outwards from them to the virtue in the object which others can verify (PRE §3; see Virtue). The phrase also explains why the Preface says the critic who has strong impressions has "no need to trouble himself with the abstract question what beauty is in itself": that question begins after the data, not with them (PRE §2).

The word returns once, for what the visible scene gives a painter: where Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandajo "do but transcribe" the outward image, the genius of which Botticelli is the type "usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own" (BOT §4; see Data).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "data" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** The answers to the critic's questions are the original facts; as in the study of light, of morals, of number, one must realise such primary data for one's self, or not at all.

**BOT §4** The genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it as the exponent of its own ideas, rejecting some, isolating others, and combining them anew.

## See also

Data; Impression; Realise; To see the object as in itself it really is; Virtue; Visionary painter.

# Pure effect

*An effect that is nothing but effect, a light on a slight thing that vanishes and leaves a longing behind · The Renaissance*

*pure effect*; *a chance effect of light*; *effect*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An effect with no substance behind it: a momentary appearance, which exists only in being perceived.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The slight thing that a sudden light transfigures vanishes "because it was pure effect" (BEL §28).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BEL §28.

## Meaning

An effect is what a cause produces, and in the language of the arts the impression a work or a sight makes, as in "an effect of light". "Pure" removes everything else: a pure effect is impression without object, a thing that exists only in the moment of its appearing and has no being to fall back on when the moment is gone. The phrase carries a paradox that Pater keeps. What is pure effect has nothing durable in it, and for that very reason it is perfect while it lasts.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the Du Bellay essay, in Pater's comment on the winnower's song. The song, he says, "has, in the highest degree, the qualities, the value, of the whole Pleiad school of poetry, of the whole phase of taste from which that school derives—a certain silvery grace of fancy, nearly all the pleasure of which is in the surprise at the happy and dexterous way in which a thing slight in itself is handled" (BEL §28; see Silveriness; Pleasure with surprise). The sentence makes the poem's value its handling, and the next one warns against any other way of getting at it: "The sweetness of it is by no means to be got at by crushing, as you crush wild

herbs to get at their perfume" (BEL §28). Analysis that breaks the thing open will find nothing inside; the sweetness is all on the surface, in the way the slight thing is handled.

The last sentences say what such a poem does. A sudden light "transfigures some trivial thing" (BEL §28; see Winnowing-fan), and then: "A moment—and the thing has vanished, because it was pure effect; but it leaves a relish behind it, a longing that the accident may happen again" (BEL §28). The essay ends on a pleasure that cannot be kept. The thing vanishes "because" it was pure effect: its vanishing is not a defect but a consequence of what it was. What is left is a relish and a longing, and a longing "that the accident may happen again", for no art can command the light.

The essay prepares the ending from its first pages. In the third paragraph the Renaissance taste that Ronsard accepted, leaving the buildings, the language, the art and the poetry of France Gothic at bottom, gilds their surfaces with a foreign aspect "in itself neither deeper nor more permanent than a chance effect of light" (BEL §3; see Gothic manner). There the chance effect of light is a measure of slightness, almost a reproach; at the end the same kind of effect is the essay's highest praise. The two can be read as the essay's whole judgement of the French Renaissance: a light passing over a solid Gothic ground, worth little as substance and much as effect.

The book's other passing effects stand around the phrase. In the sentiment of which Michelangelo is the poet, the new body is at last "a passing light, a mere intangible, external effect, over those too rigid, or too formless faces" (MIC §20; see New body); of "this particular effect of light, this sudden inweaving of gold thread through the texture of the haystack", Pater says "we might say" that it gives the scene "artistic qualities" (GIO §6; see Gold thread); much of the work on which Giorgione's immediate fame depended was "work done for instantaneous effect" (GIO §14; see Instantaneous effect). The Winckelmann essay gives the "volatile effects" that architecture can only suggest (WIN §§32–33). Pure effect is the limit of all these: the effect that has become the whole of the thing.

The Conclusion can be read as making the phrase a rule for life. There, every moment, "some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest", and it is "for that moment only" (CON §4; see Hard, gem-like flame). The relish that the winnower's song leaves, "a longing that the accident may happen again", is the Conclusion's whole ethic in small: to be present at the moment of the effect, knowing that it will not be kept.

## Places to read

BEL §28, with every paragraph in which Pater names an effect of light or a passing, chance, sudden, instantaneous or volatile effect, in the order of the book.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo's new body is a passing light, a mere intangible, external effect.

**LEO §14** Leonardo economises all forces for an opportunity of sudden and sure effect.

**GIO §6** We might say that a particular effect of light, a sudden inweaving of gold thread, gives a homely scene artistic qualities.

**GIO §14** Much of the work on which Giorgione's fame depended, done for instantaneous effect, in all probability passed away.

**BEL §3** Renaissance taste gilds the surface of French work like a chance effect of light.

**BEL §28** The slight thing vanishes because it was pure effect, but leaves a relish behind it.

**WIN §32** Architecture holds the spirit only as volatile effects, gathered from it by reflexion.

**WIN §33** What lurks about architecture as a volatile effect, sculpture takes into its whole material.

## See also

Accident; Gold thread; Gothic manner; Hard, gem-like flame; Instantaneous effect; New body; Pleasure with surprise; Relish; Silveriness; Winnowing-fan.

# Pure perception

*The state toward which art strives, in which a work is received whole by the senses and the mind together, free of the mere intelligence · The Renaissance*

*pure perception*; *perception*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Perception unmixed with reasoning about what is perceived: a work taken in as a single act.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Art, then, is thus always striving to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception, to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject or material" (GIO §9).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that Pater defines the faculty "more fully later in the essay, when the viewer perceives form and matter as a single effect".

**A place to read.** GIO §9.

## Meaning

Perception, from the Latin *percipere*, to take hold of wholly, is the mind's grasp of what the senses give: not sensation alone but sensation

taken up and recognised. "Pure" removes from it the other work of the mind, inference, comparison, the search for a meaning behind the thing. Pure perception is seeing that does not go on to interpret, because what it sees already holds all there is.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the sentence that opens the ninth paragraph and draws the conclusion of the essay's first argument. "Art, then, is thus always striving to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception, to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject or material" (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason). The rest of the sentence names the ideal works, those in which "form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect" to the imaginative reason (GIO §9; see Matter and form). Pure perception can be read as the reader's side of that union. Where the two are one, there is nothing to separate and so nothing to reason about; the work is grasped at once.

The phrase can seem to contradict the first paragraph, which says that art "addresses not pure sense, still less the pure intellect, but the 'imaginative reason' through the senses" (GIO §1; see Imaginative reason). The contradiction is only in the adjective. Pure sense would be sensation without mind, and pure intellect mind without sensation; pure perception is neither. It is perception purified of "the mere intelligence", the part of the mind that asks what a thing means and finds its answer elsewhere. The essay's other uses of "pure" mark the same distinction. Literary interest is addressed "also to the pure intelligence" (GIO §2; see Literary interest), and poetry works "with words addressed in the first instance to the pure intelligence" (GIO §7; see Poetical quality). Against these stands "that inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour" (GIO §2; see Pictorial quality), the pure material that pure perception takes in.

The phrase can be read as the essay's quiet answer to the Preface, which asks what a work is "to me" (PRE §2; see Impression). The Giorgione essay describes the kind of impression that the highest art gives: one in which perception does not divide into seeing and thinking. The landscape of the Venetian painters is the image of it, "a country of the pure reason or half-imaginative memory" (GIO §6; see Abstracted elements), a place where reason itself has become a kind of sight.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "perception" occurs, with GIO §§1 and 2, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Art addresses not pure sense, still less the pure intellect, but the imaginative reason through the senses.

**GIO §2** Technique and literary interest are both addressed to the intelligence; the true pictorial quality lies between.

**GIO §9** Art is always striving to become a matter of pure perception.

## See also

Abstracted elements; Imaginative reason; Impression; Literary interest; Matter and form; Pictorial quality; Poetical quality; Responsibilities to its material.

# Purge

*purge*, *purging*, *purged*, *purges*

Attested: *purge* (ROB §7); *the purging away* (ROB §9); *purged* (WIN §§34, 37); *purges* (WIN §37). To cleanse by removing what is foreign or harmful, from the Latin *purgare*, to make clean; the word belonged to medicine, which purged the body of ill humours, and to religion, which purged the soul of sin. Pater uses it for the sculptor's discipline of leaving out. The Greek law of *Allgemeinheit* prompted the sculptors "to purge from the individual all that belongs only to him, all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit), and the Greek system aimed "at the purging away from the individual of what belonged only to him" (ROB §9; see Abstraction). In the Winckelmann essay the white light of sculpture is "purged from the angry, bloodlike stains of action and passion" (WIN §34), sculpture "gradually purges away" all that is accidental from the supreme types, and poetry at its height uses "language in its most purged form" (WIN §37). The medical and religious senses can be read as both present: what is purged is a stain as well as a surplus, and the purified form is cleaner as well as simpler. The Purgatorio, Dante's place of purging, is named twice in the book (BOT §3; WIN §14), and purgatory once (BOT §5), not in this sense.

## See also

Abstraction; Accident; Allgemeinheit; Repose; Type.

# Realisation

*The carrying out of an intention, and the limit of art that does no more · The Renaissance*

*realisation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Realisation is the making real of something: an idea carried out in a finished work, or a truth grasped so fully that it becomes real to the mind.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the Birth of Venus "the passion, the energy, the industry of realisation, with which Botticelli carries out his intention," measures the influence of the myth it paints (BOT §8; see Imaginative system).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus".

**A place to read.** BOT §8, with LEO §25 and WIN §44.

## Meaning

The noun belongs to the verb "realise", which the book uses for making an impression real to oneself (see Realise). In the language of painting, to realise was to carry a design through to full representational truth, and "realisation" was the finish that results. Both senses live in Pater's noun: the artist realises his intention in the work, and the viewer realises, makes real to himself, what the work presents.

## Use in the book

The noun comes in five paragraphs, and it is praised in two and placed below something else in the other three. In the Botticelli essay it is a measure. After the "first impression" made by the Hellenic spirit on minds that had turned back to it (BOT §8; see First impression), Pater writes that "in the passion, the energy, the industry of realisation, with which Botticelli carries out his intention", lies "the exact measure" of that influence (BOT §8; see Imaginative system). The three nouns rise from feeling to force to labour, and the labour is the proof.

In the Leonardo essay realisation is what the painter refuses. One picture uses its subject "not as matter for definite pictorial realisation" (LEO §25; see Ostensible subject), and Leonardo uses "incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake, or as mere subjects for pictorial realisation, but as a cryptic language for fancies all his own" (LEO §29; see For their own sake). "Definite" and "mere" put realisation below suggestion: to paint a subject fully is less than to make it the occasion of a mood.

The Winckelmann essay gives the word both values in turn. When Winckelmann first meets ancient sculpture at Dresden, "in vivid realisation, we see the native tendency of Winckelmann to escape from abstract theory to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch" (WIN §9): here realisation is the cure for theory. But of the Hellenic ideal itself Pater writes that if man "was to be saved from the ennui which ever attaches itself to realisation, even the realisation of the perfect life, it was necessary that a conflict should come" (WIN §44). The perfect, once realised, is dull; life needs "some sharper note" to grieve its harmony.

The five uses can be read as one judgement. Realisation is the artist's honesty and the critic's evidence, and Pater respects it; but the art he loves

best stops just short of it, or passes through it into something unrealised, a sentiment, a conflict, a music.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the noun "realisation" occurs, in the order of the book; the verb is treated under Realise.

**BOT §8** The industry of realisation in Botticelli's Venus measures the influence of the imaginative system it depicts.

**LEO §25** In Leonardo the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a train of sentiment.

**LEO §29** Leonardo uses sacred story not as mere subjects for pictorial realisation but as a cryptic language for his own fancies.

**WIN §9** At Dresden, in vivid realisation, Winckelmann escapes from abstract theory to intuition, to sight and touch.

**WIN §44** A conflict was needed to save man from the ennui that attaches itself to realisation, even of the perfect life.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the word. The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus, although it shows the goddess being carried to shore after her birth".

## See also

First impression; For their own sake; Imaginative system; Minor tones; Ostensible subject; Realise.

# Realise

*To make real to oneself, and to make actual in a material · The Renaissance*

*realise*, *realises*, *realised*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To realise is to make real: to grasp a thing so vividly that it is real to one's mind, and also to bring a thing into actual existence or form.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface uses the first sense twice: the critic must know his impression and "realise it distinctly", and must "realise such primary data for one's self, or not at all" (PRE §2). The essays use the second: Michelangelo's unfinished sculpture "suggests rather than realises actual form" (ROB §10), and music "most completely realises" the identity of matter and form (GIO §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** PRE §2 beside GIO §10, the two senses side by side.

## Meaning

The verb comes from the French *réaliser*, to make real. In English it took two directions. One is mental: to realise something is to apprehend it as real, to bring it home to oneself, so that it is not only known but felt. The other is practical: to realise a plan or an idea is to carry it out, to give it actual existence, as an artist realises a design in stone. Pater uses both, and in the Preface the first carries a strong charge: what is realised is grasped clearly and at first hand.

## Use in the book

In the Preface realising is the inward completion of seeing. The first step in æsthetic criticism "is to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly" (PRE §2): discrimination tells the impression from others, and realising makes it fully present. Of the critic's original facts Pater says that one must "realise such primary data for one's self, or not at all" (PRE §2; see Primary data). Realising cannot be delegated.

The other sense is the artist's. Michelangelo left nearly all his sculpture "in a puzzling sort of incompleteness, which suggests rather than realises actual form", and many feel that they would lose something "if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone" (ROB §10; see Half-realised form; Incompleteness). Luca della Robbia wished "to realise the spirit and manner of that sculpture, in a humbler material" (ROB §12; see Homely art), and Leonardo "alone realises" the Medusa "as the head of a corpse" (LEO §12). In the Winckelmann essay, "To realise this situation, to define, in a chill and empty atmosphere, the focus where rays, in themselves pale and impotent, unite and begin to burn, the artist may have, indeed, to employ the most cunning detail" (WIN §36), and Winckelmann "seems to realise that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge" (WIN §19; see Reminiscence). The School of Giorgione makes this sense the measure of the arts: music "most completely realises this artistic ideal" (GIO §10; see Artistic ideal), the condition "which music alone completely realises" and which is "realised absolutely only in music" (GIO §§10, 20; see Condition of music).

The second sense also serves history. The new kingdom of thought of Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher, was "not opposed to but only beyond and independent of the spiritual system then actually realised" (FRE §6), and the more the men of the Renaissance become representative of it, "the more is this condition realised in them" (FRE §33). Of Vittoria Colonna, the Roman poet who was Michelangelo's friend in his old age, Pater says that her significance is "that she realises for him a type of affection which even in disappointment may charm and sweeten his spirit" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment).

The senses can be read as two halves of one movement. The critic realises inwardly what the artist realised outwardly; Pater's praise for the old French tale, "And then all is so realised!" (FRE §22), joins them, since the storyteller's vividness is what lets the reader see "the ancient forest, with its disused roads grown deep with grass".

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the verb occurs, in the order of the book; "realisation", "realism" and "realist" have entries of their own.

**PRE §2** The critic must realise his impression distinctly, and realise the primary data for himself or not at all.

**FRE §6** Abelard's new kingdom of thought lay beyond the spiritual system then actually realised.

**FRE §22** In Aucassin and Nicolette all is so realised that one sees the ancient forest and hears the country-people.

**FRE §33** The more the men of the Renaissance represent it, the more its condition is realised in them.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's incompleteness suggests rather than realises actual form; many would lose something if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone.

**ROB §12** Luca wished to realise the spirit of the sculpture of his age in a humbler material.

**MIC §4** As if to realise the old Florentine phrase for a sculptor, master of live stone, with Michelangelo the very rocks seem to have life.

**MIC §13** Vittoria realises for Michelangelo a type of affection which even in disappointment may charm and sweeten his spirit.

**LEO §12** Leonardo alone realises the Medusa as the head of a corpse.

**GIO §10** Music most completely realises the perfect identification of matter and form.

**GIO §20** The interpenetration of matter and form is realised absolutely only in music.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann seems to realise the fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge.

**WIN §36** To realise a situation and define the focus where its rays unite and burn, the artist may have to employ the most cunning detail.

## See also

Artistic ideal; Condition of music; Discriminate; Half-realised form; Homely art; Ideal sentiment; Impression; Incompleteness; Primary data; Realisation; Realist; Reminiscence.

## Receptacle

*receptacles*, *receptacle*

Attested: *receptacles* (PRE §2); *receptacle* (PRE §4; LEO §23). A vessel that receives and holds. The objects of æsthetic criticism "are indeed receptacles of so many powers or forces" (PRE §2; see Powers or forces): a work holds its powers as a vessel holds what is poured into it. In PRE §4 the critic asks of a period, "where was the receptacle of its refinement, its elevation, its taste?", so that a person, too, can be the vessel of an age. Leonardo's women seem "to feel powers at work in the common air unfelt by others, to become, as it were, the receptacle of them, and pass them on to us in a chain of secret influences" (LEO §23; see Chain of secret influences).

### See also

Chain of secret influences; Common air; Powers or forces; Virtue.

## Reflexion

*The bending back of light and of thought: the mirror that refines in the essays, and the reflexion that dissolves the Conclusion's world · The Renaissance*

*reflexion*, *reflexions*; *reflection*; *reflect*, *reflected*, *reflecting*; *reflex*, *reflexes*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The throwing back of light from a surface, and the mind's turning upon what it holds; "reflexion" is the older spelling of "reflection".

**In *The Renaissance*.** "But when reflexion begins to play upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence" (CON §3).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §3 says that the argument "now moves from changing material bodies to the experience of perceiving them".

**A place to read.** CON §3, with WIN §§28–29 and 53.

### Meaning

*Reflexio* is a bending back, from the Latin *reflectere*, and the spelling with *x* keeps the Latin form; in Pater's day it was the less common spelling beside "reflection", which his own 1873 Conclusion has (C73 §3). The word was first one of light, which a mirror or still water bends back to the eye, and it passed from light to the mind. Locke called "reflection" "the perception of the operations of our own mind within us", one of the two "fountains" of all our ideas, beside sensation.[60] The two senses stay close in

[60] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690), Book II, chapter 1, §§2, 4.

English, since the mind that reflects is pictured as a mirror turned upon itself, and Pater uses both, sometimes in one paragraph (WIN §§28, 36).

## Use in the book

The reflexion of light runs through the essays as an image of refinement. Verrocchio, Leonardo's master and a designer of all things for sacred or household use, fills the common ways of life "with the reflexion of some far-off brightness" (LEO §5). The supreme works of succeeding generations take "each from each the reflexion of a strange light", whose source is in Greece (WIN §23; see Conscious tradition), and the Greek ideal can be seen only "in the reflected, refined light which a great education creates for us" (WIN §49; see Intellectual light). In each the light comes from elsewhere, and it can be read as the finer for being reflected. The same figure gives the end of the Winckelmann essay its programme: what modern art has to do is "so to rearrange the details of modern life, so to reflect it, that it may satisfy the spirit", and Goethe and Hugo are its examples, regarding that life "as the modern mind must regard it, yet reflecting upon it blitheness and repose" (WIN §53; see Freedom; Dénouement). On this figure art reflects as a mirror does, and in reflecting it changes what it shows.

The reflexion of the mind is a power with an end. Greek thought, at its "happy limit", had not yet "reflected its own colour everywhere", though it had committed itself to "a train of reflexion" that must end in defiance of form (WIN §28; see Idealise; Self-reflexion); the Greek moment is a "delicate pause" on that road (WIN §29; see Pause in time). The arts follow the same stages. In architecture, the first of them, the artist's spiritualities are "to be gathered from it by reflexion" (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit); in the modern arts, to make one moment of Browning's poem appreciable takes "double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself" (WIN §36; see Self-reflexion).

The Conclusion carries the train to its end. Experience at first seems to bury us under a flood of external objects. "But when reflexion begins to play upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence; the cohesive force seems suspended like some trick of magic; each object is loosed into a group of impressions—colour, odour, texture—in the mind of the observer" (CON §3; see Cohesive force). The verb "play" can be read as joining the two senses of the word: reflexion plays upon its objects as light plays upon a surface, and where the essays' reflected light refined what it showed, the Conclusion's reflexion dissolves it. The book holds both: the mirror that refines and the reflexion that unmakes, the first step of an analysis that "goes a step further still" (CON §3; see Analysis).

The essays have lighter uses too. In the French story the two cups of Amis and Amile are "like a second reflexion" of the friends' inward likeness (FRE §10; see Inward similitude); Leonardo's type of beauty seems "to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within" (LEO §2; see

Unsanctified and secret wisdom); two ideas were confirmed in him "as reflexes of things that had touched his brain in childhood" (LEO §10; see Motion of great waters); Giorgione becomes "a sort of impersonation" of Venice, its "projected reflex or ideal" (GIO §18; see Projected reflex); and the poets of the Pleiad weave into their verses "their trite reflexions on the vanity of life" (BEL §16; see Vanity of life).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "reflexion", "reflexions", "reflection", "reflect", "reflected", "reflecting", "reflex" or "reflexes" occurs, "self-reflexion" included, in the order of the book.

**FRE §10** The two cups are like a second reflexion of the inward similitude of Amis and Amile.

**LEO §2** Leonardo's type of beauty seems more than any other artist's to reflect ideas and some scheme of the world within.

**LEO §5** Verrocchio fills the common ways of life with the reflexion of some far-off brightness.

**LEO §10** Two ideas were confirmed in Leonardo as reflexes of things that had touched his brain in childhood.

**GIO §18** Giorgione becomes a sort of impersonation of Venice, its projected reflex or ideal.

**BEL §16** The poets of the Pleiad weave into their verses their trite reflexions on the vanity of life.

**WIN §12** Turning from the Protestantism of his youth, Winckelmann might reflect that Rome had reconciled itself to the Renaissance.

**WIN §23** The supreme works of succeeding generations take each from each the reflexion of a strange light.

**WIN §28** The Greek mind had reached a stage of self-reflexion, and the spirit had not yet reflected its own colour everywhere.

**WIN §29** The delicate pause in Greek reflexion was joined to the perfect animal nature of the Greeks.

**WIN §32** The spiritualities of architecture are to be gathered from it by reflexion.

**WIN §36** Browning's art constructs double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself.

**WIN §49** We can see the Greek ideal only in the reflected, refined light which a great education creates.

**WIN §53** Modern art must so reflect modern life that it may satisfy the spirit, reflecting upon it blitheness and repose.

**CON §3** When reflexion begins to play upon objects they are dissipated under its influence.

**C73 §3** In 1873: when reflection begins to act upon those objects.

## In this edition

The 1873 Conclusion spells the word "reflection" and has a weaker verb: "But when reflection begins to act upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence" (C73 §3; see Cohesive force). The revised text spells it as the essays do and makes it "play".

## See also

Analysis; Blitheness; Cohesive force; Conscious tradition; Dénouement; Freedom; Humanistic spirit; Idealise; Intellectual light; Inward similitude; Motion of great waters; Orthodoxy of taste; Pause in time; Projected reflex; Refraction; Self-reflexion; Unsanctified and secret wisdom; Vanity of life.

# Refraction

*The bending of light as it passes into a new medium: the atmosphere that genius throws round the images it transmits · The Renaissance*

*refraction*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The bending of a ray of light as it passes from one medium into another, as a stick seems broken where it enters water.

**In *The Renaissance*.** All artistic genius generates around itself "an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction" (WIN §36).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §36.

## Meaning

*Refraction* is from the Latin *refringere*, to break back or break open, from *frangere*, to break: a ray is "broken" at the surface of a new medium and goes on at another angle. The law of the bending was found by the Dutch mathematician Willebrord Snellius about 1621 and first published by the French philosopher René Descartes in *La Dioptrique* (1637); the English mathematician Isaac Newton's *Opticks* (1704) showed that a prism refracts the rays of white light by different degrees and so parts them into colours.[61] A refracting medium neither gives back the light it receives, as a mirror does, nor makes its own, as a lamp does. It takes light that comes from elsewhere, bends it, separates it and sends it on changed.

[61] René Descartes, *La Dioptrique* (Leiden, 1637), Discourse 2; Isaac Newton, *Opticks* (London, 1704), Book I, Part I. Snellius's law survived in manuscript and was reported after his death.

## Use in the book

The word comes once, at the head of the thirty-sixth paragraph, where the essay turns from sculpture to painting and poetry. "The basis of all artistic genius lies in the power of conceiving humanity in a new and striking way, of putting a happy world of its own creation in place of the meaner world of our common days, generating around itself an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction, selecting, transforming, recombining the images it transmits, according to the choice of the imaginative intellect" (WIN §36). The three participles can be read as answering to the optics. A prism selects among the rays, transforms their direction and recombines them as colour; genius does the same with the images of the world. And the medium is not given to the artist: he generates it. The world's light is not his, but the atmosphere through which it passes is.

The same paragraph keeps to the figure. To realise a situation the artist must define "the focus where rays, in themselves pale and impotent, unite and begin to burn" (WIN §36; see Realise), which can be read as a burning-glass, a lens that gathers rays by refraction to a point of fire. And in Browning's poem an "artificial light is constructed and broken over the chosen situation" (WIN §36; see Discriminate): "broken" is the root sense of the Latin word. The paragraph can thus be read as one long optical figure, from the medium that bends the light, to the lens that brings it to a focus, to the light broken over the poet's subject.

The figure gives exactness to the book's first principle. The Preface accepts that the aim of criticism is to see the object as in itself it really is, and adds that in æsthetic criticism the first step is "to know one's own impression as it really is" (PRE §2; see To see the object as in itself it really is). Refraction is the physics of that first step: the impression is the object as it reaches us through a medium, and the medium is a temperament (see Temperament; Impression). The Leonardo essay had given the same idea a softer image, the "veil of sight" through which things reach the painter (LEO §18; see Veil of sight); the Winckelmann essay names the law by which the veil works. Pater's critic does not complain of the bending. He asks what kind of medium each artist is, and the essays can be read as studies of different refractions: the novel impression of a temperament (see Novel impression), Botticelli's "peculiar sentiment" (BOT §5), Leonardo's "faint light of eclipse" (LEO §18).

The figure also explains the limits of Winckelmann's results. He had for the most part to reach Greek art through copies, imitations and later Roman art, "this turbid medium" (WIN §20; see Turbid medium). A good medium refracts; a turbid one clouds. The difference between them is the difference between the artist's atmosphere, which selects and recombines, and an accident of history, which only obscures.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which "refraction" occurs, with the paragraph on the turbid medium through which Winckelmann saw Greek art, in the order of the book.

**WIN §20** For the most part Winckelmann had to penetrate to Greek art through copies, imitations and later Roman art, a turbid medium.

**WIN §36** Artistic genius generates around itself an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction, selecting, transforming, recombining the images it transmits.

## Elsewhere in Pater

The essay "Style" (1888) gives the principle without the optics. In proportion as a writer's aim is the transcribing "not of the world, not of mere fact, but of his sense of it", Pater writes, he becomes an artist, and in the literature of power, he says, the writer gives us "not fact, but his peculiar sense of fact".[62] The sense of fact is the light after it has passed through the medium.

## Later readings

The American critic M. H. Abrams named the change in criticism from imitation to expression after two figures, the mirror and the lamp, in *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953).[63] Pater's figure can be read as standing between them. The light is not the artist's own, as the lamp's is; but it is not given back unchanged, as the mirror gives it.

## See also

Discriminate; Impression; Novel impression; Realise; Self-reflexion; Situation; Temperament; To see the object as in itself it really is; Turbid medium; Veil of sight.

# Relative

*Beauty known only in relation to experience · The Renaissance*
*relative*; *relatively*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What is relative exists or holds only in relation to something else; the opposite is the absolute, which holds in itself and in every relation.

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[62] Walter Pater, "Style", *Fortnightly Review* (December 1888); in *Appreciations* (London, 1889); Library Edition (London, 1910), pp. 7–10.

[63] M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York, 1953).

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative" (PRE §1). The Conclusion says the same of habit, which "is relative to a stereotyped world" (CON §5), and the Winckelmann essay finds in Greek sculpture "the indifference which lies beyond all that is relative or partial" (WIN §40).

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §1 says the next paragraph supplies the method that follows from the claim.

**A place to read.** PRE §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *relativus* is "having reference to" something. A relative quality is one a thing has only in relation to something else: a thing is large or near only relative to another. Philosophers of the nineteenth century made "the relative" a watchword. The doctrine that all human knowledge is of phenomena as they appear to us, never of things as they are in themselves, went in England by the name of the relativity of knowledge, and John Stuart Mill gave a chapter of his book on the Scottish philosopher Sir William Hamilton to it;[64] the opposition of relative and absolute ran through the debates of the time.

## Use in the book

The claim comes early in the first paragraph and carries the rest of it. "Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative; and the definition of it becomes unmeaning and useless in proportion to its abstractness" (PRE §1). Beauty is "presented to human experience": it is known in being experienced, and differs as the experiences differ. A definition that leaves out the relation, an abstract definition, leaves out what beauty is, and so the true student of æsthetics looks for "the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it" (PRE §1; see Universal formula; Special manifestation). Relativity is not here a reason for giving up judgement. The same paragraph wants help "to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent" (PRE §1), and the critic's questions, "to me", "on me", are the questions of a relative inquiry carried out with care (PRE §2; see Impression).

The Conclusion turns the word against habit, which "is relative to a stereotyped world", while only "the roughness of the eye" makes things seem alike (CON §5; see Discriminate). Habit answers to a world fixed in types, and the world is not like that. The 1873 text says the same more bluntly: "Failure is to form habits; for habit is relative to a stereotyped world" (C73 §6).

Once Pater sets the relative against something beyond it. The youths of the Panathenaic frieze have a "colourless, unclassified purity of life" which,

[64] John Stuart Mill, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865), chapter 2, "The Relativity of Human Knowledge".

"pregnant with the possibilities of a whole world closed within it, is the highest expression of the indifference which lies beyond all that is relative or partial" (WIN §40; see Allgemeinheit). Its calm can be read as the one place in the book where Pater allows a beauty that seems to stand outside relation, and he finds it in a work of art, not in a definition.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book; "correlative" (BEL §1) is not listed.

**PRE §1** Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative, and its definition grows useless as it grows abstract.

**WIN §40** The hair, relatively to eye and lip mere drapery, is withdrawn from attention; the purity of life of the youths of the Panathenaic frieze expresses the indifference that lies beyond all that is relative or partial.

**CON §5** Habit is relative to a stereotyped world.

**C73 §6** In 1873 the sentence reads "Failure is to form habits; for habit is relative to a stereotyped world".

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater made the word the mark of his age. His first published essay, "Coleridge's Writings" in the *Westminster Review* (January 1866), opens with a sentence he kept when he revised it as "Coleridge" for *Appreciations* (1889): "Modern thought is distinguished from ancient by its cultivation of the 'relative' spirit in place of the 'absolute'."[65] The essay praises Coleridge's genius and regrets his search for an absolute; the Preface takes the relative spirit as its starting point and puts it to work on beauty.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §1 says that "The next paragraph supplies the method that follows from this claim": a critic asks what a particular object does in a particular encounter, and describes the effect "closely enough for others to examine it". The note at CON §5 records the softening of "Failure is to form habits" in 1893.

## See also

Abstractness; Allgemeinheit; Concrete terms; Discriminate; Failure is to form habits; Impression; Special manifestation; Universal formula.

[65] Walter Pater, "Coleridge's Writings", *Westminster Review* (January 1866), opening sentence; revised as "Coleridge" in *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (London, 1889), where it opens the second paragraph.

*Ideas of faith and of philosophy taken as points of view: the 1873 form of the instruments of criticism, from which the revision dropped religion · The Renaissance*

*religious or philosophical ideas*; *religious ideas*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The thoughts that make up a faith or a philosophy, considered as thoughts, apart from the question of their truth.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Theories, religious or philosophical ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us" (C73 §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** C73 §6.

## Meaning

*Idea* is Greek, the look or form of a thing, and Plato's word for the forms that do not change. Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690) uses it for "whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks".[66] A religious idea in the second sense is a doctrine taken as a content of the mind: the historian can speak of the religious ideas of an age without asking whether they are true. Pater's sentence takes that historian's stance and gives it a use. The ideas are "points of view", places to stand and look from, and "instruments of criticism", tools for seeing (see Instruments of criticism). What makes them worth having is what they help us notice.

## Use in the book

The phrase has a forerunner in the Pico essay, where a modern scholar might hold "that every intellectual product must be judged from the point of view of the age and the people in which it was produced", and so justify each religion as a stage in the education of the human mind (PIC §3; see Development; Historic sense). The Conclusion of 1873 can be read as moving the point of view from the age to the person. The question is no longer which age produced an idea but what the idea lets the one who holds it see.

Religious ideas have another place in the book. The medieval Renaissance of the French stories revolted against "the moral and religious ideas of the time" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). There the ideas of the age stood against the senses and the imagination; in 1873 they are among the instruments with which the senses and the imagination work. After the microscope of thought the paragraph sets the limit, refusing any system that

[66] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690), Book I, chapter 1, §8.

asks the sacrifice of experience to "some abstract morality we have not identified with ourselves" (C73 §6; see Abstract morality).

The revised text has "Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism" (CON §5; see Instruments of criticism). "Religious" goes out of the sentence, as religion went out of the service of philosophy in the paragraph before (CON §4; see Religion and culture). The revision can be read as leaving religion's ideas where the Pico essay had put them, among the creations of the human mind, without asking them to serve as tools.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the revised sentence and the paragraphs on the religious ideas of an age, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** The medieval Renaissance revolted against the moral and religious ideas of the time.

**PIC §3** A modern scholar might observe that every intellectual product must be judged from the point of view of the age and the people in which it was produced.

**CON §5** The revised text has philosophical theories or ideas as instruments of criticism.

**C73 §6** In 1873: "Theories, religious or philosophical ideas".

## See also

Abstract morality; Antinomianism; Development; Historic sense; Instruments of criticism; Microscope of thought; Religion and culture.

# Roughness of the eye

*the roughness of the eye*

Attested: *the roughness of the eye* (CON §5; C73 §6); *roughness* (FRE §21). Roughness is the want of finish, in a surface or a workmanship: the prose of *Aucassin et Nicolette* shows "signs of roughness and want of skill" at the joins of the story (FRE §21). The Conclusion transfers the word from the thing made to the organ that sees. Habit, it says, is relative to a stereotyped world, "and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike" (CON §5; see Habit). The eye is rough as a tool is rough, or a file: it cannot take a fine distinction. Likeness, on this account, is not in things but in the coarseness of the instrument that compares them, and a finer eye would find every person, thing and situation unlike every other. The phrase prepares the sentence after next, which makes the failure to discriminate "every moment some passionate attitude in those about us" a kind of sleep (CON §5; see Discriminate). The book's critics and painters are those whose eye is not

rough: Leonardo's, which sought in nature her finesse, "or delicacy of operation" (LEO §17; see Finesse), and the critic's of the Preface, who notes the special "virtue" of each thing (PRE §3; see Virtue). The Conclusion asks every reader for such an eye.

## See also

Discriminate; Finesse; Habit; Stereotyped world; Virtue.

# Salt of genuineness

*The critics' exceptions, properly qualified, as the salt that keeps knowledge of the past sound · The Renaissance*
*salt of genuineness*; *salt*, *salts*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What keeps knowledge honest: the denials of criticism, taken in the right measure.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Properly qualified, such exceptions are but a salt of genuineness in our knowledge" (GIO §25).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §25 says that the truth Pater has in view "is a durable impression of an artist's influence that historical facts can refine".

**A place to read.** GIO §25.

## Meaning

Salt preserves and seasons: it keeps food from corruption and gives it savour, and in the Gospel the disciples are called the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13). Genuineness is the quality of being what one is said to be, the word used of a picture truly by the master to whom it is given. A salt of genuineness is a small, sharp addition that keeps knowledge from going bad.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the turn of the essay's last paragraph. Pater has granted the critics their "negations and exceptions", by which, "at first sight", a "new Vasari" "seems merely to have confused our apprehension of a delightful object" (GIO §25; see Negative criticism). The next sentence refuses to stop there: "Yet it is not with a full understanding even of those exceptions that one can leave off just at this point" (GIO §25). Then the figure: "Properly qualified, such exceptions are but a salt of genuineness in our knowledge" (GIO §25; see Indirect influence). "Properly qualified" sets the condition, and "but" sets the limit. The exceptions are not the whole of knowledge, only its salt, and salt is good in its measure and bad in excess.

The figure can be read as turning an old phrase around. To take a thing "with a grain of salt" is to doubt it, and the saying is usually traced to the

Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, who has an antidote taken with a grain of salt.[67] The critics' scepticism is the grain of salt with which the legend of Giorgione must be taken. Pater makes the salt part of the knowledge itself: the doubts do not spoil the legend, they keep it sound, as salt keeps meat. A knowledge of Giorgione with no exceptions would be credulous; a knowledge made only of exceptions would be all salt and no food. The proper measure is the one the essay keeps, the "strictly ascertained facts" together with the "indirect influence" that lies beyond them (GIO §25; see Ascertained facts; Indirect influence).

The book's other salts are chemical, and they can be set beside this one. The Michelangelo essay finds that in the sonnets to Vittoria Colonna the cry of distress remains only "as a mere residue, a trace of bracing chalybeate salt, just discernible in the song" (MIC §12; see Chalybeate), a tonic bitterness that strengthens what it flavours. The Leonardo essay places the Last Supper on "the damp wall of the refectory, oozing with mineral salts" (LEO §26; see Mellowing decay), where salt belongs to a wall on which the painting soon decayed. The three uses mark the range of the figure: salt that strengthens, salt that corrodes, and in the Giorgione essay salt that preserves, in a measure that the critic has to judge.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "salt" or "salts" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §12** In the sonnets to Vittoria Colonna the cry of distress is a mere residue, a trace of bracing chalybeate salt.

**LEO §26** Leonardo painted the Last Supper on a damp wall oozing with mineral salts.

**GIO §25** Properly qualified, the critics' exceptions are but a salt of genuineness in our knowledge.

## See also

Ascertained facts; Chalybeate; Indirect influence; Mellowing decay; Negative criticism; New Vasari; Permanent efficacy.

# School of taste

*schools of taste*

Attested: *schools of taste* (PRE §4). A school is a group of artists or critics who share a manner and a standard; a school of taste is one such standard of judgement. The critic "will remember always that beauty exists in many forms. To him all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal"

[67] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* XXIII.149, on the antidote of Mithridates, king of Pontus, found by Pompey, to be taken fasting with a grain of salt added.

(PRE §4; see Beauty). The sentence can be read as saying not that all works are equal, but that no period or school is to be ranked before its works are looked at; the same paragraph holds that there have been excellent workmen "in all ages" (PRE §4; see Excellence), and asks in whom the genius of each period found itself (see Excellence). The Winckelmann essay names the standard that the fresco of Parnassus by Raphael (1483–1520) commemorates, "the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22; see Orthodoxy of taste).

## See also

Beauty; Excellence; In itself; Orthodoxy of taste; The ages are all equal.

# Scientific reconciliation

*The method a later age found for the old problem · The Renaissance scientific reconciliation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A scientific reconciliation of two faiths is one made by method, by historical and comparative study, rather than by allegory or imagination.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It remained for a later age to conceive the true method of effecting a scientific reconciliation of Christian sentiment with the imagery, the legends, the theories about the world, of pagan poetry and philosophy" (PIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §4 speaks of "Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

**A place to read.** PIC §15, with PIC §3.

## Meaning

"Science" in Pater's century meant knowledge got by a method that others can follow and check. The "science of religion" was the new name, made current in England by Friedrich Max Müller, the Oxford philologist, in the 1860s and 1870s, for the comparative study of the world's religions and myths as human products with a history.[68] A scientific reconciliation, in this sense, does not make the religions agree; it explains how each came to be what it is, and so removes the quarrel.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the essay's closing argument, where Pater ranks the ways of reconciling Christianity with paganism, in the sentence quoted above (PIC §15). The fifteenth century had only the imaginative

[68] F. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. I (London, 1867), preface; *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (London, 1873).

reconciliation of the artists (see Artistic reconciliation) and the feebler one of the philosophers. The true method came later.

What the method is Pater has said at the start: the modern scholar might treat the religions as natural products with common laws, judge each by its age and people, and range them as stages in the education of the human mind (PIC §3; see Natural product; Development; Historic sense). The scientific reconciliation can be read as the historic sense applied to religion. The artists of the fifteenth century did the opposite: it did not come into their minds "to ask curiously of science" where such story came from and what it first meant (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation). The scientific method asks exactly those questions.

The words "true method" are strong ones for Pater, and they can be read as his allegiance. The book belongs to the later age it names. Yet its admiration goes to the earlier reconciliation. The scientific one explains the old gods; the artistic one gave them a new life, the "strange flower" of a mythology "with a tone and qualities of its own" (PIC §15; see Sacred and profane). Pater praises the method and loves the flower. The Leonardo essay marks the distance between the sciences: "The science of that age was all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas" (LEO §13). The modern formulas are exact, and they do not divine.

## Places to read

The paragraph that describes the modern scholar's method, with the paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §3** A modern scholar might regard religions as natural products, judged by their age, and range them as stages in the education of the human mind.

**PIC §15** It remained for a later age to conceive the true method of a scientific reconciliation of Christian sentiment with pagan poetry and philosophy.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater's own essays on Greek myth, "A Study of Dionysus" and "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone" (both 1876), can be read as attempts at the later age's method: they trace each myth from its primitive form through its growth in poetry and worship, while keeping the imaginative sympathy of the artists.[69]

[69] Walter Pater, "A Study of Dionysus", *Fortnightly Review* (December 1876); "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone", *Fortnightly Review* (January and February 1876); both reprinted in *Greek Studies* (London, 1895).

## In this edition

The note at PIC §4 calls the account of the historic sense "a Victorian judgment about the past", and speaks of "Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Development; Historic sense; Natural product; Reconciliation; Sacred and profane.

### Secondary meaning

*secondary meaning*, *secondary meanings*

Attested: *secondary … meaning* (PIC §4); *secondary meanings* (PIC §13); *secondary* in two further paragraphs, in other senses (BOT §10; WIN §36). A meaning below the first and plain one, found by interpretation. The allegorist must "bring up the supposed secondary, or still more remote meaning" of a text (PIC §4; see In recessu divinius aliquid), and Pico seizes on "the secondary meanings of obscure stories in the later Greek mythologists" (PIC §13; see Double meaning). "Supposed" is the essay's judgement on the first; "obscure" on the second. The later Greek mythologists had themselves practised the method: the Neoplatonist Porphyry, for one, read Homer's cave of the nymphs in the *Odyssey* as a figure of the cosmos and the soul's descent.[70] Pico drew on interpreters who were already interpreting. The secondary meaning is the allegorical method's yield, and the essay's whole account of that method can be read as resting on the word "supposed".

## See also

Double meaning; In recessu divinius aliquid.

### Secondary painter

*A painter below the first rank, and his claim on criticism · The Renaissance*

*secondary painter*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A secondary painter is one of the second rank, below the masters whose work defines an age.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "But, after all, it may be asked, is a painter like Botticelli—a secondary painter, a proper subject for general criticism?" (BOT §10).

[70] Porphyry, *De antro nympharum*, on *Odyssey* 13.102–112.

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §1 says that Leonardo's mention of Botticelli "belongs to a discussion of landscape and the suggestive images one might discern in a stained wall or other marked surface".

**A place to read.** BOT §10, with BOT §1.

## Meaning

"Secondary" is from the Latin *secundus*, following, and so second in order or in rank. Elsewhere in the book the word measures meaning, "the supposed secondary, or still more remote meaning" (PIC §4; see Secondary meaning), and importance, "The characters themselves are always of secondary importance" (WIN §36). Of a painter it was a verdict of the history books, and Pater lets it stand as one.

## Use in the book

The essay begins and ends with Botticelli's standing. It opens on a sign of rising fame: "In Leonardo's treatise on painting only one contemporary is mentioned by name—Sandro Botticelli. This pre-eminence may be due to chance only, but to some will rather appear a result of deliberate judgment; for people have begun to find out the charm of Botticelli's work, and his name, little known in the last century, is quietly becoming important" (BOT §1). The poet Algernon Charles Swinburne had praised Botticelli's drawings in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1868,[71] two years before Pater's essay first appeared in the same review, as "A Fragment on Sandro Botticelli";[72] "quietly" is exact.

It ends with the concession quoted above (BOT §10). Pater grants the rank and refuses its consequence. The great painters are a force in general culture "partly for this very reason that they have absorbed into themselves all such workmen as Sandro Botticelli" (BOT §10; see General culture), and the sentence can be read against itself: what a master absorbs is lost as itself, and the "peculiar quality of pleasure" of a lesser painter survives only in him (BOT §10; see Peculiar quality of pleasure). Botticelli belongs to the select number that general criticism must interpret (see General criticism), and his last claim is not his own but his age's: he has "the freshness, the uncertain and diffident promise" of the earlier Renaissance (BOT §10; see New artistic sense).

The defence reaches beyond Botticelli. The book's subjects include the anonymous author of an Old French tale, a Florentine maker of glazed terracotta and a poet of the Pleiad overshadowed by Ronsard, and it judges, as in the Pico essay, that the Renaissance of the fifteenth century "was, in many things, great rather by what it designed or aspired to do, than by what it actually achieved" (PIC §15; see Initiatory idea). The secondary painter

[71] Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Notes on Designs of the Old Masters at Florence", *Fortnightly Review*, July 1868.

[72] Walter Pater, "A Fragment on Sandro Botticelli", *Fortnightly Review*, August 1870.

can be read as the book's own chosen subject: promise rather than mastery, a quality rather than a rank. Pater's word "diffident", of the earlier Renaissance, describes the temper of his praise as well.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs on Botticelli's standing, in the order of the book; the phrase "secondary painter" occurs only in the second.

**BOT §1** Leonardo's treatise names Botticelli alone among contemporaries, and his name is quietly becoming important.

**BOT §10** Is a secondary painter like Botticelli a proper subject for general criticism?

## Later readings

The critic John Ruskin, lecturing at Oxford on engraving, gave Botticelli a central place in *Ariadne Florentina* (1873–76),[73] and within a generation the secondary painter had become one of the most loved of all. The German art historian Aby Warburg wrote his dissertation on the *Birth of Venus* and the *Primavera* (1893), and the English scholar Herbert Horne gave Botticelli a full documentary life in 1908.[74]

## In this edition

The note at BOT §1 says that "Leonardo's painting precepts circulated after his death in compilations from his notebooks", and that his reference to Botticelli "belongs to a discussion of landscape and the suggestive images one might discern in a stained wall or other marked surface". The note at BOT §10 says that "Pater's question registers a nineteenth-century hierarchy of reputation".

## See also

General criticism; General culture; Initiatory idea; New artistic sense; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Secondary meaning.

# Self-analytical

*self-analytical*; *one-sidedly self-analytical*

Attested: *self-analytical* (WIN §33); *one-sidedly self-analytical* (WIN §42). To be self-analytical is to take apart one's own thoughts and feelings, from the Greek *analysis*, a loosening up. Pater uses the word twice, once of an art and once of a man, and in both places it is denied. Of sculpture: "Between architecture and those romantic arts of painting, music, and

[73] John Ruskin, *Ariadne Florentina: Six Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving* (1873–76).

[74] Aby Warburg, *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus" und "Frühling"* (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1893); Herbert P. Horne, *Alessandro Filipepi, Commonly Called Sandro Botticelli, Painter of Florence* (London, 1908).

poetry, comes sculpture, which, unlike architecture, deals immediately with man, while it contrasts with the romantic arts, because it is not self-analytical" (WIN §33). The romantic arts take for their matter "a consciousness brooding with delight over itself" (WIN §33; see Brooding spirit of life); sculpture shows the human form whole. Of Winckelmann: "Minute and anxious as his culture was, he never became one-sidedly self-analytical" (WIN §42). Occupied ever with himself, he was still "ever jealously refining his meaning into a form, express, clear, objective" (WIN §42; see Self-culture). The adverb matters: Winckelmann analysed himself, but not to the exclusion of everything else. The two sentences can be read as one judgement: the essay denies the same quality to the statues and to the man, and Winckelmann understood Greek sculpture because his nature, turned outward toward form, was like it (see Plastic character).

## See also

Brooding spirit of life; Plastic character; Romantic arts; Self-culture; Self-reflexion; Temperament.

# Self-culture

*The cultivation of one's own nature, which takes from every form of genius not its harvest but its own strength · The Renaissance*

*self-culture*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The cultivation of one's own mind and character by one's own effort.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The proper instinct of self-culture seeks in the various forms of genius "its own strength" (WIN §51).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §§10, 12, 51.

## Meaning

*Culture* is the Latin *cultura*, tilling, and Cicero had already called philosophy *cultura animi*, the cultivation of the mind.[75] The compound *self-culture* names the same work done by a person on himself. The idea was German before it was English. Goethe's Wilhelm Meister writes to his friend Werner, who is about to marry his sister, that "to form myself, just as I am" had been, obscurely, his wish and purpose since boyhood, and the novel is the history of that forming.[76] In English the word had a wide

[75] Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* II.13: *cultura autem animi philosophia est*.

[76] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795–96), Book V, chapter 3: *mich selbst, ganz wie ich da bin, auszubilden, das war dunkel von Jugend auf mein Wunsch und meine Absicht*.

currency in the nineteenth century, with an earnest and improving sense: the American preacher William Ellery Channing gave it as the title of a lecture to working men in Boston in 1838.[77] Pater uses it once, and not in that sense.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the fifty-first paragraph, where Pater asks how the modern problem of culture can be solved now that a single talent, exercised directly, could only end "in a thin, one-sided growth" (WIN §51; see Centrality). Goethe's answer is life in the whole (see Im Ganzen), and the life of culture meets on its way the brightest enthusiasms of the world, each the work of some special talent (WIN §51; see Enthusiasm). Then the principle: "But the proper instinct of self-culture cares not so much to reap all that those various forms of genius can give, as to find in them its own strength" (WIN §51). The image is agricultural, as the Latin word is. Self-culture does not reap other men's harvests; it finds its own strength in their fields. It sees into every divided form of culture only to measure its relation to them (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen), wins each form's secret and lets it fall back into its place (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism), and passes its former selves with a kind of passionate coldness (WIN §51; see Passionate coldness).

The definition is made between two ways the essay has set out. One is the culture of many perfections, cultivated "up to a point which leaves us still beyond the range of their transforming power" (WIN §12; see New organ), though the essay grants that the aim of culture should be "as complete a life as possible" (WIN §12; see Many-sided intellectual culture). The other is Winckelmann's own way, the "narrow perfection" of a man who plucked out every interest that was not his one motive (WIN §10; see Narrow perfection), and who made "a step forward in culture" at Seehausen, multiplying his intellectual force "by detaching from it all flaccid interests" (WIN §6; see Detachment). Self-culture takes something from each. With the many-sided it goes through every form; with Winckelmann it keeps only what feeds its own motive. The word "proper" is exact: it is the instinct proper to self-culture, as opposed to curiosity or acquisitiveness.

The "self" in the word carries a danger, and the essay sees it. Of Winckelmann it says: "Occupied ever with himself, perfecting himself and developing his genius, he was not content, as so often happens with such natures, that the atmosphere between him and other minds should be thick and clouded; he was ever jealously refining his meaning into a form, express, clear, objective" (WIN §42). Self-culture, on this reading, is not attention to oneself but the use of the world to make a self, and its product must be returned to the world refined into such a form. Goethe is the instance, and

[77] William Ellery Channing, *Self-Culture: An Address Introductory to the Franklin Lectures, Delivered at Boston, September, 1838* (Boston, 1838).

the essay's last pages put the question to art: what modern art has to do "in the service of culture" is to rearrange the details of modern life so that it may satisfy the spirit (WIN §53; see Freedom).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which "self-culture" occurs, with the chief paragraphs in which Pater and Winckelmann speak of culture as the shaping of a single life, in the order of the book.

**WIN §6** At Seehausen Winckelmann made a step forward in culture, multiplying his intellectual force by detaching from it all flaccid interests.

**WIN §8** Winckelmann regrets that he was not born to great place, with the opportunity of following his instinct and forming himself.

**WIN §10** Winckelmann's perfection is a narrow perfection; he plucked out every interest that was not his single motive.

**WIN §12** The aim of culture should be as complete a life as possible, but the higher life often requires a selection.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann was occupied ever with himself, perfecting himself, yet never one-sidedly self-analytical.

**WIN §50** Winckelmann defines for Goethe the eternal problem of culture.

**WIN §51** The proper instinct of self-culture seeks in the various forms of genius its own strength.

## Later readings

Two years after the essay first appeared, Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) made culture the pursuit of perfection by getting to know "the best which has been thought and said in the world".[78] Pater's self-culture wants the best too, but not to possess it; it takes from the brightest enthusiasms of the world only what makes it stronger.

Oscar Wilde made the word a doctrine. In "The Critic as Artist" (1890) his speaker Gilbert says that the development of the race depends on the development of the individual, and that where self-culture is no longer the ideal "the intellectual standard is instantly lowered".[79] Wilde's self-culture is the critic's; Pater's, in this paragraph, belongs to anyone who aims at "the life of culture".

[78] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), Preface.

[79] Oscar Wilde, "The True Function and Value of Criticism", *Nineteenth Century* (July and September 1890); as "The Critic as Artist" in *Intentions* (London, 1891), Part II.

## See also

Centrality; Detachment; Enthusiasm; Exigent intellectualism; Freedom; Im Ganzen; Many-sided intellectual culture; Narrow perfection; New organ; Passionate coldness; Self-analytical; Unity with one's self; Wholeness.

# Self-reflexion

*The mind's turning back upon itself, which the Greeks reached and were careful not to pass · The Renaissance*

*self-reflexion*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The mind's consideration of its own workings: reflexion turned back upon itself.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek art belongs to a mind that had reached "a particular stage of self-reflexion" (WIN §28).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §§28–29, 36.

## Meaning

*Self-reflexion* doubles the turn of reflexion (see Reflexion). It is the mind not only thinking but thinking about its thinking, and in the Winckelmann essay it is the measure of an age.

## Use in the book

The compound comes once. In the account of the Venus of Melos, the mind "begins and ends with the finite image", and the reason is historical: the Greek mind had reached "a particular stage of self-reflexion" and halted there (WIN §28; see Finite image). Reflexion is a road that, once taken, must be followed. The same paragraph warns that the train of reflexion "must end in defiance of form" (WIN §28; see Idealise), though Greek thought "has not yet plunged into the depths of religious mysticism" (WIN §28; see Mysticism), and the next calls the Greek moment a "delicate pause in Greek reflexion" (WIN §29; see Pause in time). Greek art stands at a halt on the line, with the East behind it and the middle age ahead.

The series of the arts that follows is measured on the same line. Architecture comes first, the art of a mind whose thoughts of itself are "still indistinct", and the spiritualities of its maker can only lurk about it "as volatile effects, to be gathered from it by reflexion" (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit). The modern arts are made of the later stages: into painting, music and poetry may be translated every delicacy of a consciousness "brooding with delight over itself" (WIN §33; see Brooding spirit of life), and sculpture, which comes between, differs from them because "it is not self-analytical" (WIN §33; see Self-analytical). Browning's

poem is the extreme case. Its two Parisians interest us only in a choice situation, and to make that moment appreciable takes "a cobweb of allusions" and "double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself" (WIN §36; see Discriminate). The double and treble reflexions are self-reflexion raised to a method of art.

In the Conclusion reflexion dissolves each object into impressions "in the mind of the observer" (CON §3; see Reflexion).

The word can be read as the essay's quiet admission about itself. The Greek limit is a "happy limit" (WIN §28; see Finite image), and the Greek mind is praised for being "careful not to pass beyond it". But the essay that praises it is a work of reflexion through and through: it analyses its impressions, as the Preface asks the critic to do (PRE §§2–3), and admires in the statues a freedom from the very activity it practises. Pater does not resolve the difference. He describes the pause from the far side of it, and the Conclusion shows where the far side leads.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "self-reflexion" occurs, with the paragraphs on the pause in Greek reflexion and on the mind's reflexions upon itself, in the order of the book.

**WIN §28** The Greek mind has reached a stage of self-reflexion and is careful not to pass it; its train of reflexion must end in defiance of form.

**WIN §29** That delicate pause in Greek reflexion was joined to the perfect animal nature of the Greeks.

**WIN §36** Browning's poem constructs double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself.

## See also

Brooding spirit of life; Discriminate; Finite image; Humanistic spirit; Idealise; Impression; Mysticism; Pause in time; Reflexion; Refraction; Romantic arts; Self-analytical; Situation.

# Sensible analogue

*The perceptible form born together with every thought and feeling in the faculty that art addresses · The Renaissance*

*sensible analogue*; *sensible*; *analogue*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A counterpart that the senses can grasp: the image, sound or form that matches a thought.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The imaginative reason is "that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol" (GIO §9).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that Pater "names a faculty in which sensory experience and thought act together".

**A place to read.** GIO §9, with WIN §§27, 29.

## Meaning

"Sensible" here keeps its older meaning, perceptible by the senses, not reasonable. An analogue, from the Greek *analogos*, proportionate, is a thing that corresponds to another in its own order (see Analogue). A sensible analogue is the counterpart in the world of sense of something in the world of thought: the image of an idea, the sound of a feeling.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the ninth paragraph, in Pater's definition of the faculty that art addresses: the imaginative reason, "that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol" (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason). The sentence makes the relation between thought and its sensible form a birth, not a translation. The thought is not first conceived and then given an image; the two arrive together.

The Pico essay had used "analogue" in an older sense, of a visible thing that points upward to a higher reality (PIC §13; see Analogue); Pater's sensible analogue, it can be read, points nowhere, the twin of a thought and not its shadow.

The Winckelmann essay had put the same contrast in terms of the history of art, and its sentences are the best commentary on the phrase. Of the Coronation of the Virgin by Fra Angelico Pater writes: "Certainly, it cannot be said of Angelico's fresco that it throws into a sensible form our highest thoughts about man and his relation to the world; but it did not do this adequately even for Angelico" (WIN §27; see Sensible form). For Angelico the visible was "only the symbol or type of a really inexpressible world" (WIN §27; see Symbol). Greek art is the opposite, an ideal art in which the thought does not outstrip "the proper range of its sensible embodiment" (WIN §29; see Ideal art; Artistic ideal). The thought that does not outstrip its sensible embodiment is the thought twin-born with its sensible analogue. The Giorgione essay finds in music, and in the painting nearest to music, what the Winckelmann essay had found in Greek sculpture.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sensible" or "analogue" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §5** Pico's own story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent of the purpose expressed in his writings.

**PIC §10** In Pico's theory man's dignity brings the dust under his feet into sensible communion with the thoughts of the angels.

**PIC §13** Every object in the terrestrial world is an analogue, a symbol or counterpart, of some higher reality.

**MIC §21** The old masters' characteristics are easier to read than their analogues in the confused productions of the modern mind.

**GIO §9** For the imaginative reason every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol.

**GIO §24** The one peak of blue is the sensible warrant of that due coolness which is all we need ask of the Alps.

**WIN §27** Angelico's fresco does not throw into a sensible form our highest thoughts about man.

**WIN §29** In Greek art the thought does not outstrip the proper range of its sensible embodiment.

## Pater's sources

The phrase can be set within the Hegelian account of art on which the Winckelmann essay draws. In his lectures on aesthetics Hegel defined the beautiful as *das sinnliche Scheinen der Idee*, "the shining of the Idea to the senses", and he made classical sculpture the art in which content and shape are wholly adequate to each other, while in the romantic arts, painting, music and poetry, the inward life outruns its sensuous form.[80] The Winckelmann sentence on the thought that does not outstrip its sensible embodiment (WIN §29) can be read as Pater's version of the classical moment. The Giorgione phrase finds the same equality in music, the art Hegel had placed among those in which it is lost.

## See also

Analogue; Artistic ideal; Ideal art; Imaginative reason; Sensible form; Symbol; Symbolism.

# Sentiment

*sentiment*; *sentiments*

Attested in the Preface: *sentiment* (PRE §4). Elsewhere the word comes in thirty-six further paragraphs, seven of them in the essay on Michelangelo, where it occurs thirteen times; the plural comes in five paragraphs (PIC §§4,

[80] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), Part One, ch. 1, section 3, "Die Idee des Schönen" (Werke, Suhrkamp edition, vol. 13, p. 151), for the definition; the Introduction, on the division of the subject, for the classical and romantic forms of art.

15; MIC §§10, 14; WIN §3), three of them without the singular. A sentiment is feeling informed by thought, a settled disposition of the heart; Pater uses the word without the modern taint of sentimentality, which he marks by another word, "sentimentalism" (LEO §14). In the Preface it is the feeling of an age: "In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the period find itself?" (PRE §4). The essays use it for the feeling a work carries beneath its subject, as in Botticelli's "under-current of original sentiment" (BOT §1; see Original sentiment), and for the two currents of the Renaissance, "two sentiments, the sacred and the profane" (PIC §15; see Sacred and profane).

## See also

Genius; Ideal sentiment; Original sentiment; Sacred and profane; Tradition of sentiment.

## Sharp and eager observation

*a sharp and eager observation*

Attested: *a sharp and eager observation* (C73 §5). In 1873 the service of philosophy, "and of religion and culture as well, to the human spirit", is "to startle it into a sharp and eager observation" (C73 §5; see Religion and culture); the revised service "towards the human spirit" is "to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4; see Observation). "Sharp" is the adjective of edges and of keen senses, a sharp eye, a sharp ear, and in 1873 it can be read as tying the observer to what he observes. At first sight experience seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, "pressing upon us with a sharp importunate reality" (C73 §3; see Importunate), and what is real in our life fines itself down "to a single sharp impression" (C73 §4; see Tremulous wisp): the observation of the next paragraph is to be as sharp as the impression it meets. The revision put "constant" where "sharp" had stood and made the observation "a life" (CON §4; see Observation); in 1873 the spirit can be read as startled into a single act of attention. The sharpness has not left the Conclusion. It survives in the revised third paragraph, in "a sharp and importunate reality" and "a single sharp impression" (CON §3).

## See also

Importunate; Observation; Religion and culture; Tremulous wisp.

## Sight and touch

*sight and touch*; *see and touch*

Attested: *seen and touched* (LEO §11); *sight and touch* (WIN §9); *see and touch* (CON §5, twice; C73 §6, twice). The two senses by which bodies are known are paired at two turning points of the book. From the library at Nöthenitz Winckelmann makes many visits to the antiquities at Dresden and first meets the relics of Greek sculpture, and Pater finds in that meeting Winckelmann's native tendency to escape from abstract theory "to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch" (WIN §9; see Realisation). Later he apprehends the Hellenic manner "not through the understanding, but by instinct or touch" (WIN §19; see Temperament). The Conclusion makes the pair a programme. "With this sense of the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch" (CON §5; C73 §6). The sentence repeats Winckelmann's choice as a rule for anyone: theory is what there is no time for. Pater does not mention it, but the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder had argued in *Plastik* ("Sculpture", 1778) that sculpture is the art of touch, as painting is the art of sight, and that the eye before a statue works as a hand that feels its way in the dark.[81] Winckelmann's two senses are the two that sculpture asks for.

## See also

Concrete terms; Impression; Limitation to the concrete; Realisation; Temperament.

## Signification

*signification*; *significance*

Attested: *signification* (PIC §4); *significance* in eight paragraphs (PIC §§1, 10, 12, 13; MIC §13; WIN §§32, 39, 42). What a sign signifies; the meaning of a word or a symbol. The allegorist brings up "that diviner signification held in reserve, in recessu divinius aliquid" (PIC §4; see In recessu divinius aliquid). "Signification" is the logician's word for meaning, and Pater uses it once, for the meaning the allegorist supposes. "Significance" is more frequent and more neutral. Pagan story lost "the religious significance which had once belonged to it" (PIC §1; see Pagan story); the commonplace that man is a little world perhaps had "some new significance and authority" when men heard Pico reiterate it (PIC §10); Pico "is anxious to ascertain the true significance of the obscurest legend" (PIC §12); and in his world there is "a significance in every accidental combination of the events of life" (PIC §13; see Accidental combination).

[81] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Plastik: Einige Wahrnehmungen über Form und Gestalt aus Pygmalions bildendem Traume* (Riga, 1778).

Pico's age, the essay suggests, found significance everywhere, and the word follows Pico through the essay as his habit of mind.

## See also

Accidental combination; In recessu divinius aliquid; Pagan story.

### Solidity

*solidity*; *solid*

Attested: *solidity* (WIN §33; CON §3; C73 §3); *solid* (ROB §§6, 11; GIO §20). Solidity is the quality of filling space and resisting touch, the property John Locke made the first of the qualities of body.[82] In the sculpture essays it is a fact of the material and a danger to the art. All sculptured work tends to "a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form, that solid material frame which only motion can relieve" (ROB §6; see Hard realism), and the Tuscan sculptors repressed the curves that indicate solid form (ROB §11; see Low relief). In the Winckelmann essay sculpture, "with its solidity of form", seems a thing more real and full than the faint world of poetry or painting, and Pater says that the fact is the reverse (WIN §33; see Romantic arts). The Conclusion carries the doubt from sculpture to the world. When we dwell in thought on our experience, it is no longer a world "of objects in the solidity with which language invests them", but of impressions, unstable and flickering (CON §3; see Flickering). The solidity is lent by words. A name holds together what the senses give in pieces, and the Conclusion can be read as saying that the hard and resistant things of common sense are made so by the language we have for them, not by what we feel. The 1873 text had the same phrase (C73 §3).

## See also

Flickering; Hard realism; Low relief; Romantic arts.

### Solitary culture of beauty

*Leonardo's cultivation of beauty for himself alone, hung upon a kind of self-love* · *The Renaissance*

*solitary culture of beauty*; *solitary*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The cultivation of beauty pursued alone, for oneself and a few, without regard to an audience.

[82] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690), Book II, chapter 4, "Of Solidity", and chapter 8, §9.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Other artists have been as careless of present or future applause, in self-forgetfulness, or because they set moral or political ends above the ends of art; but in him this solitary culture of beauty seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love, and a carelessness in the work of art of all but art itself" (LEO §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §24.

## Meaning

"Culture" is the Latin *cultura*, tilling, from *colere*, to tend: the culture of a field, of a plant, and so of a mind or a taste. Pater's "culture of beauty" keeps the old sense of cultivation, the patient tending of a growth. "Solitary" adds that it is done alone. The phrase can be set against the most famous English account of culture in Pater's decade. Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) called culture "a study of perfection" and made it social in its aim: it "seeks to do away with classes", and would make all men live in its sweetness and light.[83] Leonardo's culture of beauty is a study of perfection that seeks nothing of the kind.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes Pater's account of Leonardo's life among his pupils at Milan. He chose pupils with "just enough genius to be capable of initiation into his secret", and among them "he worked at his fugitive manuscripts and sketches, working for the present hour, and for a few only, perhaps chiefly for himself" (LEO §24). Then comes the distinction: "Other artists have been as careless of present or future applause, in self-forgetfulness, or because they set moral or political ends above the ends of art; but in him this solitary culture of beauty seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love, and a carelessness in the work of art of all but art itself" (LEO §24).

The sentence sorts the reasons an artist may have for not caring what the world thinks. Two are familiar: self-forgetfulness, the saint's way, and devotion to moral or political ends, the reformer's. Leonardo's is a third, and Pater names it plainly, "a kind of self-love". The judgement is held at a distance by "seems to have hung upon" and softened by "a kind of", but it is a judgement, and it is not a condemnation. Self-love is joined to "a carelessness in the work of art of all but art itself", and the paragraph goes on to its harvest, "strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown", and the novel impression counted "as an end in itself" (LEO §24; see End in itself; Novel impression). The culture is of beauty in the gardener's sense, and the blossoms and fruits are what it grows.

"Solitary" has a wider history in the book. The Preface says of the producers of an age's art and thought that "each group is solitary, gaining

[83] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), chapter 1 (titled "Sweetness and Light" in later editions).

what advantage or disadvantage there may be in intellectual isolation" (PRE §8; see Intellectual isolation). Winckelmann bears witness to the authority of the Greek tradition "as a solitary man of genius" (WIN §22). And in the Conclusion solitude becomes the condition of all experience: each mind keeps "as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world" (CON §3; see Impression). Read in that light, Leonardo's solitary culture is not an eccentricity but the Conclusion's condition chosen and made fruitful. Every mind is a solitary prisoner; Leonardo makes of the prison a garden. The Winckelmann essay sets beside him the counsel that "the aim of our culture should be to attain not only as intense but as complete a life as possible", with its own condition, that often "the higher life is only possible at all, on condition of the selection of that in which one's motive is native and strong" (WIN §12; see Higher life; Many-sided intellectual culture), and the book holds the two without choosing between them.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "solitary" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §8** Each group of producers is solitary, in intellectual isolation.

**LEO §24** In Leonardo this solitary culture of beauty seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love.

**WIN §22** Winckelmann bears his testimony to the Hellenic tradition as a solitary man of genius.

**CON §3** Each mind keeps as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world.

**C73 §3** The 1873 text of the same sentence.

## See also

End in itself; Higher life; Impression; Intellectual isolation; Many-sided intellectual culture; Novel impression.

# Special manifestation

*Beauty in this or that particular form · The Renaissance special manifestation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A manifestation is a showing forth, the form in which something appears; a special one is the particular form it takes in one case.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The true student of æsthetics looks for "the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation" of beauty (PRE §1). The word "special" then marks the particular in the Preface's account of the critic: "a special, a unique, impression of pleasure", "this special impression of beauty or pleasure" (PRE §3).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.
**A place to read.** PRE §1 with PRE §4, "beauty exists in many forms".

## Meaning

The Latin *manifestare* is to make plain, to show. A manifestation is the appearing of something in a particular form: a disease in a symptom, a force in an effect, a spirit in an act. The word had a religious sense too, of the divine made visible. Pater's phrase treats beauty as something that is never seen except in its manifestations, each "special", proper to its case.

## Use in the book

The phrase completes the first paragraph's argument: since beauty is relative, the student looks for "the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it" (PRE §1; see Relative; Universal formula). The word "manifestation" treats beauty as something that is never met except as it appears in one case or another.

The Preface then works out what "special" means. Each object affects us "with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure"; the critic must separate the virtue by which a work "produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure" (PRE §3; see Impression). The critic "will remember always that beauty exists in many forms" (PRE §4; see Beauty). The many forms are the special manifestations, and the essays may be taken as a gallery of them (see Beauty).

The School of Giorgione carries the idea from works to arts. Each art has "a special phase or quality of beauty" and "its own special responsibilities to its material" (GIO §1; see Æsthetic criticism). A special manifestation of beauty is now also the form proper to a medium.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once; listed with it are the Preface's other uses of "special" for a particular beauty or pleasure, its sentence on the many forms of beauty, and the passage where the idea is carried to the arts.

**PRE §1** The true student of æsthetics seeks the formula for this or that special manifestation of beauty.

**PRE §3** Each object gives a special, unique impression of pleasure, and the critic disengages the virtue that produces this special impression.

**PRE §4** The critic remembers that beauty exists in many forms.

**GIO §1** Each art brings a special phase or quality of beauty, with its own special responsibilities to its material.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Beauty; Concrete terms; Impression; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Relative; Responsibilities to its material; Universal formula.

# Speculative culture

*Philosophy as a culture of the mind rather than a body of doctrine: the Conclusion's name for the thought that rouses and startles · The Renaissance speculative culture*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The cultivation of the mind by speculation, the free play of thought over questions it does not expect to settle.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §5 says that "The final version speaks instead of 'philosophy' and 'speculative culture'", and that in 1873 the express inclusion of religion "gives the catalogue of ways to sharpen attention a wider reach".

**A place to read.** CON §4.

## Meaning

*Speculari* is to watch from a height, from *specula*, a watch-tower; *speculatio* was a spying out, and in the scholastics the contemplation of truth for its own sake, as against practice. In English "speculative" kept both the dignity of contemplation and a hint of the unfounded, the merely conjectural. "Culture" in Pater's decade carried the sense Matthew Arnold had given it in the Preface to *Culture and Anarchy* (1869): "a pursuit of our total perfection" by getting to know "the best which has been thought and said in the world" (see Self-culture). The phrase joins them: thought pursued not to build a system but to shape a mind.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in apposition to "philosophy", in the sentence that turns Novalis's saying into English, that to philosophise is to dephlegmatise and to vivify (CON §4; see Philosophiren). "The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4). The apposition narrows philosophy. It is not a body of doctrine or a method of proof; it is a culture, something done to and in the mind. And its service is not to inform but to wake. The two verbs, "to rouse, to startle", are those of a sleeper disturbed, and the Conclusion's last image for the unattentive life is sleep before evening (CON §5; see Short day of frost and sun).

The 1873 text was wider and plainer: "The service of philosophy, and of religion and culture as well, to the human spirit, is to startle it into a sharp and eager observation" (C73 §5). In the revision religion went out of the sentence, and "culture" became "speculative culture", in apposition to

philosophy rather than beside it. What the loss of religion may mean is taken up under Religion and culture. What remains is a claim about philosophy alone, and it is the same claim the Winckelmann essay had made just before. Philosophy serves culture, it says, not by the fancied gift of absolute knowledge, but by suggesting questions that help one to detect "the passion, and strangeness, and dramatic contrasts of life" (WIN §51; see Transcendental knowledge).

The phrase can be read as naming the kind of thinking the whole book practises. Pico's attempt to reconcile Christianity with the religions of the ancient world can be read as a speculative culture that fails as doctrine and succeeds as sympathy, and Winckelmann's as one that is narrow but intense (see Narrow perfection). The Conclusion's sentence makes the test explicit: a culture of the mind is worth what it adds to the mind's attention.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "speculative culture" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of the Winckelmann essay on philosophy's service to culture, in the order of the book.

**WIN §51** Philosophy serves culture by suggesting the questions that reveal the passion and strangeness of life.

**CON §4** The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, is to rouse, to startle the human spirit to a life of constant and eager observation.

**C73 §5** In 1873 the service was that of philosophy, "and of religion and culture as well".

## See also

Narrow perfection; Observation; Philosophiren; Religion and culture; Self-culture; Short day of frost and sun; Transcendental knowledge.

# Stereotyped world

*a stereotyped world*

Attested: *a stereotyped world* (CON §5; C73 §6). A stereotype was first a printer's plate, cast in metal from a mould of set type, from the Greek *stereos*, solid, and *typos*, impression: the French printers of the 1790s used it to print the same page again and again without resetting it. By Pater's day the word had passed to anything fixed and repeated without change. The Conclusion uses it in its argument against habit: "habit is relative to a stereotyped world" (CON §5; see Habit). Habit is made for a world that prints the same page every day. The figure answers to the book's account of impressions: the Preface had asked what "special impression" each thing makes (PRE §3; see Impression), and a stereotype is an impression that has

stopped being special, the same form pressed again and again. The Conclusion has argued for three paragraphs that the world is not like that, that the impressions to which experience dwindles are "in perpetual flight" (CON §3; see Perpetual flight), and so the habit that fits a stereotyped world fits no real one. The next words put the stereotype in the eye, in "the roughness of the eye" (CON §5; see Roughness of the eye).

## See also

Habit; Impression; Perpetual flight; Roughness of the eye.

# Style

*The single temper that shapes a whole work, or a whole age, so that it could have been done by no one else · The Renaissance*

*style*; *styles*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The way a thing is done, when the way is so much its own that it could not be done otherwise by another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Of the Pleiad's poetry: "there is style there; one temper has shaped the whole" (BEL §13).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** BEL §13.

## Meaning

The Latin *stilus* was the pointed instrument for writing on wax, and so a way of writing; the word passed to any manner of expression in any art. Pater uses it in two senses that his sentences keep apart. A "style" may be a school or a period's way of working, as "the older Florentine style" of miniature-painting; and "style", without an article, is a quality that a work has or lacks, the sign that one temper shaped it.

## Use in the book

The word's fullest use comes in the thirteenth paragraph of the Du Bellay essay, where Pater defends the Pleiad against its critics. The poetry of François de Malherbe, the poet whose strict reform of French verse in the early seventeenth century displaced the Pleiad, came "with its sustained style and weighty sentiment, but with nothing that set people singing" (BEL §13; see La poésie chantée), and at first, with Malherbe, you may think the Pleiad's poetry "fantastic, faded, rococo" (BEL §13; see Rococo). Pater asks for a longer look: "But if you look long enough to understand it, to conceive its sentiment, you will find that those wanton lines have a spirit guiding their caprices" (BEL §13). The next sentence names that spirit: "For there is style there; one temper has shaped the whole; and everything that

has style, that has been done as no other man or age could have done it, as it could never, for all our trying, be done again, has its true value and interest" (BEL §13).

The definition is a definition by uniqueness. Style is what "no other man or age could have done", what can "never, for all our trying, be done again". It can be read as something other than correctness, for Malherbe's "sustained style" is the paragraph's foil to it, and it is not excellence of a fixed kind. It is the presence of "one temper" in the whole, and the temper may be a man's or an age's. That is the sentence's boldest step. The Pleiad's poetry, Pater has just said, matters less by "the impress of individual genius upon it" than as "part of the manner of a time" (BEL §13; see À la mode; Manner); the style he finds in it is therefore the style of a time, an age's temper shaping its poems as a man's shapes his.

The step lets Pater value what he has just called fashion. Manner is the habit of a period; style is manner in which one temper is felt. The distinction can be read as the essay's answer to its own doubt. Much of Du Bellay's poetry illustrates "the age and school to which he belonged" rather than his own temper (BEL §13; see Illustrate), and that would make it a document, not a work of art, were it not that the age itself had style. The essay goes on, in the twenty-first paragraph, to ask more of a poet, "the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality" (BEL §21; see Æsthetic value), and, with Sainte-Beuve and a reservation, to find it in the *Regrets*. The style of the age is valued; the style of the man is valued more.

The book's other uses of the word are historical. Leonardo's lost cartoon of Paradise "was the perfection of the older Florentine style of miniature-painting", and "because it was the perfection of that style, it awoke in Leonardo some seed of discontent" (LEO §§8–9; see Disgust); what he had attained "so far" "had been the mastery of that earlier Florentine style, with its naïve and limited sensuousness" (LEO §20). The three great "styles" in sculpture have each solved, in three different ways, the problem of securing the equivalent of colour and the play of life in solid form (ROB §6; see Play of life). In these a style is a stage that a great artist masters and leaves, and the Leonardo essay can be read as showing what the Du Bellay essay values from the other side: the style of a school is the perfection that the next temper must break.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "style" or "styles" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §1** The restored Greek literature, at least in Plato, had made the age familiar with a style of expression concerning the earlier gods that had something of the warmth of a Christian hymn.

**PIC §14** Pico's tendency to symbolism gives his work a figured style, like Plato's.

**ROB §6** The three great styles in sculpture have solved, in three different ways, the problem of securing the equivalent of colour and the play of life.

**LEO §8** Leonardo's cartoon of Paradise was the perfection of the older Florentine style of miniature-painting.

**LEO §9** Because it was the perfection of that style, it awoke in Leonardo a seed of discontent.

**LEO §20** Leonardo had mastered the earlier Florentine style, with its naïve and limited sensuousness.

**BEL §1** Italian voluptuousness is attempered by the naïve and silvery qualities of the native style.

**BEL §13** There is style in the Pleiad's poetry: one temper has shaped the whole.

## Elsewhere in Pater

In the essay "Style", which opens *Appreciations* (1889), Pater takes the word back to the person. "In this way, according to the well-known saying, 'The style is the man,' complex or simple, in his individuality, his plenary sense of what he really has to say, his sense of the world".[84] The later essay makes style the expression of one writer's "sense of the world"; the Du Bellay essay had allowed it to an age as well, "as no other man or age could have done it". The two can be read together as Pater's doctrine in full: style is the presence of one temper in a whole, and the temper is most valuable when it is a man's own.

## See also

À la mode; Æsthetic value; Disgust; Figured style; Illustrate; La poésie chantée; Manner; Play of life; Rococo; Wantonness.

# Successive stages

*successive stages*

Attested: *successive stages* (PIC §4); *stages* also at PIC §§3, 11; *stage* in six further paragraphs (MIC §§6, 19; WIN §§11, 23, 28, 45). Steps in an ordered growth, each following and replacing the one before. The fifteenth-century scholars would reconcile the religions "not as successive stages in a regular development of the religious sense, but as subsisting side by side" (PIC §4; see Development; Religious sense). The modern scholar might range them "as so many stages in the gradual education of the human mind" (PIC §3). The idea of history as a series of stages was a nineteenth-century commonplace: Comte's law of the three stages, theological, metaphysical

[84] Walter Pater, "Style", in *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (London: Macmillan, 1889).

and positive (see Positive knowledge), Hegel's stages of the spirit, the evolutionists' stages of life. Pater's phrase belongs to that age. The same word serves the Platonists in the essay, for "the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty" (PIC §11; see Unseen beauty): the stages of history and the stages of the soul's ascent are two ladders, one in time and one beyond it.

## See also

Development; Positive knowledge; Religious sense; Unseen beauty.

# Susceptibility

*The capacity to be acted on, the measure of education · The Renaissance*
*susceptibility*; *susceptible*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Susceptibility is the capacity to receive an impression or be affected by something; a susceptible person is easily and finely moved.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Our education becomes complete in proportion as our susceptibility to these impressions increases in depth and variety" (PRE §3). The adjective describes Ludovico Sforza, "susceptible of religious impressions" (LEO §14), and Winckelmann, "the quick, susceptible enthusiast" (WIN §19).

**In this edition.** The Glossary's entry for Temperament speaks of the critic's "unusual susceptibility to the effects of art".

**A place to read.** PRE §3.

## Meaning

The Latin *suscipere* is to take up, to undergo; what is susceptible can take on a quality or an impression, as wax takes a seal. The word was used of bodies, liable to disease or to a force, and of minds and feelings, open to influence. Pater uses it of the mind's capacity to be moved by what it meets.

## Use in the book

The Preface places susceptibility at the centre of education. Works and persons are valuable "for the property each has of affecting one with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure. Our education becomes complete in proportion as our susceptibility to these impressions increases in depth and variety" (PRE §3). It is an unusual measure. Education is not the store of what one knows, but the range and depth of what can move one; it grows inward ("depth") and outward ("variety"). The next paragraph names its condition in the critic, "a certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects" (PRE §4; see Temperament). Susceptibility is passive in form, a being-affected, but the

Preface makes it the ground of the critic's active work of discriminating and analysing (PRE §§2–3; see Impression).

The adjective shows the quality and its dangers. Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan and Leonardo's patron, who, Pater says, murdered his young nephew by slow poison, was yet "so susceptible of religious impressions that he blended mere earthly passion with a sort of religious sentimentalism", and was "susceptible also to the power of music" (LEO §14), which can be read as susceptibility without discrimination. In the School of Giorgione the details of daily life, dress, gesture, speech, are, "for the wise", "susceptible of a suavity and charm, caught from the way in which they are done" (GIO §8): here things, not persons, are susceptible, open to the grace of a manner. Winckelmann's friendships, though they never reached the calm of art, are "more susceptible than any others of equal strength of a purely intellectual culture", and he himself is "The quick, susceptible enthusiast" (WIN §19; see Temperament). He is the Preface's educated man, educated by the depth and variety of what moved him.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the noun or the adjective occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** Education becomes complete in proportion as susceptibility to impressions increases in depth and variety.

**LEO §14** Ludovico Sforza was susceptible of religious impressions and of the power of music.

**GIO §8** For the wise, the details of daily life are susceptible of a suavity and charm caught from the way they are done.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's friendships are susceptible of intellectual culture; he is the quick, susceptible enthusiast who learns by instinct or touch.

## In this edition

The Glossary's entry for Temperament says that in the Preface "the critic requires an unusual susceptibility to the effects of art".

## See also

Enthusiasm; Impression; Pleasure; Temperament.

# Technical criticism

*technical criticism*; *technical*

Attested: *technical criticism* (LEO §3); *technical or antiquarian criticism* (BOT §10); *technical* (GIO §§1, 2, 12). Technical criticism is the connoisseur's criticism, which judges a work by its handling and settles

what a master really painted. Pater gives it its task in the Leonardo essay: after Carlo Amoretti's critique of Vasari's anecdotes, "For others remain the editing of the thirteen books of his manuscripts, and the separation by technical criticism of what in his reputed works is really his, from what is only half his, or the work of his pupils" (LEO §3; see Antiquarianism). The phrase assigns the work and steps aside from it, for "a lover of strange souls" may still analyse the impression the works make on him (LEO §3; see Impression). The Botticelli essay had drawn the same line between "mere technical or antiquarian criticism" and the general criticism that places a painter in culture (BOT §10; see General criticism). The Giorgione essay gives technical criticism a face, the "new Vasari" that scrutinises the great reputation "thread by thread" (GIO §14; see New Vasari), and sets its limits in the opening paragraphs, where pictorial charm is "neither a mere poetical thought or sentiment, on the one hand, nor a mere result of communicable technical skill in colour or design, on the other" (GIO §1). Pater's attitude is respectful and firm: technical criticism tells us what is the master's, and something else must tell us what the master is.

## See also

Antiquarian criticism; Antiquarianism; Authentic works; General criticism; Impression; New Vasari.

# Temperament

*The critic's qualification and the artist's constitution · The Renaissance temperament*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Temperament was once the mixture of the bodily humours that made a person sanguine or melancholy; by Pater's time it meant a person's settled cast of feeling and perception.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface makes it the critic's one requirement, in place of an abstract definition of beauty: "the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects" (PRE §4). The essays find it in their subjects, Leonardo's "unique temperament" (LEO §24), the "pictorial temperament" (GIO §2), and above all Winckelmann, who penetrated the antique world "by his passion, his temperament" (WIN §42).

**In this edition.** Temperament is one of the Key Words and has a Glossary entry.

**A place to read.** WIN §§42–43, where temperament replaces formal principle.

## Meaning

The Latin *temperamentum* is a due mixing. Ancient and medieval medicine described a person's constitution as a mixture of four humours, blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile, and called it his temperament or complexion; the sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric and melancholic temperaments were its types. When the physiology faded the word stayed, for the cast of mind and feeling a person is born with rather than acquires. Pater keeps the bodily root in view, as the Winckelmann essay shows.

## Use in the book

The Preface sets temperament against definition. "What is important, then, is not that the critic should possess a correct abstract definition of beauty for the intellect, but a certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects" (PRE §4). A definition would be general and the same for every critic; a temperament is particular, a capacity of one person to be moved. It goes with the rest of the method, since the critic's facts are his impressions and education "becomes complete" as "susceptibility" to them increases (PRE §3; see Susceptibility). The same paragraph adds the breadth such a temperament needs: the critic "will remember always that beauty exists in many forms" (PRE §4; see Beauty; School of taste).

The essays apply the word to artists, as the source of what is unlike anyone else in their work. Leonardo worked "for the present hour, and for a few only", and "Out of the secret places of a unique temperament he brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown" (LEO §24). The true pictorial quality of a painting is in its drawing and its colouring, and the drawing is "the design projected from that peculiar pictorial temperament or constitution" (GIO §2; see Drawing). Rome was full of pleasurable sensation "for men of an imaginative temperament" like Du Bellay (BEL §12), and Victor Hugo is a man "of inventive temperament" (MIC §2).

Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the eighteenth-century German historian of ancient art, is the book's fullest study of a temperament, and the essay uses the word nine times, in five paragraphs. His enthusiasm, "dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament, has a power of reinforcing the purer emotions of the intellect with an almost physical excitement", and his affinity with Hellenism "was not merely intellectual", for "the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in it" (WIN §14; see Hellenism). He "apprehended the subtlest principles of the Hellenic manner, not through the understanding, but by instinct or touch"; the world of Greek art penetrates him "and becomes part of his temperament" (WIN §19). From a few stray relics he "divines the temperament of the antique world" (WIN §31). And temperament takes the place of theory: "To the criticism of that consummate Greek modelling he brought not only

his culture but his temperament", and "Penetrating into the antique world by his passion, his temperament, he enunciated no formal principles, always hard and one-sided" (WIN §42). "One result of this temperament is a serenity—Heiterkeit" in his handling of the sensuous side of Greek art (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit).

Winckelmann can be read as the Preface's critic made into a life. He has the temperament the Preface asks for, the power of being deeply moved, and he knows by it what others failed to learn from books. Pater does not hide the cost. The temperament that opens the antique world to him is nourished by friendships (WIN §42), one of which "ends noisily in a burst of angry fire" (WIN §19), and the serenity it gives is, "perhaps, in great measure, a negative quality" (WIN §43).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §4** The critic needs not an abstract definition of beauty but a certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by beautiful objects.

**MIC §2** Men of inventive temperament, like Victor Hugo, have sometimes relieved conceptions of merely moral or spiritual greatness by lovely accidents or accessories.

**LEO §24** Out of the secret places of a unique temperament Leonardo brought strange blossoms and fruits.

**GIO §2** The true pictorial quality lies in drawing and colouring; the drawing is the design projected from the pictorial temperament, in which all ideas float up as visible scene or image.

**BEL §12** Rome was full of pleasurable sensation for men of an imaginative temperament like Du Bellay.

**WIN §14** Winckelmann's enthusiasm depends on bodily temperament, and the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in his Hellenism.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann betrays his temperament in his appearance, and the world of Greek art becomes part of it.

**WIN §31** From a few relics Winckelmann divines the temperament of the antique world.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann brought his temperament to Greek sculpture, penetrated the antique world by it, and nurtured it by friendships.

**WIN §43** One result of this temperament is Winckelmann's serenity before the sensuous side of Greek art.

## In this edition

Temperament is one of the edition's Key Words: "Pater values a capacity to be moved in finely differentiated ways. In the Preface it belongs to the critic. In essays such as *Leonardo da Vinci*, he also reads an artist's temperament through recurrent faces, gestures, and kinds of beauty." The Glossary has "A characteristic disposition of feeling and perception. In the Preface, the critic requires an unusual susceptibility to the effects of art."

## See also

Beauty; Drawing; Enthusiasm; Heiterkeit; Hellenism; Impression; Instinct; School of taste; Susceptibility.

# The ages are all equal

*"The ages are all equal"*

Attested: "The ages are all equal," says William Blake, "but genius is always above its age" (PRE §4). Blake wrote the words in the margin of his copy of the *Discourses* of the painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, first President of the Royal Academy, against Reynolds's remark in the third Discourse, after Vasari, that the German painter and engraver Albert Dürer would probably have been one of the first painters of his age had he been initiated into the great principles of art practised by his Italian contemporaries; Blake answers that one should look at Gothic figures and Gothic buildings "& not talk of Dark Ages or of Any Age", and goes on, "Ages are All Equal. But Genius is Always Above The Age".[85] Pater gives the saying a light change of wording and sets it after his own claim that "all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal" (PRE §4; see School of taste). Together they give the book its range, from twelfth-century France to eighteenth-century Germany, and its question for every period: "In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the period find itself?" (PRE §4). The note at PRE §4 says that Blake's marginalia "reject the idea that artistic genius depends on a specially favored age".

## See also

Excellence; Genius; Renaissance; School of taste.

# To see the object as in itself it really is

*Matthew Arnold's aim of criticism, and Pater's first step · The Renaissance*

[85] William Blake, annotations to *The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds* (1798), vol. 1, Discourse III, p. 71 in Reynolds; in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman, revised edition (1982), p. 649.

*"To see the object as in itself it really is"*; *"seeing one's object as it really is"*; *"to know one's own impression as it really is"*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The sentence is Matthew Arnold's: criticism, in every branch of knowledge, is the endeavour "to see the object as in itself it really is".

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater quotes it without naming Arnold, grants that it "has been justly said to be the aim of all true criticism whatever", and puts a first step in front of it: "to know one's own impression as it really is" (PRE §2). Restating the aim, he drops the words "in itself", and later in the same paragraph sets aside "the abstract question what beauty is in itself".

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §2 names Arnold's essay "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864) and sums up the difference between the two critics.

**A place to read.** PRE §2, the whole paragraph.

## Meaning

The phrase belongs to Matthew Arnold, the poet and critic, Oxford's Professor of Poetry from 1857 to 1867. He first used it in his lectures *On Translating Homer* (1861), and set it, quoted from those lectures, at the head of "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", first printed in 1864 and collected in his *Essays in Criticism* (1865): the main effort of the intellect of Europe for many years, he had said, had been a critical one, "the endeavour, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is".[86] "In itself" is the philosopher's phrase for a thing as it is apart from our view of it.

## Use in the book

The Preface turns the sentence in one movement: "'To see the object as in itself it really is,' has been justly said to be the aim of all true criticism whatever; and in æsthetic criticism the first step towards seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly" (PRE §2). Pater does not reject Arnold's aim; he calls it just. What he adds is an order of work. Before the critic can see the object, he must know what the object does to him, and the same words "as it really is" are now applied to the impression (see Impression).

The sentence changes as it goes. Arnold's "the object as in itself it really is" becomes "one's object as it really is", and then "one's own impression as it really is". The "in itself" has gone, and it comes back near the end of the paragraph only to be dismissed: the critic who experiences impressions strongly "has no need to trouble himself with the abstract question what

[86] Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", *National Review* (November 1864), reprinted in *Essays in Criticism* (1865), opening paragraph, quoting his own words from *On Translating Homer* (1861), Lecture II.

beauty is in itself, or what its exact relation to truth or experience—metaphysical questions, as unprofitable as metaphysical questions elsewhere" (PRE §2; see Metaphysical question). The dropping of the two words can be read as Pater's quiet correction of Arnold. The object "in itself" is left to the metaphysicians; what is open to the critic is the object as it acts on someone, and that can be known "as it really is", precisely and without self-deception.

The questions that follow bear this out. They ask what the song or picture is "to me", and what effect it "really" produces (PRE §2; see Pleasure). "Really" stays, "in itself" does not. The answers are "the original facts", primary data to be realised "for one's self, or not at all" (PRE §2; see Primary data). The rigour Arnold asked of the critic is kept, but it is asked of his report on his own experience. The rest of the Preface returns from the impression to the object: the critic must find "what the source of that impression is, and under what conditions it is experienced" (PRE §3), and disengage the virtue that produces it (see Virtue). Seeing the object as it really is comes last, by way of the impression, and not first.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the sentence and its two restatements occur.

**PRE §2** Arnold's aim of criticism is quoted and called just; in æsthetic criticism the first step towards seeing the object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is; the question what beauty is in itself is set aside.

## Pater's sources

Arnold's essay gives criticism a public task. It is to create a current of fresh and true ideas, and it does so by "a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world", keeping aloof from practical and party interests.[87] Pater takes from it the authority of the formula and the demand for exactness, and leaves aside the programme. Arnold's critic surveys literatures and ideas; Pater's starts from what a picture, a landscape or a person does to him.

## Later readings

Oscar Wilde took the turn one step further. In "The Critic as Artist", in *Intentions* (1891), the speaker Gilbert argues that the highest criticism is itself a creation, and asks, "Who, again, cares whether Mr. Pater has put into the portrait of Monna Lisa something that Lionardo never dreamed of?"; his friend Ernest sums up the theory as making the critic's primary aim "to

[87] Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", closing pages, where criticism is defined as a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.

see the object as in itself it really is not", and Gilbert accepts it.[88] Wilde's inversion drops what Pater kept. Pater asks the critic to know his impression "as it really is" and then to trace it to its source in the work; Wilde's Gilbert makes the work only a starting point for the critic's own creation.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §2 identifies the quotation as coming from Arnold's "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", first published in 1864, and puts the difference in one sentence: "Arnold calls for a disinterested study of the object. Pater makes a close description of the observer's own impression the first step toward seeing it."

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Discriminate; Impression; In itself; Metaphysical question; Pleasure; Primary data; Realise; Virtue.

# Tradition of sentiment

*The feeling handed down from Dante and Giotto through the Florentines of the fifteenth century to Michelangelo, its last heir · The Renaissance tradition of sentiment*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A tradition is what is handed down; a tradition of sentiment is a way of feeling passed from one generation of artists to the next.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Up to him the tradition of sentiment is unbroken, the progress towards surer and more mature methods of expressing that sentiment continuous" (MIC §17).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §17.

## Meaning

The Latin *traditio* is a handing over, from *tradere*, to deliver. A tradition in art is usually thought of as a set of forms or methods: a way of drawing drapery, a type of composition. Pater's phrase makes the thing handed down a sentiment (see Sentiment), a habit of feeling, and treats the methods as the means by which that feeling is expressed, improved from one generation to the next.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the seventeenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which explains why the essay has dwelt on his old age: "I have dwelt on the thought of Michelangelo as thus lingering beyond his

[88] Oscar Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", Part I, in *Intentions* (London, 1891).

time in a world not his own, because, if one is to distinguish the peculiar savour of his work, he must be approached, not through his followers, but through his predecessors; not through the marbles of Saint Peter's, but through the work of the sculptors of the fifteenth century over the tombs and altars of Tuscany" (MIC §17; see Savour). Then the lineage: "He is the last of the Florentines, of those on whom the peculiar sentiment of the Florence of Dante and Giotto descended: he is the consummate representative of the form that sentiment took in the fifteenth century with men like Luca Signorelli and Mino da Fiesole. Up to him the tradition of sentiment is unbroken, the progress towards surer and more mature methods of expressing that sentiment continuous" (MIC §17).

The passage distinguishes two things that pass from master to master. One is the sentiment, which "descended" on the Florentines as a gift descends, and which remains the same: the feeling of the Florence of Dante and Giotto. The other is the method of expressing it, which progresses, growing "surer and more mature". Luca Signorelli (about 1450–1523), the painter of Cortona whose frescoes of the Last Things fill a chapel of Orvieto cathedral, and the Florentine sculptor Mino da Fiesole (about 1429–1484), carver of tombs and portrait busts, are named as the fifteenth-century form of the sentiment; Michelangelo is its "consummate representative", in whom the method is surest and the feeling still whole.

"Up to him" marks the break. After Michelangelo the tradition fails, and the next sentences say how: his professed disciples "are in love with his strength only" (MIC §17; see Theatricality). The followers inherited the method and lost the sentiment. The next paragraph gives the tradition a concrete example in the Creation of Man, which "had haunted the mind of the middle age like a dream" and which Michelangelo "receives from tradition" (MIC §18; see Discipleship; Medievalism); the paragraph after names "another tradition", the Florentines' preoccupation with death, to which he "gives the final expression" (MIC §19; see Outre-tombe).

The phrase states a method of criticism. To understand a great artist, on this account, one looks backward to what he received, not forward to what he caused: "not through his followers, but through his predecessors". The method runs through the book. The della Robbia essay had already set Michelangelo's system of sculpture beside that of the Tuscan sculptors before him (ROB §§10–11; see Incompleteness); the Preface asks the critic to find the "special" impression a work produces and "under what conditions it is experienced" (PRE §3; see Special manifestation). Tradition, in Pater, is not the opposite of genius but its condition.

Pater's phrase answers, on one reading, the usual history of the Renaissance, in which Michelangelo begins the modern age. For Pater he ends an older one: "the last of the Florentines". His greatness is the fulfilment of a feeling handed down since Dante and Giotto, and what came after him, the theatricality of his imitators, is the loss of that feeling.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §17** Michelangelo is the last of the Florentines; up to him the tradition of sentiment is unbroken.

## See also

Discipleship; Incompleteness; Medievalism; Outre-tombe; Savour; Sentiment; Special manifestation; Theatricality.

### Traditional reputation

*traditional reputation*; *traditional*, *traditionally*

Attested: *traditional reputation* (GIO §14); *traditional* in six further paragraphs (FRE §§21, 33; MIC §§14, 18; LEO §27; GIO §18); *traditionally* (MIC §20). A traditional reputation is a fame handed down, from the Latin *tradere*, to hand over, made as much by what was said of a man as by what he did. Pater traces the history of Giorgione's. "And, as we might expect, something fabulous and illusive has always mingled itself in the brilliancy of Giorgione's fame" (GIO §14). Then the tradition breaks: "And then there is a barrier or borderland, a period about the middle of the sixteenth century, in passing through which the tradition miscarries, and the true outlines of Giorgione's work and person are obscured" (GIO §14; see Fashion). Finally the critics come: "The accomplished science of the subject has come at last, and, as in other instances, has not made the past more real for us, but assured us only that we possess less of it than we seemed to possess" (GIO §14), and in the "new Vasari" "the great traditional reputation" is "scrutinised thread by thread" (GIO §14; see New Vasari). The essay does not let the account end there. "The real and the traditional elements" are both part of what concerns a great name (GIO §18; see Æsthetic philosopher), and the traditional, though not real, may be "very stimulating". The phrase can be read as Pater's name for the legend that the Giorgionesque inherits.

## See also

Æsthetic philosopher; Fashion; Legend; New Vasari.

### Traditional subject

*traditional subject*

Attested: *traditional subject* (FRE §21). A story handed down from people to people, not invented by the writer who tells it. "The little book loses none of its interest through the criticism which finds in it only a traditional subject, handed on by one people to another; for after passing

thus from hand to hand, its outline is still clear, its surface untarnished; and, like many other stories, books, literary and artistic conceptions of the middle age, it has come to have in this way a sort of personal history, almost as full of risk and adventure as that of its own heroes" (FRE §21). The criticism Pater means can be taken as that of the French historian Claude Fauriel, who divined for the tale "a still more ancient ancestry, traces in it of an Arabian origin, as in a leaf lost out of some early Arabian Nights" (FRE §20). Pater turns the reproach into a charm: the travels of a story give it a life of its own, and its "surface untarnished" is what the æsthetic critic responds to (see Matter and manner). The note at FRE §20 says that Pater reports Fauriel's Arabic ancestry "as a conjecture", and that the analogy "does not establish the route by which the French tale arose".

## See also

Matter and manner; Traditional friendship.

## Transcendental knowledge

*transcendental knowledge*; *absolute or transcendental knowledge*

Attested: *transcendental knowledge* (WIN §51). "Transcendental" is from the Latin *transcendere*, to climb across: knowledge of what lies beyond experience, or, in Immanuel Kant's technical sense, knowledge concerned not with objects but with our way of knowing them, so far as that is possible a priori;[89] "absolute knowledge", *das absolute Wissen*, is the last stage of G. W. F. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807).[90] Pater's phrase can be read as setting both aside at once. At the end of the fifty-first paragraph, after saying that a taste for metaphysics may be one of the things we must renounce if we would mould our lives to artistic perfection (WIN §51; see Metaphysical question), he gives philosophy its proper work: "Philosophy serves culture, not by the fancied gift of absolute or transcendental knowledge, but by suggesting questions which help one to detect the passion, and strangeness, and dramatic contrasts of life" (WIN §51). The word "fancied" does the work. The gift is not refused but doubted, and philosophy keeps its use as a means of sight. The Conclusion says the same in nearly the same form: philosophy's service is to rouse the spirit "to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4; see Speculative culture). In 1873 the service had been that "of philosophy, and of religion and culture as well" (C73 §5; see Religion and culture). Philosophy is to be judged by what it helps us see, not by what it claims to know (see Im Ganzen).

[89] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Riga, 1781; 2nd ed. 1787), Introduction, A11–12/B25.

[90] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bamberg and Würzburg, 1807), chapter VIII, "Das absolute Wissen".

## See also

Im Ganzen; Impression; Metaphysical question; Religion and culture; Speculative culture; Strangeness.

### Turbid medium

*turbid medium*; *turbid fever*; *turbid*

Attested: *turbid medium* (WIN §20); *turbid fever* (WIN §43); *turbid* (WIN §44). *Turbid* is the Latin *turbidus*, troubled, from *turba*, a tumult: of water, clouded with mud; of the mind, confused. Pater uses it three times in the Winckelmann essay, and always of what clouds a clear thing. Winckelmann knew Greek art at second hand: "For the most part he had to penetrate to Greek art through copies, imitations, and later Roman art itself", and "this turbid medium" left in his results much that a later criticism can correct (WIN §20; see Palaestra). The spectacle of great art takes from the life of the senses "something of its turbid fever" (WIN §43; see Tyranny of the senses). And the perfection for which man left the Hellenic ideal is one "that makes the blood turbid, and frets the flesh" (WIN §44; see Hellenic ideal). The three uses move from water to fever to blood, and each names what clouds a clear thing; Pater's image for the clearing is wine: the "fiery, stupefying wine" becomes, in a happier climate, "clear and exhilarating" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities). Pater does not mention it, but Goethe's theory of colours had made the turbid medium, *das trübe Mittel*, the origin of colour: light seen through it turns yellow and red, and darkness seen through it, when the medium is lit, blue.[91] In Pater the medium only obscures (see Refraction).

## See also

Chthonian divinities; Hellenic ideal; Palaestra; Refraction; Tyranny of the senses.

### Typical standards

*The qualities of the great masters as patterns by which the critic measures lesser and stranger work · The Renaissance*

*typical standards*; *typical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A typical standard is a model that shows a kind in its purest form, and so serves as a measure for other instances.

[91] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Zur Farbenlehre* (Tübingen, 1810), Didactic Part, §§145–177.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The qualities of the great masters are "not peculiar to them; but most often typical standards, or revealing instances of the laws by which certain æsthetic effects are produced" (MIC §21).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §21.

## Meaning

"Typical", from the Greek *typos*, an impression or stamp, means what has the character of a type: the representative example of a class (see Type). A "standard" was first a flag raised to rally troops, then a fixed measure kept by authority, the standard yard or pound. Joined, the words make a model that does two things: it represents its kind, and it measures other things against it.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the first sentence of the last paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: the qualities of the great masters are "most often typical standards, or revealing instances of the laws by which certain æsthetic effects are produced" (MIC §21; see Æsthetic effect). The paragraph's third sentence gives the standard its use: "But when once we have succeeded in defining for ourselves those characteristics, and the law of their combination, we have acquired a standard or measure which helps us to put in its right place many a vagrant genius, many an unclassified talent, many precious though imperfect products of art" (MIC §21; see Vagrant genius).

The sentence describes a method in three steps. The critic first defines the characteristics of a great master, then "the law of their combination", how they "moderate, support, relieve each other"; and with that law in hand he has a measure. The measure is for the unplaced: the vagrant, the unclassified, the imperfect. Great masters are easy to admire; it is the lesser and stranger artists who need a standard, and the old masters supply one because "their characteristics are written larger, and are easier to read" (MIC §21; see Analogue). The paragraph applies the method at once: the interfusion of sweetness and strength, defined in Michelangelo, is found again in Blake and Victor Hugo (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength).

"Typical" is a word the book uses of art at its most representative. Music is "the typical, or ideally consummate art", the object of the aspiration of all the others (GIO §4; see Anders-streben); Giorgione "is typical of that aspiration of all the arts towards music" (GIO §12); the Concert in the Pitti Palace is "the typical instance" of the Giorgionesque (GIO §19) and "is typical of everything that Giorgione, himself an admirable musician, touched with his influence" (GIO §21). In the Winckelmann essay the Mothers of *Faust* "mould and remould the typical forms that appear in human history" (WIN §29), and Winckelmann's insight into "the typical unity and repose of the highest sort of sculpture seems to have involved

limitation in another direction" (WIN §45). The typical is the case in which a kind shows itself most clearly.

"Standard" brings with it the question of authority. The Winckelmann essay speaks of "a standard of taste, which genius confesses", fixed "in Greece, at a definite historical period" (WIN §23; see Orthodoxy), and the Giorgione essay of the "new Vasari" for whom the Pitti Concert becomes "the standard of Giorgione's genuine work" (GIO §16). Pater's typical standards are of a different kind. They are not rules imposed from Greece but qualities found by the critic in a master and carried, as measures, to other work; their authority is that of a clear example.

The Preface refuses a "universal formula" for beauty (PRE §1; see Universal formula), and the Michelangelo essay ends by allowing standards. The two can be read as consistent, since the standard is drawn from particular works and applied to particular works: the critic does not define beauty, but learns from Michelangelo what sweetness and strength look like together, and then recognises them in later men.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "typical" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §21** The qualities of the great masters are most often typical standards, and give a measure for many a vagrant genius.

**GIO §4** Music is the typical, or ideally consummate art.

**GIO §12** Giorgione is typical of the aspiration of all the arts towards music.

**GIO §19** The Pitti Concert is the typical instance of the Giorgionesque.

**GIO §21** The Concert is typical of everything Giorgione touched with his influence.

**WIN §29** The Mothers of *Faust* mould the typical forms that appear in human history.

**WIN §45** Winckelmann's insight into the typical unity and repose of sculpture involved limitation elsewhere.

## See also

Æsthetic effect; Analogue; Anders-streben; Orthodoxy; Sweetness and strength; Type; Universal formula; Vagrant genius.

# Ultimate differences of the arts

*The differences of kind between the arts, grounded in the senses, whose apprehension is the beginning of æsthetic criticism · The Renaissance*

*ultimate differences of the arts*; *differences of kind*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The differences between the arts that remain when every comparison has been made: differences of kind, not of degree.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "A just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism" (GIO §3).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §2 says that Lessing's *Laocoön* "distinguishes arts that arrange bodies in space from poetry, which unfolds signs in time", and that "Pater extends the problem to what different arts can learn from each other".

**A place to read.** GIO §§1, 3.

## Meaning

"Ultimate", from the Latin *ultimus*, last, describes what comes at the end of an analysis and cannot be analysed further. The ultimate differences of the arts are the ones that are left when everything the arts share has been set aside: not that one art is better or more developed than another, but that each is of a different kind, as sight differs from hearing.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the third paragraph of the Giorgione essay, in the concessive clause that restates the first two before the essay turns. "But although each art has thus its own specific order of impressions, and an untranslatable charm, while a just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism; yet ..." (GIO §3; see Anders-streben). The first paragraph had given the ground of the differences. Because art addresses "the 'imaginative reason' through the senses, there are differences of kind in æsthetic beauty, corresponding to the differences in kind of the gifts of sense themselves" (GIO §1; see Imaginative reason). The arts differ ultimately because the senses do. Painting is for the eye and music for the ear, and no development of either will make it the other.

"Just apprehension" is a careful phrase, and the essay returns to it. The Venetian painters had "that old Venetian clearness or justice, in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art" (GIO §12; see Pictorial design). The justice that criticism must learn, the Venetian school had "instinctively" (GIO §11; see Venetian school). The ultimate differences are the critic's beginning, and the painter's practice: to know them is to know what one's art can and cannot do.

The Winckelmann essay had grounded the differences of the arts elsewhere, and the two grounds can be set side by side. There, in a series that follows Hegel's,[92] the arts are "ranged in a series" answering to the "developments in the human mind itself" (WIN §32; see Development).

[92] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, part III: architecture, sculpture, and the romantic arts (*die romantischen Künste*), painting, music and poetry.

"Different attitudes of the imagination have a native affinity with different types of sensuous form, so that they combine together, with completeness and ease" (WIN §32). The differences are historical: each art suits a stage of the mind, architecture the earliest, sculpture the Greek, while painting, music and poetry are "the special arts of the romantic and modern ages" (WIN §33; see Romantic arts). In the Giorgione essay the differences are sensory and permanent; no history ranks them. The change can be read as the measure of what the later essay owes to the earlier and of where it parts from it. The Winckelmann essay ranks the arts by what they express; the Giorgione essay distinguishes them by what they are made of, and ranks them only by how nearly each approaches the condition of music (see Musical law).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "ultimate differences of the arts" occurs, with GIO §1 and WIN §§32–33, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** There are differences of kind in æsthetic beauty, corresponding to the differences in kind of the gifts of sense.

**GIO §3** A just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism.

**WIN §32** The arts may be ranged in a series corresponding to a series of developments in the human mind.

**WIN §33** Painting, music and poetry are the special arts of the romantic and modern ages.

## See also

Anders-streben; Art-casuistry; Development; Imaginative reason; Musical law; Order of impressions; Pictorial design; Romantic arts; Sensuous material; Venetian school.

# Unity with one's self

*The accord of a person with his own nature, easy for the Greek and the eternal problem of modern culture · The Renaissance*
*unity with one's self*; *at unity with himself*; *unity with ourselves*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Accord within a person: of his powers with one another, and of himself with his nature and his world.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Hellenic ideal is one "in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world" (WIN §44).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§10, 44, 50.

## Meaning

To be "at unity" with someone is an old English idiom for being at peace with him. Pater turns it inward: the other party is oneself. The phrase thus implies a division that it denies, for a man can be at unity with himself only because he could be at odds with himself. The modern form of the problem had been stated by the German poet Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) in his letters on the aesthetic education of man (1795). The Greeks, he wrote, were at once full of form and full of matter, while modern man, bound for ever to one small fragment of the whole, develops himself only as a fragment.[93] Pater does not cite the letter, but his essay ends in the same place.

## Use in the book

The phrase first comes as one of Goethe's words for Winckelmann's influence: "wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity" (WIN §10; see Intellectual integrity). Pater doubts at once whether they fit the narrow Winckelmann (see Narrow perfection). Unity with one's self seems, at this point, to belong to Goethe's universal culture; what Winckelmann had, and what affected Goethe, was the integrity of a single force, true to its type (WIN §10; see Intellectual integrity).

The forty-fourth paragraph finds the phrase's home in Greece, in the Hellenic ideal (WIN §44; see Hellenic ideal), and gives its three unities in a widening order: with the self, with the body, with the world. The longer we contemplate it, Pater says, the more we may regret that man passed beyond it. But he had to, if he was to be saved from the ennui "which ever attaches itself to realisation, even the realisation of the perfect life" (WIN §44; see Ennui). Unity, once realised, would have become a weariness, and the Greek tragedians already show the conflict that broke it.

At the end of the essay the phrase becomes a problem. "Certainly, for us of the modern world, with its conflicting claims, its entangled interests, distracted by so many sorrows, with many preoccupations, so bewildering an experience, the problem of unity with ourselves, in blitheness and repose, is far harder than it was for the Greek within the simple terms of antique life" (WIN §50). Harder, not hopeless: the intellect demands completeness, centrality, "not less than ever" (WIN §50; see Centrality), and Winckelmann gives the demand to Goethe. It comes to him in a person rather than a book, "more importunately" (WIN §50; see Importunate). The paragraph ends with the phrase in the middle of a definition. "For Goethe, possessing all modern interests, ready to be lost in the perplexed

[93] Friedrich Schiller, *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen* (1795), Letter 6: *Zugleich voll Form und voll Fülle*; *Ewig nur an ein einzelnes kleines Bruchstück des Ganzen gefesselt, bildet sich der Mensch selbst nur als Bruchstück aus*.

currents of modern thought, he defines, in clearest outline, the eternal problem of culture—balance, unity with one's self, consummate Greek modelling" (WIN §50; see Modelling).

Between the first use and the last the phrase changes hands. In the tenth paragraph it is Goethe's word, and seems hardly to fit Winckelmann; in the fiftieth it is the problem that Winckelmann defines for Goethe. The essay can be read as the story of that exchange. The Greek had unity with himself by nature, as part of a happy world; the modern can have it, if at all, only by culture, and the next paragraph says what kind (see Self-culture; Im Ganzen). Bodily perfection will not do, nor the direct exercise of a single talent (WIN §51; see Centrality). What remains is a unity that is won, not given, and that takes the self's own conflicts as its material.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "unity with one's self", "at unity with himself" or "unity with ourselves" occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §10** The secret of Winckelmann's influence, Goethe tells us, is wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity.

**WIN §44** The Hellenic ideal is one in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world.

**WIN §50** For the modern world the problem of unity with ourselves is far harder; Winckelmann defines for Goethe the eternal problem of culture, balance, unity with one's self, consummate Greek modelling.

## See also

Centrality; Ennui; Hellenic ideal; Im Ganzen; Importunate; Intellectual integrity; Modelling; Narrow perfection; Repose; Self-culture; Wholeness.

# Universal formula

*The abstract definition of beauty that Pater sets aside · The Renaissance universal formula*; *formula*, *formulas*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A formula is a set form of words or symbols meant to hold always; a universal formula for beauty would define it once for every case.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface opens by setting it aside: many writers have tried "to find some universal formula" for beauty, and their attempts help us little to enjoy or discriminate (PRE §1). The student of æsthetics seeks instead "the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it" (PRE §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at PRE §1 is given under Relative.

**A place to read.** PRE §1, the whole paragraph.

## Meaning

The Latin *formula* is a little form, a fixed pattern of words, and in Roman law the set statement of a case. In mathematics and chemistry a formula expresses a general rule or a composition in symbols. To ask for a universal formula of beauty is to ask for a definition that would hold of every beautiful thing, the kind of definition the philosophical treatises on beauty had long sought.

## Use in the book

The book's first sentence names the project it declines: "Many attempts have been made by writers on art and poetry to define beauty in the abstract, to express it in the most general terms, to find some universal formula for it" (PRE §1). Pater grants these attempts some value, though not where they aimed: "The value of these attempts has most often been in the suggestive and penetrating things said by the way." They fail at three practical tasks: they "help us very little to enjoy what has been well done in art or poetry, to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent in them, or to use words like beauty, excellence, art, poetry, with a more precise meaning than they would otherwise have" (PRE §1).

The reason follows: beauty "is relative", and its definition grows useless as it grows abstract (PRE §1; see Relative; Abstractness). So the paragraph ends with a new aim: "To define beauty, not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible, to find, not its universal formula, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of æsthetics" (PRE §1; see Concrete terms; Special manifestation; Æsthetics). Pater keeps the word "formula" and changes its range: a formula is still wanted, a precise expression, but of one manifestation at a time. The essays may be taken as such formulas: "sweetness and strength", "pleasure with surprise" for Michelangelo (MIC §1), "the condition of music" for the arts (GIO §5).

The word returns twice as a measure of other ages. Botticelli will not accept Dante's orthodoxy, which refers all human action "to the simple formula of purgatory, heaven and hell" (BOT §5; see Conventional orthodoxy; Insoluble element of prose): a universal formula of another kind, moral and theological, and one that, on Pater's reading, leaves "an insoluble element of prose" in Dante's poetry. And the science of Leonardo's age "was all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas" (LEO §13; see Divination). In both the formula is what fixes in advance; against it stand vision and the particular case.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "formula" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §1** Attempts to find a universal formula for beauty help little; the true student seeks the formula for this or that special manifestation of it.

**BOT §5** Dante's orthodoxy refers all human action to the simple formula of purgatory, heaven and hell, which Botticelli does not accept.

**LEO §13** The science of Leonardo's age was divination, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas.

## See also

Abstractness; Æsthetics; Concrete terms; Conventional orthodoxy; Divination; Excellence; Insoluble element of prose; Relative; Special manifestation.

# Universality

*What holds for all: the Greek ideal, and the law that binds the modern mind · The Renaissance*

*universality*; *universal*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of holding for all cases, persons or times.

**In *The Renaissance*.** *Allgemeinheit* is glossed "breadth, generality, universality" (ROB §7).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §7 glosses *Allgemeinheit* as "Universality".

**A place to read.** ROB §§7–8, with WIN §§52–53.

## Meaning

Latin *universus*, "turned into one", is the whole taken together, and the universal is what belongs to every member of a kind. The logicians set it against the particular. Pater uses the noun three times, and the uses fall at two points of the book: at its centre, in the account of Greek sculpture, and at its end, in the account of the modern mind.

## Use in the book

The first use is the last term of Pater's gloss on *Allgemeinheit*, "breadth, generality, universality" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit). The order of the three words moves from the visible to the abstract: breadth is a quality of form, seen in the large planes of a statue; generality a quality of the type; universality a quality of its reach. The next paragraph says what the universality achieves: the Greek works gained "universal acceptance" (ROB

§8; see Breadth of humanity). A work that leaves out what belongs only to one moment belongs to every moment; that is the reward of the Greek law.

The Winckelmann essay ends on a question that uses the word in the same sense. For Goethe "the problem came to be:—Can the blitheness and universality of the antique ideal be communicated to artistic productions, which shall contain the fulness of the experience of the modern world?" (WIN §52; see Blitheness). The question is the della Robbia essay's question at a larger scale: can the general be joined to the particular, repose to expression? Luca della Robbia's system, "midway between" the Greek and Michelangelo's, was one answer in sculpture (ROB §11; see Pure form).

The last use reverses the value. "The chief factor in the thoughts of the modern mind concerning itself is the intricacy, the universality of natural law, even in the moral order" (WIN §53). Here universality is not a gift of art but a fact of science, and it binds: natural law reaches into every act, and the modern mind feels itself entangled in it. The paragraph asks whether art can give "the spirit at least an equivalent for the sense of freedom" (WIN §53; see Equivalent of colour).

The adjective keeps the same sense, from the Preface's refusal of "some universal formula" for beauty (PRE §1; see Universal formula) to "the universal problem" that low relief answers (ROB §5; see Low relief).

Read across the book, the word traces a shift from art to science. The universality Pater admires is the Greek one, reached by leaving out; the universality he fears is the modern one, which leaves nothing out. Greek sculpture won its universal acceptance by purging the accidents of the moment; the modern law of nature claims every accident, and the question of the Winckelmann essay's last pages is whether art can still make, within that law, a world of repose.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "universality" or "universal" occurs, in the order of the book; the Italian *universale* at MIC §14 is not listed.

**PRE §1** Writers have sought some universal formula for beauty; the student of æsthetics seeks not its universal formula but its special manifestation.

**ROB §5** Luca's school has before it the universal problem of its art, and meets the special limitation of sculpture by low relief.

**ROB §7** Allgemeinheit means breadth, generality, universality.

**ROB §8** The breadth of humanity in the Greek works insured them universal acceptance.

**WIN §10** Goethe's universal culture is set against Winckelmann's narrow interest.

**WIN §24** A universal pagan sentiment lies beneath the religions of the greatest number.

**WIN §52** Goethe asked whether the blitheness and universality of the antique ideal could be communicated to modern art.

**WIN §53** The chief factor in the modern mind's thought of itself is the universality of natural law.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §7 glosses *Allgemeinheit* as "Universality". The note at WIN §35 gives "Generality or universality".

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Blitheness; Breadth of humanity; Equivalent of colour; Low relief; Pure form; Special manifestation; Universal formula.

### Vagrant genius

*vagrant genius*

Attested: *vagrant genius* (MIC §21). A wandering genius, one who belongs to no school and cannot be placed; from the Anglo-French *vageraunt*, its form shaped by the Latin *vagari*, to wander. Pater uses the phrase in the last paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, where the qualities of the great masters, once defined, help "to put in its right place many a vagrant genius, many an unclassified talent, many precious though imperfect products of art" (MIC §21; see Typical standards). The three phrases rise and fall together: the genius who wanders outside any tradition, the talent no category holds, the work that is precious and imperfect at once. The paragraph then applies the measure: William Blake and Victor Hugo, "though not of his school, and unaware, are his true sons" (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength). Blake can be read as the type of the vagrant genius for Pater's first readers, a poet-engraver outside every school, lately recovered by Alexander Gilchrist's *Life* and Swinburne's critical essay;[94] the paragraph places him by measuring him against Michelangelo. The word can be read as describing the kind of artist Pater's criticism most cares for: not the great master, who needs no placing, but the stranger whom the master's example helps us to understand.

## See also

Sweetness and strength; Typical standards.

### Variations of the beautiful

*variations of the beautiful*; *variations*

[94] Alexander Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake, "Pictor Ignotus"* (1863); Algernon Charles Swinburne, *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (1868).

Attested: *variations of the beautiful* (GIO §2); *variations* (LEO §§2, 25; GIO §§18, 21; WIN §25). Pater uses the phrase for the kind of philosophy the first paragraph of the Giorgione essay calls for, a philosophy to which Lessing's analysis of the spheres of sculpture and poetry, in the *Laocoon*, "was an important contribution" (GIO §2; see Art-casuistry). The phrase states the Preface's relativism as a programme. The Preface had sought, for beauty, "not its universal formula, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it", and held that beauty, like every quality presented to experience, "is relative" (PRE §1; see Universal formula; Relative); a philosophy of the variations of the beautiful studies beauty in its kinds and not in its essence. The word has a musical sense that the essay brings out later. Giorgione's school treats its favourite subject, music, in "many intricate variations" (GIO §21; see Listening), and his influence survives in "variations on him, by unknown or uncertain workmen" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque). The phrase can be read in that sense too. Pater's philosophy of beauty is a set of variations whose theme is never stated, because a theme stated apart from its variations would be the universal formula he refuses.

## See also

Art-casuistry; Giorgionesque; Listening; Relative; Universal formula.

# Virtue

*The active property that gives a thing its effect · The Renaissance*
*virtue*, *virtues*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Besides moral goodness, virtue is the power a thing has to produce an effect: the virtue of a herb, a wine, a gem.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface uses the old sense deliberately, "as we say, in speaking of a herb, a wine, a gem" (PRE §3). Works of art and engaging persons have "so many virtues or qualities" (PRE §2); the critic separates the virtue that produces an impression, and notes it "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3); in Wordsworth it is "the virtue, the active principle" (PRE §5). Leonardo broods over "the hidden virtues of plants and crystals" (LEO §9).

**In this edition.** Virtue is one of the Key Words and has a Glossary entry; the note at PRE §3 glosses it as "an active property".

**A place to read.** PRE §3, from "To him, the picture" to the end of the paragraph.

## Meaning

The Latin *virtus* was first a man's strength and courage, and then excellence of any kind. English kept two senses side by side: moral excellence, and the power or efficacy of a thing, its capacity to act on something else. The second is the sense of the old herbals and lapidaries, where plants and stones have virtues, and of the Gospel healing in which Jesus knows that power, "virtue" in the Authorised Version, had gone out of him (Mark 5:30). By Pater's day it survived mostly in set phrases, and his "as we say" points to them.

## Use in the book

Pater introduces the word as one half of a pair: the objects of æsthetic criticism are "receptacles of so many powers or forces", and "possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues or qualities" (PRE §2; see Powers or forces). "Powers or forces" and "virtues or qualities" are glosses on each other: a virtue is a power, and the products of nature are the model (see Powers or forces). The next paragraph makes the model explicit: "To him, the picture, the landscape, the engaging personality in life or in a book, La Gioconda, the hills of Carrara, Pico of Mirandola, are valuable for their virtues, as we say, in speaking of a herb, a wine, a gem; for the property each has of affecting one with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure" (PRE §3). The virtue is in the object and the impression in the viewer; criticism goes from the second to the first.

So the critic's function is to separate "from its adjuncts, the virtue" by which a work produces its impression, and to note it "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Æsthetic criticism; Chemist). The virtue is rarely found pure; it must be disengaged "from the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination" (PRE §5; see Disengage). The Preface's example is Wordsworth, whose "strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things" Pater names outright: "Well! that is the virtue, the active principle in Wordsworth's poetry" (PRE §5; see Active principle). "Virtue" there is printed in italics, the word itself held up for notice.

The moral sense of the word is never called on, and that silence can be read as part of the argument. A virtue in this sense is neither good nor bad; it is what a thing can do. The Preface asks the critic what a work does to him and what in the work does it, and leaves aside whether it ought to.

The word returns twice. Leonardo, turning to nature, "brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals" in the manner of the older students of nature (LEO §9; see Hidden virtues), the sense of the Preface in its first home, the lore of natural magic. And in Du Bellay's defence of the French language, languages "are not born like plants and trees", but "all their virtue is generated in the world of choice and men's freewill concerning them" (BEL §9): the virtue of a language is made by its users, not given by nature.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** The objects of æsthetic criticism are receptacles of powers or forces, and possess, like the products of nature, virtues or qualities.

**PRE §3** Works, landscapes and persons are valuable for their virtues, as a herb, a wine or a gem is; the critic separates the virtue from its adjuncts and notes it as a chemist notes an element.

**PRE §5** The virtue must be disengaged from commoner elements; in Wordsworth it is the sense of a life in natural things, the active principle of his poetry.

**LEO §9** Leonardo, following the older students of nature, broods over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals.

**BEL §9** Du Bellay holds that the virtue of languages is generated in the world of choice and men's freewill concerning them.

## In this edition

Virtue is one of the edition's Key Words: "The Preface uses the word in the sense in which a plant or a wine has a virtue. It is a distinctive power to produce an effect. The critic's work is to isolate that power and describe the conditions in which it can be felt." The Glossary has "In the Preface, the active property that gives a work its distinctive effect." The note at PRE §3 explains "an active property, as when one speaks of a medicinal herb's efficacy", and observes that the chemist's image which follows makes criticism "sound like a disciplined inquiry into what produces an effect".

## See also

Active principle; Adjunct; Æsthetic criticism; Chemist; Disengage; Element; Hidden virtues; Impression; Powers or forces.

# Vraie vérité

*The real truth about an artist, which lies in the durable impressions beyond the ascertained facts · The Renaissance*

*vraie vérité*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, the real truth: the truth that matters, as against the merely correct.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In a just impression of that, is the essential truth, the vraie vérité, concerning him" (GIO §25).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §25 renders the phrase "The real truth" and says that "Pater glosses the phrase in the same sentence".

**A place to read.** GIO §25.

## Meaning

*Vraie vérité* is French, literally "true truth". The doubling is the force of the phrase: a truth so called because ordinary truths, the correct facts, may miss what is true about a person or a thing. Pater introduces it as "a serviceable expression" (GIO §25), a phrase of French speech rather than of philosophy, and translates it at its second appearance as "the essential truth".

## Use in the book

The phrase frames the last paragraph of the Giorgione essay. It opens the paragraph, "Something like this seems to me to be the vraie vérité about Giorgione", and the expression is explained as the one "by which the French recognise those more liberal and durable impressions which ... lie beyond, and must supplement, the narrower range of the strictly ascertained facts" (GIO §25; see Ascertained facts). It closes it, where a just impression of that influence is "the essential truth, the vraie vérité, concerning him" (GIO §25; see Indirect influence). Between the two the paragraph grants the critics their negations (see Negative criticism; Salt of genuineness) and names the indirect influence by which an artist "really makes himself felt in our culture". The ring of the paragraph makes the phrase its conclusion. The real truth about Giorgione is not his catalogue but the impression his name has left.

The adjectives of the definition carry the argument. The impressions are "more liberal", wider and more generous, and "durable"; the facts are "narrower" and "strictly ascertained". The essay's own history gives "durable" an unexpected force. The facts on which the "new Vasari" built have proved less durable than the impression. The edition's notes record that the critics' own verdicts have since been revised, the Concert itself now given to Titian (notes at GIO §§15–16; see New Vasari). The Giorgionesque, meanwhile, has survived every change (see Giorgionesque).

The phrase can be read as the Preface's "really" turned on history. The Preface asks the critic to know "one's own impression as it really is" (PRE §2; see Impression), and the Giorgione essay ends by finding the truth about an artist in "a just impression". "Just" is the essay's word for right apprehension: "a just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts" is the beginning of æsthetic criticism (GIO §3; see Ultimate differences of the arts), and the Venetian painters keep a "clearness or justice" (GIO §12; see Pictorial design). A just impression is not a vague one. It is an impression held to the standard of truth, and it is what the æsthetic philosopher brings to history (see Æsthetic philosopher).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "vraie vérité" occurs.

**GIO §25** The *vraie vérité* about Giorgione lies in the durable impressions beyond the ascertained facts; a just impression of his indirect influence is the essential truth.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater returned to the phrase in "Style", the essay that opens *Appreciations* (1889), where it names the truth proper to literary art. The humblest writing owes its truth to bare fact, the highest to some personal sense of fact, and the one indispensable beauty of both is truth: "truth there as accuracy, truth here as expression, that finest and most intimate form of truth, the *vraie vérité*".[95] The Giorgione essay had found the vraie vérité about a painter in a just impression; the later essay finds it in expression, the impression given form. In both, it can be read, the vraie vérité is the truth of a person's sense of things, set against a narrower truth of fact.

## See also

Æsthetic philosopher; Ascertained facts; Giorgionesque; Impression; Indirect influence; Negative criticism; New Vasari; Pictorial design; Salt of genuineness; Ultimate differences of the arts.

# Wholeness

*The state of a nature undivided among its aims: Goethe's word for Winckelmann, and in the Greek statues a wholeness that cannot act · The Renaissance*

*wholeness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The condition of being whole, entire, undivided; of a person, the soundness of a nature that is not split among aims.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The secret of Winckelmann's influence, Goethe tells us, is "wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity" (WIN §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the note at WIN §51 says that Goethe's *Ganzen* means "the whole".

**A place to read.** WIN §§10, 42, 51.

## Meaning

*Whole* is the Old English *hāl*, which meant both entire and healthy; *hale*, *heal* and *holy* are of the same family. Wholeness is therefore health as well as completeness, and the double sense runs through the German

[95] Walter Pater, "Style", in *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (London: Macmillan, 1889).

tradition that Pater follows. Goethe's essay on Winckelmann (1805) imagines man's healthy nature working "as a whole", and man feeling himself in the world "as in a great, beautiful, worthy and valued whole", and calls that the condition of the ancients.[96] The same ideal had its English statement in Pater's day (see Many-sided intellectual culture). Pater uses the noun twice, once of a man and once of a statue, and Goethe's *im Ganzen* gives the idea a third form.

## Use in the book

The first use is Goethe's list (WIN §10; see Intellectual integrity). Pater doubts whether the words fit the narrow Winckelmann (see Narrow perfection), and then quotes the sentence of Goethe's that can be read as justifying the first of them. "He was thirty years old before he enjoyed a single favour of fortune: but so soon as he had attained to an adequate condition of freedom, he appears before us consummate and entire, complete in the ancient sense" (WIN §10). Winckelmann's wholeness is not breadth. It is the wholeness of a thing that has all its parts, though there are few of them. The forty-second paragraph gives its image: "We have seen how definite was the leading motive of that culture; how, like some central root-fibre, it maintained the well-rounded unity of his life through a thousand distractions" (WIN §42).

The second use turns the word on the statues. Their beauty "was a sexless beauty" (WIN §42; see Sexless beauty), and in them Pater finds "a moral sexlessness, a kind of ineffectual wholeness of nature" (WIN §42; see Moral sexlessness). Their wholeness is that of a nature with nothing outside itself to act upon (see Sexless beauty). The wholeness of the god is the wholeness of a nature that has not yet been called on to choose.

The third form of the idea is Goethe's own, and Pater gives it in German. Goethe's description of his higher life is to live resolutely "im Ganzen", in the whole, and "life in the whole" turns out to mean the life of one for whom, over and over, what was once precious has become indifferent (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen). His Hellenism is "the completeness and serenity, of a watchful, exigent intellectualism" (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism).

The three wholenesses can be read as the essay's argument in small. Winckelmann's is won by exclusion, the plucking out of every interest not his own; the statue's is given by indifference, since it has no interests to divide it; Goethe's is reached by passing through, taking each form of culture and leaving it behind. Pater does not rank them, but only the last can be read as open to a modern: the statue's is an image of what life lacks,

[96] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1805), "Skizzen zu einer Schilderung Winckelmanns", section "Antikes": *Wenn die gesunde Natur des Menschen als ein Ganzes wirkt, wenn er sich in der Welt als in einem großen, schönen, würdigen und werten Ganzen fühlt*.

and a single talent exercised directly can now end only in one-sided growth (WIN §51; see Centrality). Wholeness, which the Old English word joined to health, becomes in the essay a task rather than a state.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "wholeness" occurs, with those in the Winckelmann essay in which a life, or the intellect's demand, is called whole, complete or entire, in the order of the book.

**WIN §10** Goethe names wholeness as the secret of Winckelmann's influence; free at last, Winckelmann appears consummate and entire, complete in the ancient sense.

**WIN §12** The aim of culture should be to attain not only as intense but as complete a life as possible.

**WIN §42** The leading motive of his culture maintained the well-rounded unity of his life; in the Greek statues there is a kind of ineffectual wholeness of nature.

**WIN §50** The intellect demands completeness, centrality, not less than ever.

**WIN §51** Goethe's higher life is life in the whole, im Ganzen; his Hellenism is the completeness and serenity of an exigent intellectualism.

## See also

Centrality; Exigent intellectualism; Im Ganzen; Intellectual integrity; Many-sided intellectual culture; Moral sexlessness; Narrow perfection; Self-culture; Sexless beauty; Unity with one's self.

# Beauty, pleasure and the senses

ἰδέᾳ τε καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον

*ἰδέᾳ τε καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον*

Attested: *ἰδέᾳ τε καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον* (WIN §15). The words are from the tenth Olympian ode of the Greek choral poet Pindar of Thebes (about 518–after 446 BC), for Agesidamus, son of Archestratus, of Epizephyrian Locri in southern Italy, who won the boys' boxing at Olympia in 476 BC. The edition's note renders them "beautiful in appearance and tempered by the bloom of youth": *ideā*, form or look; *hōrā*, the season of youth; *kekramenon*, mixed, as wine is mixed with water. Winckelmann used them in the dedication of his treatise on the feeling for beauty to the young Friedrich von Berg, which Pater quotes. He excuses his delay "in the words of Pindar" (WIN §15). "He says to Agesidamus, a youth of Locri—ἰδέᾳ τε

καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον—whom he had kept waiting for an intended ode, that a debt paid with usury is the end of reproach" (WIN §15). Winckelmann joins the two ends of the poem. Its opening confesses that the poet had forgotten the sweet song he owed, and that interest can release the sharp reproach; its close praises the boy he saw win, "fair of look and blended with the bloom of youth".[97] The next words of the ode, which Winckelmann does not quote, say that this youthful bloom once, with the help of Aphrodite, kept shameless death from Ganymede, the Trojan boy whom Zeus loved. The compliment to Berg can be read as lying in what is left unsaid.

## See also

Affinity; Pindaric ode; Sense of beauty.

# Abject

*Cast down: the first verdict on Botticelli's Madonnas, and its reversal · The Renaissance*

*abject*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Abject means cast down, low in condition or spirit, and so mean or contemptible.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "At first, contrasting them with those, you may have thought that there was something in them mean or abject even, for the abstract lines of the face have little nobleness, and the colour is wan" (BOT §7).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §7 says that the "Desire of all nations" is "From Haggai 2:7 in the King James Bible", and that it "heightens the contrast between the child's exalted role and the mother's reserve in Pater's reading".

**A place to read.** BOT §7.

## Meaning

The Latin *abicere* is to throw away, and *abiectus* is what has been thrown down: an outcast, a thing of no account. English kept both the condition and the contempt. The King James Bible uses the word as a noun for the lowest of the people, "the abjects", who gather against the psalmist.[98] To call a face abject is to say that it lacks the bearing of the high-born, the lift of the head that nobility was supposed to give.

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[97] Pindar, *Olympian* 10.1–12 (the debt and the interest, *tokos*) and 99–105 (the praise of Agesidamus and the comparison with Ganymede).

[98] Psalm 35:15 (King James Version).

## Use in the book

The word comes once, in a sentence that the essay sets up in order to overturn. Pater begins with a question to the reader: "Perhaps you have sometimes wondered why those peevish-looking Madonnas, conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty, attract you more and more, and often come back to you when the Sistine Madonna and the Virgins of Fra Angelico are forgotten" (BOT §7). The standards are named: the Sistine Madonna of Raphael, the Virgins of Fra Angelico, the acknowledged types (see Type). Then comes the first verdict, quoted above (BOT §7).

"At first" marks the verdict as a first impression to be revised, and the reasons it gives are formal: lines without nobleness, colour without warmth (see Wan). The next sentence gives the real reason, which is moral and theological: though she holds in her hands the "Desire of all nations", she too is "one of those who are neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies" (BOT §7; see Middle world). The face is low because the woman behind it has not chosen the height offered her. Pater then lights the scene: "The white light on it is cast up hard and cheerless from below, as when snow lies upon the ground, and the children look up with surprise at the strange whiteness of the ceiling" (BOT §7). Light from below can be read as the light of the abject place, thrown up from the ground.

The reversal comes at the end of the paragraph, where the Madonna's "true children" are the gipsy children of Apennine villages (BOT §7; see Enfants du chœur). She can be read as abject in the root sense, among the cast-down, and that is why she attracts. Two paragraphs later Pater comes close to saying so: the Madonnas plead "for a warmer, lower humanity" (BOT §9; see Undertone). "Lower" takes up "abject" and changes its sign.

The word marks a turn in the essay's method. The acknowledged types of beauty, Raphael's and Angelico's, are "forgotten"; the abject face is the one that comes back. Pater's criticism trusts the impression that returns over the standard that is approved, and the mean or abject turns out to be the humble, and the humble the human. The paragraph does in small what the book does with the Renaissance as a whole: it finds beauty where the received taste had seen a falling-off.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**BOT §7** Botticelli's Madonnas may at first seem mean or abject, for the lines of the face have little nobleness and the colour is wan.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §7 says that the "Desire of all nations" is "From Haggai 2:7 in the King James Bible. In traditional Christian interpretation the phrase can be applied to Christ. It heightens the contrast between the child's exalted role and the mother's reserve in Pater's reading."

## See also

Beauty; Enfants du chœur; Madonna; Middle world; Type; Undertone; Wan.

## Aerial delicacy

*aerial delicacy*; *the aerial touch*; *aerial*

Attested: *aerial delicacy* (BEL §2); *the aerial touch* (BEL §3); *aerial*, of light (LEO §5). Aerial is airy, of the air, light as air. Pater uses the phrase for the native quality of French art. "A light, aerial delicacy, a simple elegance—une netteté remarquable d'exécution: these are essential characteristics alike of Villon's poetry, and of the Hours of Anne of Brittany" (BEL §2), Villon being the fifteenth-century Paris poet François Villon; the Hours, the note at BEL §2 says, were made for Anne of Brittany by Jean Bourdichon and his workshop. The paragraph finds the same lightness in the Gothic cathedrals and chansons de geste, whose rough and ponderous mass becomes refined "as if by passing for a moment into happier conditions, or through a more gracious stratum of air" (BEL §2; see Chanson de geste). Air is the medium of the refinement, and the adjective keeps the figure. In the next paragraph the aerial touch is what survives Ronsard's reform: "only the elegance, the aerial touch, the perfect manner remain" (BEL §3; see Finesse). The Leonardo essay uses the word of light, the "aerial illusions of Italian sunsets" that passed into the soul of the young Perugino, the Umbrian painter Pietro Perugino (LEO §5).

## See also

Chanson de geste; Daintiness; Finesse; Netteté d'exécution; Overwrought delicacy.

## Æsthetic charm

*The direct attraction of a thing or a person · The Renaissance*
*æsthetic charm*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Charm is the power to attract and delight, first a magic spell; æsthetic charm is that power felt through the senses and the imagination.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The personalities of fifteenth-century Italy have "their profound æsthetic charm" (PRE §7). "A real, direct, æsthetic charm in the thing itself" is the first condition of any value in an old work (FRE §23). Men of inventive temperament, like Victor Hugo, relieve conceptions "with little æsthetic charm of their own" by lovely accidents (MIC §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at MIC §2 says Pater turns to Hugo's novels "to distinguish sweetness added by an incident from the sweetness he finds within Michelangelo's figures".

**A place to read.** FRE §23.

## Meaning

"Charm" comes from the Latin *carmen*, a song or incantation, through the French *charme*. A charm was a spell, and the word kept something of its magic when it came to mean the attraction a person or a thing exerts. Pater's "æsthetic" ties the attraction to perception and to art.

## Use in the book

The Preface applies the phrase to persons. The fifteenth century in Italy is to be studied for "its special and prominent personalities, with their profound æsthetic charm", as well as for "its general spirit and character" (PRE §7; see Engaging personality). Charm here may be taken as the effect a person produces, the virtue the critic is to disengage from "a fair personality in life or in a book" (PRE §3).

Two Early French Stories makes it the test of an old work. Antiquarianism may add to the charm of ancient literature, "But the first condition of such aid must be a real, direct, æsthetic charm in the thing itself. Unless it has that charm, unless some purely artistic quality went to its original making, no merely antiquarian effort can ever give it an æsthetic value, or make it a proper subject of æsthetic criticism" (FRE §23; see Antiquarianism). Charm is "real" and "direct": it does not need the scholar's help to be felt. Aucassin and Nicolette has it, and "All the charm of the piece is in its details" (FRE §23).

The essay on Michelangelo uses the phrase of what conceptions of merely moral or spiritual greatness lack. Men of inventive temperament, Victor Hugo for one, "have sometimes relieved conceptions of merely moral or spiritual greatness, but with little æsthetic charm of their own, by lovely accidents or accessories, like the butterfly which alights on the blood-stained barricade in Les Misérables" (MIC §2). The austere genius of Michelangelo, Pater says, will not depend for its sweetness "on any mere accessories like these" (MIC §2). Charm can be added from outside, or it can belong to the conception itself; the second is what the book praises.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §7** The personalities of the fifteenth century in Italy have their profound æsthetic charm.

**FRE §23** A real, direct æsthetic charm in the thing itself is the first condition of an old work's æsthetic value.

**MIC §2** Inventive men relieve conceptions with little æsthetic charm of their own by lovely accidents or accessories.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Æsthetics; Antiquarianism; Engaging personality; Sweetness and strength.

## Animal nature

*the perfect animal nature of the Greeks*

Attested: *animal nature* (WIN §29); *animal*, of life below the human (WIN §28); *animals* (PIC §§2, 9; BOT §7). Animal nature is the bodily life that man shares with the animals, health, strength, the senses, the body's beauty. Pater uses the phrase for the second of the two conditions that made Greek art possible. The first was a delicate pause in Greek reflexion, joined "by some supreme good luck" to "the perfect animal nature of the Greeks" (WIN §29; see Pause in time). These are "the two conditions of an artistic ideal" (WIN §29; see Artistic ideal), and the influences which perfected the animal nature of the Greeks "are part of the process by which 'the ideal' was evolved" (WIN §29). The claim can be read as a materialist's: the ideal grows out of physical conditions, the delicate air, the finer aspects of nature, "the finer lime and clay of the human form" (WIN §29; see Ideal art), as Goethe's "Mothers" in the second part of *Faust* mould the types of history. The word "animal" carries no disdain. In the paragraph before, oriental thought confuses humanity "with the fantastic, indeterminate life of the animal and vegetable world" (WIN §28), and the Greek achievement is to have perfected the animal in man without being confused with it. The phrase can be read as Pater's boldest statement of the essay's sensuousness: the Greek ideal begins in a healthy body, and the paragraphs that follow, on beauty contests and the gymnasium, describe how that body was prized and trained (WIN §§30–31; see Fleet and fair).

## See also

Animalism; Artistic ideal; Fleet and fair; Ideal art; Pause in time; Physical beauty.

## Animalism

*animalism*

Attested: *animalism* (LEO §31). The word names the life of the animal in man: the senses, appetite and bodily vigour, and in the nineteenth century also the doctrine that man is no more than an animal. Pater uses it once, as the first of the ages that have "etched and moulded" the face of La

Gioconda: "the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). Greece is given the body; Rome, the body's excess; the middle age, the soul. On one reading the word is not a reproach. The Winckelmann essay finds the same ground in "the perfect animal nature of the Greeks" and says that the influences which perfected it "are part of the process by which 'the ideal' was evolved" (WIN §29; see Animal nature); Greek sensuousness "does not fever the conscience: it is shameless and childlike" (WIN §43). Animalism, on this reading, is the innocent body that the later ages complicate, and it stands first because the face is built on it.

## See also

Animal nature; Beauty wrought from within; Ends of the world; Mysticism; Vampire.

# Austere dignity

*The reserve of lives whose histories are lost, read as a quality of the lives themselves · The Renaissance*

*austere dignity*; *austere*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Austere is severe, plain, without ornament or indulgence; dignity is the worth that commands respect.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is part of the reserve, the austere dignity and simplicity of their existence, that their histories are for the most part lost, or told but briefly" (ROB §1).

**In this edition.** The notes at ROB §1 identify Mino da Fiesole and Tommaso Rodari, and say that Pater's spelling "Maso del Rodario" is "an older form of his name".

**A place to read.** ROB §1.

## Meaning

The Greek *austēros* was used of a dry, harsh wine that roughens the tongue, and of a stern man; the Latin *austerus* kept both senses. "Austere" in English is severe and unadorned, in manners, art or life. Dignity, from the Latin *dignitas*, is worthiness, the bearing of one who deserves respect. Together the words describe a life lived without display and without complaint, worthy and plain.

## Use in the book

The phrase belongs to the opening paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which begins with a lament and turns it into praise. The fifteenth-century

sculptors are unknown men, and one longs to know their lives (ROB §1; see Power and sweetness). "But it is part of the reserve, the austere dignity and simplicity of their existence, that their histories are for the most part lost, or told but briefly. From their lives, as from their work, all tumult of sound and colour has passed away. Mino, the Raphael of sculpture, Maso del Rodario, whose works add a further grace to the church of Como, Donatello even,—one asks in vain for more than a shadowy outline of their actual days" (ROB §1). Tommaso Rodari, whom Pater calls Maso del Rodario, was a sculptor and architect of the cathedral of Como in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries; Donatello (about 1386–1466) was the greatest Florentine sculptor of the earlier part of the century.

The sentence performs a small act of sympathy. The loss of the sculptors' histories is an accident of the archives, and Pater reads it as a trait of the men: their lives left little record because they were lived with reserve, as their work was made with restraint (see Reserve). "From their lives, as from their work" makes the parallel explicit. The quiet of a low relief, where "all tumult of sound and colour has passed away", becomes the quiet of a biography. The reading can be called a fiction; it is also the essay's method, which finds the man in the work when the record fails (see Imaginative order; Expressiveness).

"Austere" has the same value elsewhere in the book, and it is always a word of praise for discipline. The French Renaissance in its earliest phases has "the charm of ascêsis, of the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis; Girding of the loins). Victor Hugo relieves greatness with lovely accidents, but "the austere genius of Michelangelo will not depend for its sweetness on any mere accessories like these" (MIC §2); and Michelangelo gives "no lovely draperies and comely gestures of life, but only the austere truths of human nature" (MIC §5; see Suggestion of life). The austere in these places is the art that refuses ornament and finds its sweetness within.

In the phrase one may find Pater's portrait of the kind of artist he most admires, the worker whose life is absorbed into the work. The Luca of the twelfth paragraph lives "a life of labour and frugality, with no adventure and no excitement" except the solution of artistic problems (ROB §12; see Frugality). The dignity is in the absorption, and the essay's end makes the paradox clear: the men whose lives are lost are, through their work, "very near to us" (ROB §13; see Expressiveness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "austere" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The earliest phases of the French Renaissance have the charm of ascêsis, of the austere girding of the loins in youth.

**ROB §1** It is part of the austere dignity and simplicity of the existence of the Italian sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century that their histories are lost.

**MIC §2** The austere genius of Michelangelo will not depend for its sweetness on mere accessories.

**MIC §5** Michelangelo gives only the austere truths of human nature.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §1 says that "Mino da Fiesole was a Florentine sculptor of portraits, tombs, and devotional reliefs", and another that "Tommaso Rodari was a sculptor and architect who worked on Como Cathedral. Pater's spelling is an older form of his name."

## See also

Ascêsis; Expressiveness; Frugality; Girding of the loins; Imaginative order; Power and sweetness; Reserve; Suggestion of life.

# Beauty

*A quality known only in its many forms · The Renaissance beauty*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Beauty is the quality that gives pleasure to the senses and the mind; it has been a central term of philosophy since Plato, and of the philosophy of art since the eighteenth century.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface opens by setting aside the attempts "to define beauty in the abstract", because beauty "is relative" (PRE §1). The critic needs instead "the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects", and must "remember always that beauty exists in many forms" (PRE §4). The essays are a gallery of those forms: Michelangelo's "unseen beauty" (MIC §14), Leonardo's "remote beauty" (LEO §11), the Greek "sexless beauty" (WIN §42). The Conclusion ranks "the desire of beauty" with the poetic passion as having most of wisdom (CON §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no Key Word or Glossary entry for beauty; its notes treat particular beauties at their places.

**A place to read.** PRE §§1 and 4, where beauty is declared relative and many-formed.

## Meaning

The English word comes through French *beauté* from the Latin *bellus*, pretty, fine. Philosophy had given it two long traditions that the book meets. One, from Plato's *Symposium* (210a–212a) and *Phaedrus* (249d–

251a) through the Renaissance Platonists, made earthly beauty a step towards a single beauty itself, unseen and unchanging. The other, from the eighteenth century, made beauty a matter of taste, of the pleasure a thing gives the one who perceives it, as in the view David Hume reports in "Of the Standard of Taste" (1757), that "Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them".[99] Pater's Preface stands in the second tradition, and the book can be read as treating the first as one of the forms beauty took in history.

## Use in the book

The Preface begins with beauty and refuses to define it "in the abstract" or by "some universal formula" (PRE §1; see Universal formula), because beauty, "like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative" (PRE §1; see Relative). What can be defined is "this or that special manifestation of it" (PRE §1; see Special manifestation). The critic who has strong impressions "has no need to trouble himself with the abstract question what beauty is in itself" (PRE §2), and needs not a definition but a temperament, "the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects" (PRE §4; see Temperament). Then the rule that governs the book: "He will remember always that beauty exists in many forms" (PRE §4).

The essays take the rule at its word, and their beauties differ in kind. In the Pico essay beauty is the Platonists' goal, the unseen beauty to which the soul rises by grades from the love of a physical object (PIC §14; see Unseen beauty), and a change passes over Pico, as if the chill of the Platonists' abstract beauty were already upon him (PIC §11; see Disembodied beauty; Unseen beauty). Michelangelo presses forward from the outward beauty that pleases the eyes to the unseen beauty of the Platonists (MIC §14; see Unseen beauty). Botticelli's Madonnas conform "to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty", yet "attract you more and more" (BOT §7). Some of Leonardo's sketches have "that remote beauty which may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully" (LEO §11; see Remote beauty). In La Gioconda it is "a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). Each is defined, as the Preface asked, by its own formula, and none is offered as beauty itself.

The School of Giorgione gives the variety a ground in the arts: the sensuous material of each "brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty" (GIO §1; see Æsthetic criticism; Æsthetics).

The Winckelmann essay holds the book's longest reflection on beauty, much of it in Winckelmann's own words. In a letter to a young friend he writes that the beauty of Greek art is "rather male than female", and that the

[99] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", in *Four Dissertations* (London, 1757), paragraph 7.

beauty of art, "like tears shed at a play, gives no pain" (WIN §18; see Beauty of art). For the Greeks, Pater says, beauty becomes "a distinction" (WIN §29; see Distinction), and he quotes Winckelmann's account of their contests for beauty (WIN §30). The beauty of the Greek statues was "a sexless beauty" (WIN §42; see Sexless beauty), and in it Pater finds "a moral sexlessness" (WIN §42; see Moral sexlessness). We are "accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty", a view Pater calls "only a partial one" (WIN §24; see Religion of art and beauty), and Hellenism has "its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty" (WIN §48).

The last word on beauty is the Conclusion's. Of the wisdom that spends life's interval in passions yielding "a quickened, multiplied consciousness", "the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most" (CON §6; see Desire of beauty). By the end, beauty is less an object than the aim of a desire, and it is possible to see the Preface's critic, deeply moved by beautiful objects, in the Conclusion's person who wants as many such moments as the interval allows.

## Places to read

The word occurs in forty-six paragraphs. Listed is a selection of the passages where beauty itself is discussed, defined or named in a kind.

**PRE §1** Beauty is not to be defined in the abstract, for it is relative; the student seeks the formula for each special manifestation.

**PRE §2** The critic need not ask what beauty is in itself.

**PRE §4** The critic needs the power of being deeply moved by beautiful objects, and remembers that beauty exists in many forms.

**FRE §24** The Troubadours valued a type of personal beauty with little of the open air and sunshine in it.

**PIC §11** Pico attempts to define the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty; a change has passed over him, as if the chilling touch of the Platonists' abstract beauty were upon him.

**PIC §14** Pico explains the steps from the love of a physical object to the love of unseen beauty.

**PIC §16** Pico sought knowledge believing there was a spirit of order and beauty in it.

**BOT §7** Botticelli's Madonnas conform to no acknowledged type of beauty, yet attract more and more.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo presses from the outward beauty to the unseen beauty, the abstract form of the Platonists.

**LEO §2** Leonardo's type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights.

**LEO §11** Some of Leonardo's sketches have the remote beauty apprehended by those who refine upon acknowledged types; in his mind beauty and terror are interfused.

**LEO §16** Curiosity and the desire of beauty are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius.

**LEO §23** From Leonardo's drawings one might construct a series illustrating his type of womanly beauty.

**LEO §31** La Gioconda's is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh.

**GIO §1** Each art brings a special phase of beauty, and there are differences of kind in æsthetic beauty.

**WIN §18** Winckelmann writes that the beauty of Greek art is rather male than female, and that the beauty of art demands a higher sensibility than the beauty of nature.

**WIN §24** We are accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty, a view Pater calls only partial.

**WIN §29** For the Greek, beauty becomes a distinction, like genius or noble place.

**WIN §30** Winckelmann describes the esteem of the Greeks for beauty and their contests for it.

**WIN §31** The beauty of the palaestra and the beauty of the artist's workshop reacted on one another.

**WIN §42** The beauty of the Greek statues was a sexless beauty; its moral sexlessness has a true beauty and significance of its own.

**WIN §48** Hellenism, in its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty, is married to the Romantic spirit in Goethe.

**CON §6** The desire of beauty has most of the wisdom of quickened consciousness.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Æsthetics; Beauty of art; Beauty wrought from within; Concrete terms; Desire of beauty; Disembodied beauty; Distinction; Moral sexlessness; Physical beauty; Relative; Religion of art and beauty; Remote beauty; Sexless beauty; Special manifestation; Temperament; Universal formula; Unseen beauty.

### Beauty of art

*Winckelmann's name for the beauty that art gives, painless, lifeless and needing culture, as against the beauty of nature · The Renaissance*

*the beauty of art*; *the beauty of nature*; *the beauty of man*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The beauty proper to works of art, as distinct from the beauty of living things.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann writes that the beauty of art "demands a higher sensibility than the beauty of nature" (WIN §18).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §14 says that Winckelmann's essay to Friedrich von Berg is "on the capacity to perceive beauty in art".

**A place to read.** WIN §§18–19.

## Meaning

The distinction between the beauty of nature and the beauty of art is old. Pater does not cite it here, but Plato's ladder of love rises from the beauty of a body to beauty itself,[100] and the eighteenth century made the comparison a question of taste: whether art imitates or improves on nature, and whether the two are judged by the same faculty. Winckelmann's answer, in the treatise that Pater quotes, is that the beauty of art is harder to perceive than the beauty of nature, because it is cooler. It does not move the senses directly; it must be met by a trained sensibility.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in Pater's long quotation from Winckelmann's essay on the capacity for the feeling of beauty in art, addressed in 1763 to the young Friedrich von Berg (WIN §§15–18). After the dedication Pater calls the passage that follows "characteristic" (WIN §17), and the passage begins with the beauty of man: "As it is confessedly the beauty of man which is to be conceived under one general idea, so I have noticed that those who are observant of beauty only in women, and are moved little or not at all by the beauty of men, seldom have an impartial, vital, inborn instinct for beauty in art" (WIN §18). The claim is personal and general at once. It ties the taste for art to a taste for male beauty, and the next sentence draws the consequence for Greek art: "To such persons the beauty of Greek art will ever seem wanting, because its supreme beauty is rather male than female" (WIN §18).

Then the distinction itself, in Winckelmann's words: the beauty of art "demands a higher sensibility than the beauty of nature, because the beauty of art, like tears shed at a play, gives no pain, is without life, and must be awakened and repaired by culture" (WIN §18). The simile is exact. Tears at a play are real tears for unreal griefs, an emotion without its cost; the beauty of art is a beauty without the pain that living beauty brings. The passage ends with education: since "the spirit of culture is much more ardent in youth than in manhood", the instinct for beauty "must be exercised and directed to what is beautiful, before that age is reached, at which one would be afraid to confess that one had no taste for it" (WIN §18). Winckelmann's

[100] Plato, *Symposium* 210a–211c.

essay is thus a lesson in taste addressed to a young man he loved, and its first lesson is that the beauty of art is learned.

Pater's own comment turns the quotation round. Of the beauty of living form that regulated Winckelmann's friendships, Pater says, "it could not be said that it gave no pain" (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form). The beauty of art may be painless, but the beauty that taught Winckelmann to see it was not; one notable friendship ended "noisily in a burst of angry fire" (WIN §19). The essay can be read as placing Winckelmann between the two beauties, learning the cool beauty of art through the hot beauty of life, and as finding his gift in the passage from the one to the other. The same distinction can be read as running through the book. The Preface asks the critic what this "song or picture" is to him (PRE §2; see Impression); the Conclusion counts "the face of one's friend" among the things that give a moment's pleasure (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame); and the Winckelmann essay, which ends the series, sets the two kinds of beauty side by side in one man's life.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater or Winckelmann names the beauty of art, of nature, of man or of living form, in the order of the book.

**WIN §18** Those moved only by the beauty of women seldom have an instinct for beauty in art; the beauty of art demands a higher sensibility than the beauty of nature.

**WIN §19** Of the beauty of living form which regulated Winckelmann's friendships, it could not be said that it gave no pain.

## See also

Beauty; Beauty of living form; Hard, gem-like flame; Impression.

# Beauty of living form

*The beauty of the living body, which ruled Winckelmann's friendships and trained his eye for sculpture · The Renaissance*
*that beauty of living form*; *the pride of human form*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The beauty of the living human body, in movement and in life, as distinct from its image in art.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The beauty of the living body "regulated Winckelmann's friendships" (WIN §19), and through them perfected his reconciliation to Greek sculpture (WIN §14).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §14 says that Pater treats "friendship and the apprehension of male beauty as central to the education of Winckelmann's eye".

**A place to read.** WIN §§14, 19.

## Meaning

Living form is the shape of the living body, the form that sculpture takes as its subject and fixes in stone. Pater sets it against the "beauty of art" of Winckelmann's essay (WIN §18): the body that breathes and moves, that can be loved and lost, against the statue that gives no pain.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the nineteenth paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, the paragraph in which Pater speaks most directly of Winckelmann's loves. "Certainly, of that beauty of living form which regulated Winckelmann's friendships, it could not be said that it gave no pain. One notable friendship, the fortune of which we may trace through his letters, begins with an antique, chivalrous letter in French, and ends noisily in a burst of angry fire. Far from reaching the quietism, the bland indifference of art, such attachments are nevertheless more susceptible than any others of equal strength of a purely intellectual culture" (WIN §19). The word "regulated" is strong. The beauty of living form does not merely please Winckelmann; it governs his friendships, sets their terms and chooses their objects. And the friendships are said to be, despite their pain, especially open to "a purely intellectual culture": "Of passion, of physical excitement, they contain only just so much as stimulates the eye to the finest delicacies of colour and form" (WIN §19).

The passage can be read as Pater's most careful sentence on the subject the essay cannot avoid. The fourteenth paragraph had already said that Winckelmann's affinity with Hellenism "was not merely intellectual", and that it is "proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men" (WIN §14; see Hellenism). "These friendships, bringing him into contact with the pride of human form, and staining the thoughts with its bloom, perfected his reconciliation to the spirit of Greek sculpture" (WIN §14). The image of staining is Pater's boldest: the bloom of the living body colours the mind, as a dye colours cloth, and the mind so coloured sees Greek sculpture rightly. The nineteenth paragraph then measures the passion. It is real, it can end in "a burst of angry fire", but its use is to train the eye; passion is admitted to the extent that it serves sight.

Then the letters. "These friendships, often the caprices of a moment, make Winckelmann's letters, with their troubled colouring, an instructive but bizarre addition to the History of Art, that shrine of grave and mellow light around the mute Olympian family" (WIN §19). The contrast is the essay's theme in small: the troubled colour of life beside the grave light of

art, the letters beside the history, and Winckelmann at home in both. The essay returns to the friendships at the end of his life, when he had reached the age at which "emotions hitherto fitful, sometimes concentrate themselves in a vital, unchangeable relationship" (WIN §21), and Pater regrets the friendship with Goethe that his murder prevented. The beauty of living form, in the essay, is the source of Winckelmann's knowledge and of his trouble, and the essay does not separate the two.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater speaks of Winckelmann's friendships, in the order of the book.

**WIN §14** The friendships, bringing him into contact with the pride of human form, perfected his reconciliation to Greek sculpture.

**WIN §19** Of the beauty of living form which regulated Winckelmann's friendships, it could not be said that it gave no pain.

**WIN §21** Winckelmann had reached the age at which fitful emotions concentrate in a vital, unchangeable relationship.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann nurtured his temperament by friendships which kept him in contact with the spirit of youth.

## See also

Ardour and indifference; Beauty of art; Chivalry; Classical motive; Hellenism; Temperament.

# Beauty wrought from within

*La Gioconda's beauty, moulded upon the flesh by thought and passion from inside · The Renaissance*

*a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh*; *wrought out*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A beauty worked into the face from inside, by the life of the mind, rather than given by nature.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions" (LEO §31).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the notes at LEO §31 explain "the ends of the world" and the figures of Leda and Saint Anne, and the Introduction observes that Pater's chapter on Leonardo "makes the face of the *Mona Lisa* bear the weight of centuries".

**A place to read.** LEO §31.

## Meaning

"Wrought" is the old past participle of "work", kept in "wrought iron": shaped by labour, hammered into form. "Wrought out" adds completion, a thing worked until it is done. A beauty wrought out from within is a made beauty. The face is the material and the inward life the craftsman, working outward "upon the flesh".

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the centre of Pater's paragraph on La Gioconda, the Mona Lisa. The paragraph opens with the presence that rose "thus so strangely beside the waters", which "is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire" (LEO §31), and the face upon which "the ends of the world are come" (LEO §31; see Ends of the world). Then the phrase: "It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions" (LEO §31). Two figures meet in the sentence. "Wrought out" is the language of the smith; "the deposit, little cell by cell" is the language of natural growth, of coral or of the cells of the body laid down one by one. The beauty is both made and grown: the work of a mind, and the slow sediment of a life.

The next sentence sets it against the Greek: "Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed!" (LEO §31). The Greek beauty is untroubled because the soul has not yet passed into it, and the Winckelmann essay gives the same account from the other side. In Greek art the "harmonies, storms, victories, of the unseen and intellectual world" are "wrought out into the bodily form" (WIN §32), but the thought does not "outstrip or lie beyond the proper range of its sensible embodiment" (WIN §29). The Gioconda's beauty is that inward life carried beyond the Greek limit, until the body becomes the record of the soul and its maladies.

The paragraph then names the forces that wrought it. "All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form", and the list follows, from "the animalism of Greece" to "the sins of the Borgias" (LEO §31; see Animalism). "Etched and moulded" carry on the craftsman's figure, and the clause that qualifies them is exact: thoughts and experience work on the face only "in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive". What it leaves is not a history but a refinement. The sentence that follows the famous list ends on the same note: all this "lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands" (LEO §31; see Lineaments).

The phrase can be read as the end of a line the essay began in its first paragraph. The Leonardo essay began with a painter whose type of beauty

seems "to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within" (LEO §2; see Exotic), and it ends its account of his masterpiece with a face in which that world within has become visible. The paragraph closes on the modern idea of humanity "as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life), and the verb returns: the face is wrought upon as humanity is.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "wrought out" occurs, in the order of the book; "wrought" alone is not listed.

**LEO §31** La Gioconda's is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed.

**WIN §32** Architecture belongs to an age not yet preoccupied with the unseen world whose victories, wrought out into the bodily form, give that form an interest communicable to it alone.

## Later readings

The paragraph was famous within Pater's lifetime. Oscar Wilde, in "The Critic as Artist" (1890), has his speaker quote it at length and say that it shows the picture more wonderful than it really is, revealing a secret of which it knows nothing; for Wilde the passage proved that criticism is itself a creative art.[101] W. B. Yeats printed the sentences from "She is older than the rocks" as free verse, the first poem of his *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1936).[102]

## See also

Animalism; Ends of the world; Exotic; Lineaments; Perpetual life; Vampire.

# Bizarre

*bizarre*

Attested: *bizarre* (LEO §18; WIN §19). The word came into English from the French *bizarre*, odd, fantastic, which is from the Italian *bizzarro*, first "hot-tempered", of uncertain origin. Pater uses it once of Leonardo, as the founder of a taste: "In him first appears the taste for what is bizarre or recherché in landscape" (LEO §18; see Antitype; Recherché). The note at LEO §18 renders *recherché* "Rare and carefully sought out". The paragraph then qualifies the word. Leonardo's strange landscape is of real places, and of hours "selected from a thousand" (LEO §18; see Finesse): the bizarre is

[101] Oscar Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", part I, in *Intentions* (1891); first printed in *The Nineteenth Century*, July and September 1890.

[102] W. B. Yeats, ed., *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892–1935* (1936), poem 1, "Mona Lisa", with the editor's introduction.

found in nature by a fastidious eye, not invented. In the Winckelmann essay the word keeps its common sense of the out-of-keeping. Winckelmann's letters about his friendships make "an instructive but bizarre addition to the History of Art, that shrine of grave and mellow light around the mute Olympian family" (WIN §19). The two uses mark the word's range in Pater, from a taste he praises to an incongruity he notes without blame.

## See also

Antitype; Finesse; Recherché; Strangeness.

## Blithe poise

*a blithe and steady poise*

Attested: *a blithe and steady poise* (WIN §44). Pater uses the phrase for the Greek spirit's way of meeting its own sadness. Greek tragedy shows how a conflict may be treated "with serenity", and the Greek spirit could bring "joy out of matter in itself full of discouragements"; the Greek poet Theocritus, of the third century BC, "strikes often a note of romantic sadness" (WIN §44; see Romantic love). The paragraph ends with an exclamation, a blithe and steady poise above these discouragements, "in a clear and sunny stratum of the air!" (WIN §44; see Poise). The phrase joins two of the essay's words. Blithe is Pater's English for the German *Heiterkeit* (see Blitheness); steady can be read as the poise of a body balanced, a figure from the sculptor's studio and the gymnasium. The image of a stratum of air can be read as recalling the Du Bellay essay, where the Gothic mass becomes graceful as if by passing "through a more gracious stratum of air" (BEL §2; see Chanson de geste): in both, refinement is a change of atmosphere. The poise is above the discouragements, not without them, and the same paragraph has said that the Hellenic ideal had to be disturbed, if man was to be saved "from the ennui which ever attaches itself to realisation" (WIN §44; see Ennui).

## See also

Aerial delicacy; Blitheness; Chanson de geste; Ennui; Poise; Romantic love.

## Blitheness

*Pater's English for the Greek serenity, Heiterkeit: a cheerfulness that has repose in it · The Renaissance*

*blitheness*; *blithe*; *pagan blitheness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Blitheness is gladness, lightness of heart; in Pater, the English of the German *Heiterkeit*, serenity.

**In *The Renaissance*.** *Heiterkeit*, "blitheness or repose", is with breadth one of "the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal" (WIN §35).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §35 renders *Heiterkeit* "Serenity or blitheness" and says that "his Hellenic ideal has both liveliness and repose".

**A place to read.** WIN §§35, 46.

## Meaning

*Blithe* is a native English word, from the Old English *blīþe*, kind, cheerful, glad, and in Pater's day it had a slightly archaic ring, the gladness of ballads and hymns. Pater uses it to translate *Heiterkeit*, the German word that he applies to the Hellenic ideal (WIN §35), to Winckelmann's handling of Greek art (WIN §43) and to Goethe's Hellenism (WIN §51): in German *heiter* is bright, clear, as a sky is clear, and so cheerful and serene. The German joins brightness and calm; the English blithe brings gladness, and Pater adds "repose" to give the calm (WIN §35).

## Use in the book

The word first comes in the paragraph that names the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal, *Heiterkeit*, "blitheness or repose", and *Allgemeinheit*, "generality or breadth" (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit; Repose). From there it runs through the end of the essay, always paired. The forty-ninth paragraph counts it among the marks of Hellenic culture with breadth, centrality and repose (WIN §49; see Breadth of humanity); the modern problem of unity with ourselves "in blitheness and repose" is harder than the Greek (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self); Goethe asks whether "the blitheness and universality of the antique ideal" can be given to works that hold the fulness of modern experience (WIN §52; see Universality); and the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo regard modern life as the modern mind must, "yet reflecting upon it blitheness and repose" (WIN §53; see Dénouement). The pairing is the essay's argument. Blitheness alone would be mere gaiety; joined to repose it is serenity, and joined to breadth and centrality it is a culture.

The one place where blitheness stands alone is the forty-sixth paragraph, on Christian art. "In the very 'worship of sorrow' the native blitheness of art asserted itself. The religious spirit, as Hegel says, 'smiled through its tears.' So perfectly did the young Raphael infuse that Heiterkeit, that pagan blitheness, into religious works, that his picture of Saint Agatha at Bologna became to Goethe a step in the evolution of Iphigenie" (WIN §46). The passage makes blitheness something more than Greek. It is "native" to art, and asserts itself even in the art of a religion of sorrow; Hegel's smile through tears is its Christian form; and Raphael, a painter of saints,

becomes for Goethe a step toward his own Greek play. The essay can be read as claiming blitheness as the constant of art itself, which Greece had in its purest form and which the middle age kept even while it denied the senses.

The Greek examples define the quality. Blitheness is the "blithe and steady poise" with which the Greek spirit rose above its own sadness (WIN §44; see Blithe poise), and the essay distinguishes it from mere happiness by placing it beside discouragement. The serenity of Winckelmann himself, his *Heiterkeit*, is "perhaps, in great measure, a negative quality" (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit). Blitheness in the Greeks is positive, a gladness won from sorrow; in Winckelmann it is an innocence; in Goethe it must be "the completeness and serenity, of a watchful, exigent intellectualism" (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism). The word changes with each bearer, and the essay's last pages ask whether a modern artist can have it at all.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "blitheness" or "blithe" occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §35** Heiterkeit, blitheness or repose, and Allgemeinheit are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal.

**WIN §44** What a blithe and steady poise, above these discouragements, in a clear and sunny stratum of the air!

**WIN §46** In the very worship of sorrow the native blitheness of art asserted itself, and Raphael infused that pagan blitheness into religious works.

**WIN §49** Blitheness, with breadth, centrality and repose, is a mark of Hellenic culture.

**WIN §50** For us the problem of unity with ourselves, in blitheness and repose, is far harder.

**WIN §52** Can the blitheness and universality of the antique ideal be communicated to modern works?

**WIN §53** The romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo reflect upon modern life blitheness and repose.

## In this edition

Pater's own note at WIN §46 dates Goethe's visit to the Saint Agatha at Bologna 1776, and the edition's note corrects it to 19 October 1786.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Blithe poise; Breadth of humanity; Centrality; Dénouement; Exigent intellectualism; Freedom; Heiterkeit; Repose; Unity with one's self; Universality.

# Blossoming of the aloe

*The rare strange flowering that true art must have, made lovely · The Renaissance*

*blossoming of the aloe*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The flowering of the aloe, a plant that was believed to bloom only once in a long lifetime.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "A certain strangeness, something of the blossoming of the aloe, is indeed an element in all true works of art" (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §1.

## Meaning

The plant English writers called the American aloe, the agave or century plant, grows for many years as a rosette of thick spiny leaves and then sends up, once, a tall flowering stem, after which it dies. Popular belief, common in the nineteenth century, said it flowered once in a hundred years. Its blossoming was thus a proverb for a rare and astonishing event, a thing seen once in a lifetime. The image has also its harshness: the aloe is a hard, armed plant, and its flower comes out of that hardness.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second sentence of the Michelangelo essay, which corrects the critics who see only strength in him. "A certain strangeness, something of the blossoming of the aloe, is indeed an element in all true works of art: that they shall excite or surprise us is indispensable. But that they shall give pleasure and exert a charm over us is indispensable too; and this strangeness must be sweet also—a lovely strangeness" (MIC §1; see Strangeness).

The image fits the argument exactly. The strangeness of great art is like the aloe's flower: rare, sudden, a surprise; and it comes out of something hard, as Michelangelo's sweetness comes out of his strength. The essay's first paragraph ends on a Latin tag adapted from Samson's riddle, "ex forti dulcedo", sweetness out of strength (MIC §1; see Ex forti dulcedo), and the aloe can be read as the same paradox in a plant: the hard, spiked stock that once in its life puts out a flower. The sentence then adds the condition that makes the strangeness art: it must give pleasure, it must be "a lovely strangeness". Surprise alone is not enough; the flower must be beautiful.

The phrase states in one image a principle the book holds everywhere. The Preface asks of each work what "special" impression it gives (PRE §3; see Special manifestation); the Leonardo essay finds in him "curiosity and

the desire of beauty" as "the two elementary forces" (LEO §16), and in his work a type of beauty "so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights" (LEO §2). The aloe's blossoming can serve as the emblem of these passages: the strange that is also lovely, the rare that is also natural.

One may take the image, too, as Pater's choice of nature against effect. He might have compared the strangeness of art to a marvel or a miracle; he compares it to a plant, a thing that grows and flowers by its own law. The surprise of a great work, on this reading, is not a trick but a natural event, slow in coming and inevitable when it comes, as the "loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things" (MIC §1; see Energy of conception) is recovered, in the same paragraph, "touch by touch".

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §1** A certain strangeness, something of the blossoming of the aloe, is an element in all true works of art, and it must be sweet also.

## Elsewhere in Pater

The essay "Romanticism" (1876), reprinted as the Postscript to *Appreciations* (1889), gives the aloe's lesson a formula, "the addition of strangeness to beauty" (see Strangeness).

## See also

Energy of conception; Ex forti dulcedo; Special manifestation; Strangeness; Strength; Sweetness.

# Bodily form

*The body as a burden to escape or a perfection to keep: Plato against Dante, and the Greeks against the moderns · The Renaissance*

*bodily form*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The form of the body: the visible human shape.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Platonic dream of "the passage of the soul through one form of life after another, with its passionate haste to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §14, with WIN §51.

## Meaning

"Bodily" is of the body; "form" is shape, and in the language of philosophy the principle that makes a thing what it is. Bodily form is thus

the body's visible shape, and also, in the Platonic vocabulary Pater draws on, the question of how the soul stands to the body it informs.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the third sentence of the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which sets two traditions of love against each other: "Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body, through which, even in heaven, Beatrice loses for him no tinge of flesh-colour, or fold of raiment even; and the Platonic dream of the passage of the soul through one form of life after another, with its passionate haste to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether; are, for all effects of art or poetry, principles diametrically opposite" (MIC §14; see Resurrection of the body; Passage of the soul).

The sentence is a judgement about art. For Dante the body is kept, even in heaven, to its colour and the fold of its dress, and that faith gives a poet his images. For the Platonist the body is a "burden" to be escaped "altogether", and the soul's "passionate haste" is to leave it. "For all effects of art or poetry" makes the opposition practical: the first faith fills a poem with things seen; the second empties it. The essay then says which Michelangelo followed: "Now it is the Platonic tradition rather than Dante's that has moulded Michelangelo's verse" (MIC §14); in his poems "frost and fire are almost the only images" (MIC §14; see Refining fire; Forma universale; Houseless spirit). The paradox can be read out of the essay: the greatest sculptor of the body wrote poems that wished to be rid of it.

The phrase returns twice in the Winckelmann essay. Architecture, since "human form is not the subject with which it deals", is the art of an age still little preoccupied with the harmonies and storms of the unseen world, which, "wrought out into the bodily form, give it an interest and significance communicable to it alone" (WIN §32); and at the end of the essay "the eternal problem of culture—balance, unity with one's self" (WIN §50) "could no longer be solved, as in Phryne ascending naked out of the water, by perfection of bodily form, or any joyful union with the external world: the shadows had grown too long, the light too solemn, for that" (WIN §51; see Unveiled human form). Phryne, a courtesan of fourth-century BC Athens, is the woman who, in the passage of Hegel that the essay quotes, "ascended naked out of the water, in the presence of assembled Greece" (WIN §41); the Greek writer Athenaeus of Naucratis, about AD 200, tells that she laid aside her cloak and walked into the sea in sight of all the Greeks at the festival of Poseidon.[103] The Greek solution was the perfect body; the modern mind has lost it.

The uses can be read as one history. The Greeks found the meaning of life in bodily form; the Platonists and the Christian ascetics taught the soul to escape it; Dante, in his doctrine of the resurrection, kept it even in

[103] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XIII.590f.

heaven; Michelangelo carved it with a passion no one has surpassed and wrote of it as a burden. Pater's sympathy can be heard in the image he gives Dante, Beatrice losing in heaven "no tinge of flesh-colour", and in the regret of the Winckelmann essay's last pages that the joyful union with the body can no longer be had.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "bodily form" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §14** The Platonic dream hastens to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether.

**WIN §32** Architecture is the art of an age not yet occupied with the unseen world that, wrought out into the bodily form, gives it its interest.

**WIN §51** The problem of culture can no longer be solved, as in Phryne, by perfection of bodily form.

## See also

Forma universale; Houseless spirit; Passage of the soul; Refining fire; Resurrection of the body; Unveiled human form.

# Cadaverous

*cadaverous*

Attested: *cadaverous* (BOT §8). Corpse-like, deathly pale: from the Latin *cadaver*, a corpse, itself from *cadere*, to fall. The word belongs to the viewer's second thought before the Birth of Venus. At first, perhaps, one is attracted only by "a quaintness of design" (BOT §8; see Quaint conceit); "afterwards you may think that this quaintness must be incongruous with the subject, and that the colour is cadaverous or at least cold" (BOT §8). The words "or at least cold" withdraw half the charge in the same breath, and the next sentence withdraws the rest: "the more you come to understand what imaginative colouring really is", "the better you will like this peculiar quality of colour" (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring). Pater lets the strong word stand as a stage of perception, not a verdict. Yet he keeps something of it. In the next paragraph Botticelli never paints the goddess of pleasure "without some shadow of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers" (BOT §9; see Goddess of pleasure). The colour is not dead, but death is in it, and the word "cadaverous" was not wholly wrong.

## See also

Colour; Goddess of pleasure; Imaginative colouring; Quaint conceit; Wan.

*Charito-blepharos*

Attested: *Charito-blepharos* (WIN §30). Greek, *charitoblepharos*, from *charis*, grace, and *blepharon*, eyelid: "grace-eyed", or as the note at WIN §30 puts it, a compound pointing "to grace in the region of the eyes, taken here as the beauty of his brows". The word comes in Pater's long quotation from Winckelmann on the Greek esteem for beauty: "Some were famous for the beauty of one single part of their form; as Demetrius Phalereus, for his beautiful eyebrows, was called Charito-blepharos" (WIN §30). Demetrius of Phalerum was the Athenian statesman and Peripatetic philosopher who governed Athens for the Macedonian ruler Cassander from 317 to 307 BC. The nickname is reported by the biographer Diogenes Laertius, of the third century AD, who cites the *Table-Talk* of the Alexandrian scholar Didymus for it: Demetrius was called *Charitoblepharos*, and also Lampito, after a courtesan.[104] Winckelmann's list of beauty prizes, kisses judged by umpires and statues of Narcissus in Spartan bedchambers (WIN §30; see Distinction) makes beauty a public honour, and the nickname is its smallest instance: a single feature, the brows, enough to earn a name. The passage stands behind Pater's own judgement in the paragraph before, that beauty becomes "a distinction, like genius, or noble place" (WIN §29; see Distinction).

## See also

Distinction; Fleet and fair.

# Colour

*The element the book sets against pure form, and keeps returning to · The Renaissance*

*colour*, *colours*, *coloured*, *colourless*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Colour is the quality of things the eye perceives as hue and tint; in painting, the handling of pigment as distinct from line or design.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Before Botticelli's Venus "you may think" that "the colour is cadaverous or at least cold", yet colour, rightly understood, is "a spirit upon" things (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §34 says that "Ancient marble sculptures could bear painted details or extensive color", and that Pater "gives priority to an ideal of pure form shaped by the condition in which many works reached his age".

[104] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* V.76.

**A place to read.** BOT §8, with ROB §6 and WIN §14.

## Meaning

The Latin *color* is probably related to *celare*, to hide: colour as what covers a surface. The old quarrel of Italian criticism set it against design. Florentine writers praised *disegno*, drawing, as the intellectual part of painting; Venetian writers answered for *colorito*, and the Venetian writer Lodovico Dolce's dialogue on painting (1557) set Raphael above Michelangelo and crowned Titian, the master of colour, above both.[105] The quarrel runs through Pater's book without being named.

## Use in the book

The word and its family occur in fifty-three paragraphs. Read together, the passages that discuss colour show the book pulled between two loyalties.

The first is to pure form. Hellenism is "pre-eminent for light", while "our modern culture may have more colour" (WIN §14; see Hellenism; Intellectual light). Greek sculpture has had "an unfixed claim to colour", but its colour "has always been more or less conventional" (WIN §34), and Winckelmann lived "in a world of exquisite but abstract and colourless form" (WIN §45; see Abstractness). The della Robbia essay calls the use of colour in sculpture "but an unskilful contrivance", and sets the great styles the problem "to get not colour, but the equivalent of colour" (ROB §6; see Equivalent of colour). On this side colour is the modern addition, the warmth that the Greek ideal did without.

The second loyalty is to the senses. The bright colours of oriental pottery, "colours of art, colours not to be attained in the natural stone", and the red of the jars of Arezzo "haunted Luca's fancy" (ROB §12; see Oriental pottery). A great picture is "a space of such fallen light, caught as the colours are in an Eastern carpet" (GIO §2; see Abstract colour), and painting reaches its ideal condition in "this perfect interpenetration of the subject with the elements of colour and design" (GIO §20; see Interpenetration). The Conclusion breaks experience into "a group of impressions—colour, odour, texture" (CON §3) and says we "may well grasp" at "strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours" (CON §5; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness). Here colour is what the eye lives on.

Botticelli stands between the two, and the Botticelli essay is where the book tries to reconcile them. His colour may at first seem a defect: the Madonna's "colour is wan" (BOT §7; see Abject), the Venus's "cadaverous or at least cold" (BOT §8; see Cadaverous). Then Pater redefines the word, in the sentence quoted above, and asks the reader to like "this peculiar quality of colour" the better for understanding it (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring). Colour ceases to be a pleasure added to form and becomes a meaning in things, and on that definition the cold colour of the Venus is

[105] Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo della pittura intitolato l'Aretino* (Venice, 1557).

not only a lack of warmth, which Pater puts partly down to the "incompleteness of resources" of the time, but the expression of a mood.

The redefinition can be read as the book's settlement of its quarrel. Colour is kept, but spiritualised; the Greek light is kept, but given a tint. The edition's notes register what the settlement costs: the Greeks painted their marbles, and Pater's colourless ideal was formed by statues that had lost their paint. His argument for pure form rests on the accident of survival, and his finest pages on colour are about a painter whose colour the reader "may think" cadaverous at first.

## Places to read

A selection of the paragraphs in which colour is discussed, in the order of the book; the word and its family occur in fifty-three paragraphs in all.

**BOT §7** The abstract lines of the Madonna's face have little nobleness, and the colour is wan.

**BOT §8** The colour of Botticelli's Venus may seem cadaverous or cold, but all colour is a spirit upon things by which they become expressive.

**ROB §6** Colour in sculpture is an unskilful contrivance; the great styles seek not colour but its equivalent.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's incompleteness is his equivalent for colour in sculpture.

**ROB §12** The bright colours of oriental pottery haunted Luca's fancy, and he gave his figures colour.

**GIO §2** A great picture is a space of fallen light, caught as the colours are in an Eastern carpet.

**GIO §20** Painting reaches its ideal condition in the perfect interpenetration of the subject with the elements of colour and design.

**WIN §14** Modern culture may have more colour, but Hellenism is pre-eminent for light.

**WIN §34** Greek sculpture's colour has always been more or less conventional.

**WIN §45** Winckelmann lived in a world of exquisite but abstract and colourless form.

**CON §3** Each object is loosed into a group of impressions, colour, odour, texture.

**CON §5** We may well grasp at strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §6 says that "Pater presents painted color as a borrowing from another medium", that "The premise reflects a particular aesthetic hierarchy", and that "Evidence of paint, gilding, and colored materials survives on ancient sculpture". The note at WIN §34 says that "Ancient marble sculptures could bear painted details or extensive color, and bronzes could have inlays and other colored materials", and that Pater "gives priority to an ideal of pure form shaped by the condition in which many works reached his age".

## See also

Abject; Abstract colour; Abstractness; Anders-streben; Cadaverous; Colouring; Equivalent of colour; Hellenism; Imaginative colouring; Intellectual light; Interpenetration; Line and colour; Matter and form; Modelling; Oriental pottery; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Wan.

# Comely form

*The decent, pleasing shape that Michelangelo's energy seems always about to break, and keeps · The Renaissance*

*comely form*; *comely*, *comeliness*, *uncomely*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Comely is pleasing to look at, well proportioned, becoming; comely form is the shape that satisfies the eye's sense of fitness.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo has "an energy of conception which seems at every moment about to break through all the conditions of comely form" (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §1, with MIC §§5, 6, 8.

## Meaning

"Comely" probably goes back to the Old English *cȳmlic*, lovely, splendid, and the word came to mean fair to see, and then fitting, seemly, decent. It is a homely word for beauty, less exalted than "beautiful", with a suggestion of good order. The King James Bible's "whatsoever things are lovely" (Philippians 4:8) sits near it, and Pater's FRE §33 has "whatsoever things are comely" (see Whatsoever things are comely). Comely form is beauty as order and fitness, the beauty that rules can describe.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that defines the Michelangelesque, whose energy of conception "seems at every moment about to break through all the conditions of comely form" (MIC §1; see Energy of

conception). Comely form is the limit the energy presses against. "Conditions" makes it a set of rules: proportion, balance, decorum, the comeliness that a trained eye expects. The energy "seems" about to break them and does not; the art lies in the tension.

The word recurs in the essay's account of Michelangelo's life, and each time comeliness is what he lacks or loses. He gives "no lovely draperies and comely gestures of life, but only the austere truths of human nature" (MIC §5; see Austere dignity). In a quarrel in his youth "he received a blow on the face which deprived him for ever of the comeliness of outward form" (MIC §6). His loves, "vague and wayward" as they may have been, "sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music, so that the comely order of his days was quite put out" (MIC §8; see Dolce amaro). The man who stood at the limit of comely form in his art lost the comeliness of his face, and at times the comely order of his days.

The rest of the book uses the word for a beauty of order and grace. The Renaissance is a movement in which "the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life" makes itself felt (FRE §1; see Renaissance); in it "all breathes of that unity of culture in which 'whatsoever things are comely' are reconciled" (FRE §33); Abelard is "the famous and comely clerk" (FRE §3); Pico is "like one of those comely divinities" of the old religion (PIC §13); Botticelli's figures are "comely, and in a certain sense like angels" (BOT §5); the Greek youths of the *Lysis* find the end of endeavour in "the continual stir and motion of a comely human life" (WIN §7). The later growth of the Renaissance in France has the sweetness "which belongs to a refined and comely decadence" (PRE §6; see Decadence).

The phrase names, on this reading, one pole of the book's idea of beauty. Comeliness is the beauty of the Greeks, of youth, of order; strangeness is the beauty of Michelangelo and Leonardo, of the exceptional (see Strangeness). The great artist, on the Michelangelo essay's account, works at the point where the second presses on the first and does not destroy it, recovering "touch by touch" the loveliness of "the simplest natural things" (MIC §1).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "comely", "comeliness" or "uncomely" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The later growth of the Renaissance in France has the sweetness of a refined and comely decadence.

**FRE §1** The Renaissance is a movement in which the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life makes itself felt.

**FRE §3** Abelard is the famous and comely clerk.

**FRE §33** In the unity of culture of the Renaissance whatsoever things are comely are reconciled.

**PIC §6** In his biographer's portrait, Pico's colour is white, intermingled with comely reds.

**PIC §13** Pico is like one of the comely divinities of the older gods.

**BOT §5** Botticelli's persons are comely, and in a certain sense like angels.

**MIC §1** Michelangelo's energy of conception seems about to break through all the conditions of comely form.

**MIC §5** Michelangelo gives no comely gestures of life, only the austere truths of human nature.

**MIC §6** A blow on the face deprived Michelangelo for ever of the comeliness of outward form.

**MIC §8** His loves, it may be, sometimes put out the comely order of his days.

**WIN §7** The youths of the *Lysis* find the end of endeavour in the stir and motion of a comely human life.

**WIN §29** Greek ideal art could not have arisen out of a phase of life that was uncomely or poor.

## See also

Austere dignity; Decadence; Dolce amaro; Energy of conception; Renaissance; Strangeness; Whatsoever things are comely.

# Daintiness

*The fineness of French hand and taste, which Ronsard doubled with Italian finesse · The Renaissance*
*daintiness*; *dainty*; *daintily*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Fineness of make or of taste: the quality of a thing small, delicate and exactly done.

**In *The Renaissance*.** French work had always had "a certain nicety, a remarkable daintiness of hand" (BEL §2).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §2 renders the French as "A remarkable precision of execution", and says that "Pater has already paraphrased this quality as daintiness of hand".

**A place to read.** BEL §§2–3.

## Meaning

"Dainty" came into English from the Old French *deintié*, from the Latin *dignitas*, worth; it meant first esteem, then a thing esteemed, a delicacy at table, and so the quality of what is choice and fine. Pater keeps both sides of

the word. Daintiness is fineness of execution, but it is also the taste that delights in fine things, the taste of people who choose. In his English it is never coarse or merely pretty; it is the word for a precision that has become a pleasure.

## Use in the book

The word gives the Du Bellay essay its account of what is French. The second paragraph names the native gift: "The characteristic of French work had always been a certain nicety, a remarkable daintiness of hand, une netteté remarquable d'exécution" (BEL §2). Pater gives the quality three names, English, English and French, and the third, which the note renders "A remarkable precision of execution", fixes the sense. Daintiness of hand is exactness: the clean line, the finished detail. The paragraph finds it in the painting of the Clouets, the family of portrait painters at the court of the French kings, in Villon's poetry, in the Hours of Anne of Brittany and in "a hundred French Gothic carvings and traceries" (BEL §2; see Aerial delicacy; Netteté d'exécution).

The third paragraph tells what the Renaissance did with it. Ronsard, casting about for a means of refining French literature, "reinforces, he doubles the French daintiness by Italian finesse" (BEL §3). The native quality is not replaced but doubled, and the result is a loss and a gain at once: nearly all the force and all the seriousness of French work disappear, and what remains is consummate, "this elegance, this manner, this daintiness of execution" (BEL §3; see Æsthetic value). Daintiness, which had been one quality of French work among others, becomes, with elegance and manner, nearly all that is left of it.

The first paragraph had already shown the blending in stone. At the Château de Gaillon a Gothic donjon is "veiled faintly by a surface of dainty Italian traceries" (BEL §1; see Donjon). There the dainty thing is Italian and the strong thing French; by the third paragraph daintiness is French and finesse Italian. The two uses can be read as the essay's picture of the French Renaissance: the native strength veiled by an imported surface, and the native delicacy refined by an imported one. Either way the surface wins, and the essay values it while it counts the cost.

The Pleiad's language shows the same taste. Certain Greek words "charmed Ronsard and his circle by their gaiety and daintiness, and a certain air of foreign elegance about them" (BEL §14; see Ephemeral), and crept into French. Daintiness here is a quality of words, prized like ornaments.

Outside the essay the adjective keeps its fineness and often meets its opposite. The Venus of Botticelli sails on a "dainty-lipped shell" while the wind blows hard across the grey water (BOT §8; see Emblematical); about "the dainty lines of the cheek the bat flits unheeded" in the Medusa then given to Leonardo (LEO §12; see Fascination of corruption); in Leonardo's drawings the head-dresses leave "the dainty oval of the face disengaged"

(LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias). The Greek, in the Winckelmann essay, has the good luck of "the finer lime and clay of the human form, and modelling of the dainty framework of the human countenance" (WIN §29; see Artistic ideal). In each the dainty thing is a fine surface set against something larger, darker or more natural, and the word can be read as Pater's mark for that fineness wherever he finds it, in a face, a shell, a carving or a French poem.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "dainty", "daintily" or "daintiness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §31** Aucassin goes forth to battle in dainty, tight-laced armour.

**PIC §12** Pico kept "somewhat of the old plenty, in dainty viand and silver vessel".

**BOT §8** The wind moves forward the dainty-lipped shell on which Venus sails.

**LEO §12** About the dainty lines of the Medusa's cheek the bat flits unheeded.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's drawings show daintily bound hair and the dainty oval of the face.

**BEL §1** A Gothic donjon at Gaillon is veiled by a surface of dainty Italian traceries.

**BEL §2** French work had always had a remarkable daintiness of hand.

**BEL §3** Ronsard doubles the French daintiness by Italian finesse, and the daintiness of execution is consummate.

**BEL §14** Greek words charmed Ronsard and his circle by their gaiety and daintiness.

**WIN §29** The Greek has the good luck of the dainty framework of the human countenance.

## See also

Aerial delicacy; Æsthetic value; Artistic ideal; Daughters of Herodias; Donjon; Emblematical; Ephemeral; Fascination of corruption; Finesse; Netteté d'exécution.

# Desire of beauty

*The second force in Leonardo's genius, and in the Conclusion the passion that gives most to the moment · The Renaissance*

*desire of beauty*; *desirous of beauty*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The longing for beauty, as a ruling force in a temperament.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This struggle between the reason and its ideas, and the senses, the desire of beauty, is the key to Leonardo's life at Milan" (LEO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §20, with CON §6.

## Meaning

The phrase is plain English, and old: to desire beauty is to long for it and to be moved toward it. It can be read as an English form of the Platonic *erōs*, which Diotima in the *Symposium* first calls love of the beautiful.[106] In Pater it names a force of temperament, one of the two of which Leonardo's genius is made, and in the Conclusion what has most of the wisdom of passion.

## Use in the book

The phrase is introduced with its partner. Leonardo's genius was "composed, in almost equal parts, of curiosity and the desire of beauty" (LEO §15; see Curiosity), and the next paragraph makes them "the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius" (LEO §16; see Elementary forces). The twentieth paragraph tells their quarrel. "Sometimes this curiosity came in conflict with the desire of beauty; it tended to make him go too far below that outside of things in which art really begins and ends. This struggle between the reason and its ideas, and the senses, the desire of beauty, is the key to Leonardo's life at Milan—his restlessness, his endless re-touchings, his odd experiments with colour" (LEO §20).

The sentences are a statement of Pater's æsthetic in small. Art "begins and ends" at the "outside of things", and the desire of beauty is the faculty that keeps to it; curiosity goes "below". The struggle is set between "the reason and its ideas" on one side and "the senses" on the other, and the desire of beauty is placed with the senses. The essay's last sentence returns to the same placing. Leonardo had been "always so desirous of beauty, but desired it always in such precise and definite forms, as hands or flowers or hair" (LEO §36; see Curiosity). The desire of beauty in Pater is not a longing for an ideal beyond the senses. It is a desire for particular, visible things, and the hands, flowers and hair of the last sentence recall those the essay has dwelt on: the hands of La Gioconda, the violets and wild rose of the drawing at Venice, the contour of the young man's hair (LEO §§18, 22, 31).

The Winckelmann essay gives the phrase to the Greeks. Goethe illustrates a union of the Romantic spirit with Hellenism, "in its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty—that marriage of Faust and

[106] Plato, *Symposium* 204b–d.

Helena, of which the art of the nineteenth century is the child" (WIN §48; see Marriage of Faust and Helena). The desire of beauty is the Greek half of the marriage. The Conclusion gives it, with the poetic passion and the love of art for its own sake, the largest share of that wisdom (CON §6; see Poetic passion). The wisdom is that of passion, which yields "this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness", and the reason given is art's: art proposes to give "the highest quality" to our moments (CON §6; see Art for its own sake).

The three settings can be read as one doctrine. In Leonardo the desire of beauty holds a man of science to the surface where art lives; in Goethe it is the Greek gift that the modern spirit must marry; in the Conclusion it is the passion that makes a brief life full.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "desire of beauty" or "desirous of beauty" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §15** Leonardo's genius was composed in almost equal parts of curiosity and the desire of beauty.

**LEO §16** Curiosity and the desire of beauty are the two elementary forces in his genius, in conflict or in union.

**LEO §20** Curiosity sometimes came in conflict with the desire of beauty; their struggle is the key to his life at Milan.

**LEO §36** Leonardo had been always desirous of beauty, but desired it in precise and definite forms.

**WIN §48** Goethe joins the Romantic spirit to Hellenism in its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty.

**CON §6** Of the wisdom that gives the highest quality to the moments, the desire of beauty has most.

**C73 §7** The 1873 text names the desire of beauty with the love of art for art's sake.

## Elsewhere in Pater

In the essay on romanticism of 1876, reprinted as the Postscript to *Appreciations* (1889), Pater put the pair in a formula: "the desire of beauty being a fixed element in every artistic organisation, it is the addition of curiosity to this desire of beauty, that constitutes the romantic temper".[107] The Leonardo essay can be read as the portrait of that temper before it had a name.

[107] Walter Pater, "Postscript", *Appreciations* (1889); first printed as "Romanticism", *Macmillan's Magazine*, November 1876.

## See also

Abstract grace; Art for its own sake; Curiosity; Elementary forces; Hellenism; Marriage of Faust and Helena; Poetic passion; Strangeness; Subtle and curious grace.

# Disembodied beauty

*The Platonists' beauty without a body, and its chill · The Renaissance disembodied beauty*; *disembodied*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Disembodied beauty is beauty apart from any body or sensible thing: the beauty itself which, in Plato's teaching, the lover rises to contemplate.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "A change indeed had passed over him, as if the chilling touch of the abstract and disembodied beauty Platonists profess to long for were already upon him" (PIC §11). The Michelangelo essay uses the adjective once more, for "the conditions and surroundings of the disembodied spirit" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §14 traces the ascent "from attraction to a beautiful body toward the contemplation of beauty" to Diotima's teaching in Plato's *Symposium*.

**A place to read.** PIC §11, with PIC §14.

## Meaning

"Disembodied" is freed from the body, as a spirit after death. The beauty Pater means is the one Diotima describes in Plato's *Symposium*, which the lover reaches after loving first one beautiful body, then all, then souls, laws and knowledge: beauty itself, pure and unmixed, not filled with human flesh and colours and the other trash of mortality.[108] The Platonists of Florence, among them Pico and Marsilio Ficino, the translator of Plato into Latin, made this ascent the centre of their teaching on love.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the point where Pico turns from the world. "He had loved much and been beloved by women", but "their reign over him was over", and he had destroyed his love-songs in the vulgar tongue (PIC §11; see Vulgar tongue). His Platonic commentary on Beniveni's "Song of Divine Love" "attempts to define the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty" (PIC §11). "A change indeed had passed over him, as if the chilling touch of the abstract and disembodied beauty Platonists profess to long for were already upon him" (PIC §11). The

[108] Plato, *Symposium* 211e.

sentence is Pater's judgement in three words: "chilling", "abstract", "profess". The beauty is cold, it is an abstraction, and the Platonists' longing for it may be more professed than felt.

The sentence then turns to death. "Some sense of this, perhaps, coupled with that over-brightness which in the popular imagination always betokens an early death", led Camilla Rucellai to prophesy that "he would depart in the time of lilies" (PIC §11). The disembodied beauty can be read as a foretaste of disembodiment: the touch that chills Pico's love is the touch of the grave. The essay keeps the other side too: when Pico explains the soul's ascent to unseen beauty, there is "a glow and vehemence in his words" (PIC §14; see Unseen beauty). The ascent is cold in its goal and hot in its telling.

The book can be read as preferring beauty with a body. The Preface wants beauty defined "in the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1; see Concrete terms), the worship of the body runs through the first essay, and Winckelmann deals with "the sensuous element in Greek art" "in the pagan manner" (WIN §43). The one other use of the adjective is in Michelangelo's Medici chapel, whose figures express the fancies that come when the thoughts try to fix themselves on "the disembodied spirit", and to which no one would come "for consolation" (MIC §20; see Disembodied spirit). Disembodied beauty, in Pater's book, is where the Platonic ascent ends, and it does not console.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "disembodied" occurs, with the paragraph on Pico's account of the ascent, in the order of the book.

**PIC §11** The chilling touch of the abstract and disembodied beauty Platonists profess to long for seems already upon Pico.

**PIC §14** Pico's account of the grades by which the soul passes from a physical object to unseen beauty has a glow and vehemence.

**MIC §20** The figures of the Medici chapel express the fancies that come whenever the thoughts try to fix themselves on the conditions of the disembodied spirit.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §14 says that the movement "from attraction to a beautiful body toward the contemplation of beauty recalls the teaching of Diotima in Plato's Symposium 210a–212a", and that "Pico adapts this ascent in his commentary on Benivieni".

## See also

Beauty; Concrete terms; Disembodied spirit; Unseen beauty; Vulgar tongue; Worship of the body.

# Distinction

*The quality of the Concert and of Giorgione's world, and the word for the difference of matter and form that art strives to obliterate · The Renaissance distinction, distinctions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Two senses: a difference between things, and the quality that sets a person or a work apart, refinement, eminence.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is noticeable that the 'distinction' of this Concert, its sustained evenness of perfection, alike in design, in execution, and in choice of personal type, becomes for the 'new Vasari' the standard of Giorgione's genuine work" (GIO §16).

**In this edition.** The Introduction calls the Concert "A good place to try Pater's method".

**A place to read.** GIO §§16–17.

## Meaning

The Latin *distinctio* is a separating, from *distinguere*, to mark off. The older English sense is the act of telling things apart and the difference so marked. From it grew the second: the quality that marks a person or a thing off from the common, and so excellence, refinement, the bearing of rank. Pater uses both, and the Giorgione essay sets them side by side. Art strives to abolish one distinction, that of matter and form; Giorgione's art has the other.

## Use in the book

The word in its second sense comes in quotation marks, as the critics' term. "It is noticeable that the 'distinction' of this Concert, its sustained evenness of perfection, alike in design, in execution, and in choice of personal type, becomes for the 'new Vasari' the standard of Giorgione's genuine work" (GIO §16). The marks can be read as giving the word to Crowe and Cavalcaselle (see New Vasari), and Pater defines it for them: distinction is "sustained evenness of perfection", in three things at once, design, execution and "choice of personal type". The standard is a strict one, and by it the critics take from Giorgione the Holy Family of the Louvre "in consideration of certain points where it comes short" (GIO §16).

The next paragraph takes the word from the critics and gives it to the painter's life. The young Giorgione "finds his way early into the circle of notable persons—people of courtesy. He is initiated into those differences of personal type, manner, and even of dress, which are best understood there—that 'distinction' of the Concert of the Pitti Palace" (GIO §17; see Cortesia). The critics' standard of a picture becomes the manners of a society. The distinction of the Concert is the distinction of the people

Giorgione painted and lived among, and the picture records a way of carrying oneself as much as a way of painting. "Initiated" makes it a knowledge of the few, learned by entry into a circle.

The first sense of the word runs through the same essay. In every art but music the understanding "can always make this distinction, yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it" (GIO §5; see Matter and form), and the ideal types of poetry are those in which "this distinction is reduced to its minimum", so that lyrical poetry is, "at least artistically", the highest (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). The two senses can be read as one argument. Art obliterates the distinction of matter and form, and the result is distinction of the other kind: the Concert has "sustained evenness of perfection" because in it nothing stands apart as mere subject or mere skill. The Leonardo essay uses the first sense of the happy moment: between the moment of *bien-être*, well-being, and the others, "for Leonardo the distinction is absolute" (LEO §21; see Bien-être).

The Winckelmann essay gives the second sense its Greek form. The gods "borrow something of the lordliness and distinction of human nature" (WIN §26); in Greece "Beauty becomes a distinction, like genius, or noble place" (WIN §29); and Winckelmann, whom Pater quotes at length, says that every beautiful person "sought to become known to the whole people by this distinction" (WIN §30). The Michelangelo essay finds it in death, seen "in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs" (MIC §15; see Death in its distinction). In each use distinction is a separation that ennobles. Giorgione's is the separation of a courtly society from the common, carried into the evenness of a picture.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "distinction" or "distinctions" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** We come to mark changes and distinctions of temper in the middle age.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo comes to see death in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs.

**MIC §19** The Florentines came to see death in its distinction.

**LEO §21** For Leonardo the distinction between the moment of bien-être and other moments is absolute.

**GIO §5** The understanding can always distinguish matter from form, and art strives to obliterate the distinction.

**GIO §7** In the ideal types of poetry the distinction of matter and form is reduced to its minimum.

**GIO §16** The distinction of the Concert, its sustained evenness of perfection, becomes the standard of Giorgione's genuine work.

**GIO §17** Giorgione is initiated into that distinction of the Concert, in the circle of people of courtesy.

**BEL §8** Du Bellay's essay is full of delicate critical distinctions.

**WIN §26** The Greek gods borrow the lordliness and distinction of human nature.

**WIN §27** The main distinction between Greek art and the mystical art of the middle age.

**WIN §28** Oriental thought has no knowledge of the distinction of man's nature.

**WIN §29** In Greece beauty becomes a distinction, like genius, or noble place.

**WIN §30** Winckelmann: every beautiful person sought to become known to the whole people by this distinction.

## See also

Bien-être; Cortesia; Death in its distinction; Harpsichord; Lyrical poetry; Matter and form; New Vasari.

# Doubtful sex

*The face in a red-chalk drawing at the Louvre whose sex cannot be told · The Renaissance*
*doubtful sex*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Of uncertain sex: a face that could be a young man's or a woman's.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is a face of doubtful sex, set in the shadow of its own hair, the cheek-line in high light against it, with something voluptuous and full in the eyelids and the lips" (LEO §23).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §23.

## Meaning

"Doubtful", from the Latin *dubitare*, to be uncertain, is what admits of doubt. A face of doubtful sex is one whose features do not settle the question, as with a beautiful youth before manhood or a woman of strong features. The phrase describes; it does not explain.

## Use in the book

Pater finds the face among the old masters' drawings at the Louvre. "Take again another head, still more full of sentiment, but of a different kind, a little drawing in red chalk which every one will remember who has

examined at all carefully the drawings by old masters at the Louvre. It is a face of doubtful sex, set in the shadow of its own hair, the cheek-line in high light against it, with something voluptuous and full in the eyelids and the lips" (LEO §23). The description is a draughtsman's: shadow, hair, the line of the cheek in high light. The sensual note comes last, in the eyelids and lips. The same face, it seems, appears in childhood in a second drawing, "with parched and feverish lips" (LEO §23; see Bulla).

From these two drawings Pater proposes a series of "Leonardo's type of womanly beauty" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias; Type). The series of women begins from a face whose sex is in doubt. On one reading the ambiguity is not an exception to the type but its root. The women of the series are "not of the Christian family", "faint always with some inexplicable faintness" (LEO §23; see Chain of secret influences), and on this reading they have something of the youth about them as the youth has something of the woman.

Twice more the essay comes near the doubt. The Saint John of the Louvre has "delicate brown flesh and woman's hair" (LEO §25; see Decayed gods), and the one attachment recorded of Leonardo's life at Milan is to Salaino, the pupil now usually called Salaì, "beloved of Leonardo for his curled and waving hair" (LEO §24). The hair is the constant: the drawing's face is "set in the shadow of its own hair", and hair is one of the "precise and definite forms" in which Leonardo desired beauty (LEO §36; see Desire of beauty).

The Winckelmann essay offers a contrast in its own terms. The beauty of the Greek statues, Pater says, was "a sexless beauty", and the statues of the gods had the least traces of sex (WIN §42; see Sexless beauty). The Greek face is beyond sex, at rest in "a kind of ineffectual wholeness of nature" (WIN §42; see Moral sexlessness). Leonardo's is between the sexes, and restless with it, "voluptuous and full". The two phrases can be read as the book's two forms of the beauty that does not belong to one sex: the Greek, which has risen above desire, and the modern, in which desire is uncertain of its object.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §23** A red-chalk drawing at the Louvre shows a face of doubtful sex, with something voluptuous in the eyelids and the lips.

## See also

Bulla; Chain of secret influences; Daughters of Herodias; Decayed gods; Desire of beauty; Moral sexlessness; Sexless beauty; Type.

*Sweetness out of strength: Samson's riddle as the formula of Michelangelo · The Renaissance*

*ex forti dulcedo*; *out of the strong came forth sweetness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Latin, "out of the strong, sweetness".

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Out of the strong came forth sweetness, *ex forti dulcedo*" (MIC §16).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §1 says that Pater "adapts the riddle of Samson, who finds honey in the carcass of a lion", and that the phrase "supplies the essay's governing paradox".

**A place to read.** MIC §§1, 16.

## Meaning

In the Book of Judges Samson kills a young lion with his hands, and returning later finds that bees have made honey in its body. He makes the find a riddle for the Philistines: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges 14:14, King James Version). The Vulgate has *de forti egressa est dulcedo*; Pater's *ex forti dulcedo* is a shortened form, as an emblem or motto would give it. The English half of Pater's sentence is the King James Version's. The riddle became a proverb for good that comes out of hard things.

## Use in the book

The Latin closes the first paragraph of the Michelangelo essay and returns in the sixteenth, and the two uses make the essay's argument a circle. In the first they stand alone at the end of the long sentence on the Michelangelesque (see Energy of conception): "recovering, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things—*ex forti dulcedo*" (MIC §1). They name a quality of the art. In the sixteenth they name the course of a life: "Some of those whom the gods love die young. This man, because the gods loved him, lingered on to be of immense, patriarchal age, till the sweetness it had taken so long to secrete in him was found at last. Out of the strong came forth sweetness, *ex forti dulcedo*" (MIC §16).

The second passage turns a proverb inside out. "Whom the gods love dies young" is a line of the Greek comic poet Menander, which Byron's *Don Juan* recalls in Pater's plural,[109] and Pater reverses it: this man the gods loved and kept alive, so that the sweetness could be found. "Secrete" can be read as the bees' work, slow and hidden, and it places the honey inside the lion of

[109] Menander, *Dis Exapaton*, fragment 4 (Sandbach), rendered by Plautus, *Bacchides* 816–17; Byron, *Don Juan* IV.12, "Whom the gods love die young".

Michelangelo's strength as the riddle places it in the carcass. The essay's middle paragraphs show the process: the strength "often turning to bitterness" (MIC §8; see Discordant note), the struggle to "adorn and attune" itself (MIC §9; see Attune), the "charmed and temperate space" of the friendship with Vittoria Colonna (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment).

The riddle's first half is silent in Pater, and its silence can be read as part of the meaning. "Out of the eater came forth meat": the lion was dead when the honey was found in it. The sweetness of Michelangelo's old age is found as his world dies around him, "The world had changed around him" (MIC §16; see New catholicism), and the subject of his predilection is an art of death, the Pietà and the entombment (MIC §20; see Entombment). The honey is in the carcass.

The phrase can be read as the book's emblem for its own idea of beauty. Pater's Renaissance prizes sweetness, but not alone: alone it is languid (FRE §19; see Sweetness). What he admires is sweetness that has come through strength, and a strangeness, "something of the blossoming of the aloe", that is "sweet also" (MIC §1; see Blossoming of the aloe). The essay's last paragraph finds the same "interfusion of sweetness and strength" in Blake and Victor Hugo (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength), and calls them Michelangelo's true sons.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the Latin occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §1** The Michelangelesque energy of conception recovers, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things: ex forti dulcedo.

**MIC §16** In old age the sweetness was found at last: out of the strong came forth sweetness, ex forti dulcedo.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §1 says: "English: Sweetness out of strength. Latin. Pater adapts the riddle of Samson, who finds honey in the carcass of a lion. The phrase makes sweetness an effect of strength and supplies the essay's governing paradox."

## See also

Attune; Blossoming of the aloe; Discordant note; Energy of conception; Entombment; Frozen orthodoxy; Ideal sentiment; New catholicism; Strength; Sweetness; Sweetness and strength.

# Exotic

*exotic*

Attested: *exotic* (LEO §§2, 15, 35; BEL §13). The Greek *exōtikos*, from *exō*, outside, means foreign; in English the adjective first meant simply foreign, and the noun "an exotic" was first a plant brought from abroad. Pater uses the word four times, and the foreign thing is nearly always Italian. Leonardo's "type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights, and seems more than that of any other artist to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within" (LEO §2; see Fascination; Type): his beauty is foreign even in Italy. At Milan the word is the hothouse figure, "To Leonardo least of all men could there be anything poisonous in the exotic flowers of sentiment which grew there" (LEO §15). The essay's last paragraph but one turns it into a noun. At Amboise, under Francis the First, "in a peculiarly blent atmosphere, Italian art dies away as a French exotic" (LEO §35). In the Du Bellay essay Mary Queen of Scots, reading Ronsard in prison, remembers the court of Catherine de' Medici at the Louvre "with its exotic Italian gaieties" (BEL §13). The word can be read as framing the Leonardo essay: it opens with a beauty that is exotic in its own country and closes with the art of that country grown under glass in France, where the Du Bellay essay takes it up.

## See also

Fascination; Finesse; Type.

# Fascination

*The word Pater finds always descriptive of Leonardo: a charm that binds, and half repels · The Renaissance*

*fascination*; *fascinates*, *fascinating*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A binding charm: the power of holding attention as by a spell, whether or not it pleases.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Fascination is always the word descriptive of him" (LEO §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §14, with LEO §2.

## Meaning

The Latin *fascinare* meant to bewitch, especially with the evil eye; the *fascinum* was the amulet worn against it. The serpent was said to fascinate its prey, holding it still with its gaze. English used "fascinate" in the sense of bewitching before the weaker sense of charming irresistibly took over. Pater keeps both. Fascination in his use is a power that holds, and it is not always kind.

## Use in the book

The word belongs above all to the Leonardo essay, and it is introduced with its shadow. It is "by a certain mystery in his work, and something enigmatical beyond the usual measure of great men, that he fascinates, or perhaps half repels" (LEO §2; see Mystery). The same paragraph sets fascination against delight: "His type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights" (LEO §2; see Exotic). Fascination is wider than pleasure. It holds those whom it does not please.

The essay then shows the power at work in the man before the painter. "We see him in his boyhood fascinating all men by his beauty, improvising music and songs, buying the caged birds and setting them free, as he walked the streets of Florence" (LEO §4). At Milan he came to Ludovico Sforza not as an artist but as a player on "a strange harp of silver of his own construction, shaped in some curious likeness to a horse's skull" (LEO §14). The next sentences name the power: "The capricious spirit of Ludovico was susceptible also to the power of music, and Leonardo's nature had a kind of spell in it. Fascination is always the word descriptive of him. No portrait of his youth remains; but all tends to make us believe that up to this time some charm of voice and aspect, strong enough to balance the disadvantage of his birth, had played about him" (LEO §14). "Spell" and "charm" keep the word's first sense; the harper who charms a prince can be read as an Orpheus at court.

The power passes into the work and its subjects. The Medusa holds the eye through "What may be called the fascination of corruption" (LEO §12; see Fascination of corruption), and the women of the drawings pass on to us the powers they feel "in a chain of secret influences" (LEO §23; see Chain of secret influences). On one reading the essay's own method is shaped by the word. Pater does not explain Leonardo; he describes the spell, and the half-repulsion that goes with it, as an impression he has received.

Outside the Leonardo essay the word belongs to fifteenth-century Italy and to the works that go under Giorgione's name. The della Robbia essay finds in the sculptors, as in Botticelli and Brunelleschi, "that intimate impress of an indwelling soul, which is the peculiar fascination of the art of Italy in that century" (ROB §1; see Indwelling soul). In the Giorgione essay works "often fascinating enough" went under his name (GIO §14), and a school "grew together out of all those fascinating works rightly or wrongly attributed to him" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque). There fascination survives the question of authorship, as in Leonardo's case it works through "a multitude of other men's pictures" (LEO §25; see Authentic works).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "fascination", "fascinates" or "fascinating" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §1** The impress of an indwelling soul is the peculiar fascination of fifteenth-century Italian art.

**LEO §2** Leonardo fascinates, or perhaps half repels; his exotic type fascinates more than it delights.

**LEO §4** In his boyhood Leonardo fascinated all men by his beauty.

**LEO §12** The fascination of corruption penetrates every touch of the Medusa.

**LEO §14** Leonardo's nature had a kind of spell in it; fascination is always the word descriptive of him.

**GIO §14** The relationship to Giorgione of many works, often fascinating enough, that went by his name was from the first uncertain.

**GIO §18** A school grew together out of all the fascinating works attributed to Giorgione.

## See also

Authentic works; Chain of secret influences; Exotic; Fascination of corruption; Giorgionesque; Indwelling soul; Mystery.

# Fascination of corruption

*The spell of decay that Pater finds in every touch of the Medusa of the Uffizi · The Renaissance*

*fascination of corruption*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The attraction of decay: a beauty that holds the eye by the very signs of death and dissolution.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "What may be called the fascination of corruption penetrates in every touch its exquisitely finished beauty" (LEO §12).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §12 says that "The Uffizi no longer attributes the oil painting to Leonardo" and has associated it with Otto Marseus van Schrieck.

**A place to read.** LEO §12.

## Meaning

"Corruption", from the Latin *corrumpere*, to break up or spoil, is first the decay of a dead body, then any decay, and then the moral kind. "Fascination" keeps its old sense of a binding spell (see Fascination). The phrase joins them: the spell that decay casts on the eye. "What may be called" can be read as Pater's sign that he is coining it.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the centre of the twelfth paragraph of the Leonardo essay, on the Medusa of the Uffizi. The paragraph opens by gathering the essay's account of Leonardo's grotesques, the "Legions of grotesques" that "sweep under his hand", nature too having "her grotesques" (LEO §11; see Grotesque): "All these swarming fancies unite in the Medusa of the Uffizii". It turns from Vasari's story of the monster the boy painted on a wooden shield, which Pater calls "an earlier Medusa" and whose subject is "the experiment of a child" (LEO §12; see Legend), to the picture: "It was not in play that he painted that other Medusa, the one great picture which he left behind him in Florence. The subject has been treated in various ways; Leonardo alone cuts to its centre; he alone realises it as the head of a corpse, exercising its powers through all the circumstances of death" (LEO §12; see Realise).

The phrase follows, and the details that make it good. "What may be called the fascination of corruption penetrates in every touch its exquisitely finished beauty. About the dainty lines of the cheek the bat flits unheeded. The delicate snakes seem literally strangling each other in terrified struggle to escape from the Medusa brain. The hue which violent death always brings with it is in the features" (LEO §12). The sentences hold the two terms together in each clause. The cheek is "dainty" and the bat flits about it; the snakes are "delicate" and they strangle one another; the beauty is "exquisitely finished" and the hue of violent death is in it. The fascination is double. The Gorgon of the myth turned to stone all who looked at her, and her severed head kept the power; Pater's Medusa, a corpse "exercising its powers through all the circumstances of death", still holds the viewer, and holds him by the death itself. The paragraph ends with the head seen as "a great calm stone" (LEO §12; see Foreshortening).

The Medusa can be read as the essay's first full instance of "some interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror", which had shaped itself in Leonardo's mind and "never left him" (LEO §11; see Interfusion of beauty and terror). The same union returns at the end in a living face. La Gioconda "has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave" (LEO §31; see Vampire), and the smile that plays over all Leonardo's work, hers among it, has "always ... a touch of something sinister in it" (LEO §30; see Unfathomable smile). The Medusa is beauty with death outside it, in the hue and the bat; the Gioconda is beauty with death taken inside.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once; "corruption" alone, at WIN §43, is not listed.

**LEO §12** The fascination of corruption penetrates every touch of the Medusa's exquisitely finished beauty.

## Pater's sources

Shelley had written on the same picture, "On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci in the Florentine Gallery" (1819), a poem that finds in it "the tempestuous loveliness of terror" and says that "Its horror and its beauty are divine".[110] Pater does not cite the poem, but his union of beauty and terror can be read as continuing it.

## Later readings

The Italian critic Mario Praz opened his study of romantic sensibility, *La carne, la morte e il diavolo nella letteratura romantica* (1930), translated as *The Romantic Agony* (1933), with a chapter called "The Beauty of the Medusa", which treats Shelley's poem as almost a manifesto of the Romantic idea of beauty, a beauty bound up with pain, corruption and death, and closes by looking ahead to the same beauty at the century's end in the smile of the Gioconda.[111]

## In this edition

The note at LEO §12 says that "The oil painting Pater describes differs from the childhood shield in Vasari's story and from Caravaggio's painted shield. The Uffizi no longer attributes the oil painting to Leonardo. The museum has presented it as the work of a painter from the Low Countries and has also associated it with Otto Marseus van Schrieck." The Uffizi has connected the picture with Otto Marseus van Schrieck, a Dutch painter of the seventeenth century known for dark forest-floor pictures of snakes, lizards and insects. Pater's description holds of the picture whoever painted it.

## See also

Fascination; Foreshortening; Grotesque; Interfusion of beauty and terror; Legend; Realise; Unfathomable smile; Vampire.

# Fashion

*fashion*, *fashions*; *fashionable*

Attested: *fashion* (FRE §§12, 32; GIO §8; WIN §§22, 36, 47); *fashionable* (GIO §14); *fashions* (CON §2; C73 §2). The Latin *factio*, a making, gave the Old French *façon*, a shape or manner, and "fashion" is first the make of a thing, then the manner of the day. Pater's principle that art strives to make its handling an end in itself extends, he says, to "all things that partake in any degree of artistic qualities": to furniture and dress, and to "life itself", to "gesture and speech" (GIO §8; see Suavity). "Herein,

[110] Percy Bysshe Shelley, "On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci in the Florentine Gallery" (written 1819), in *Posthumous Poems* (1824).

[111] Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, translated by Angus Davidson (1933), chapter 1.

again, lies what is valuable and justly attractive, in what is called the fashion of a time, which elevates the trivialities of speech, and manner, and dress, into 'ends in themselves,' and gives them a mysterious grace and attractiveness in the doing of them" (GIO §8; see End in itself). Fashion can be read as the condition of music in daily life: manner valued for itself, the how above the what. The word's other uses are less kind. Giorgione's reputation was blurred when it "became fashionable for wealthy lovers of art, with no critical standard of authenticity, to collect so-called works of Giorgione" (GIO §14); classicism can become "an intellectual fashion" (WIN §22), and the Renaissance is wrongly represented "as a fashion which set in at a definite period" (WIN §47). For the Conclusion, to regard all things "as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought" (CON §2). Between the grace of the Giorgione essay and the flux of the Conclusion the word keeps both its charm and its transience.

## See also

End in itself; Matter and form; Suavity.

## Feat

*feat*

Attested: *feat* (FRE §27). An old adjective meaning neat, trim, elegantly made, from the Old French *fait*, made, through the Anglo-French *fet*. Pater uses it in his English of Nicolette's escape from her chamber: "Her hair was yellow in small curls, her smiling eyes blue-green, her face clear and feat, the little lips very red, the teeth small and white; and the daisies which she crushed in passing, holding her skirt high behind and before, looked dark against her feet; the girl was so white!" (FRE §27). The word was already old-fashioned in Pater's time, and it gives his version the air of an older English, as "convenient" does in the story of Amis and Amile (FRE §13; see Convenient). The paragraph is part of what Pater calls "perhaps the prettiest passage in the whole piece" (FRE §24).

## See also

Convenient; Fay.

## Fleet and fair

*fleet and fair, white and red*

Attested: *fleet and fair* (WIN §31, twice). Fleet is swift, fair is beautiful, and Pater pairs them with "white and red", the colours of a healthy skin, as the ideal of the Greek gymnasium. Gymnastics began as part of a religious

ritual (WIN §31; see Gymnastics), and the worshipper "was to recommend himself to the gods by becoming fleet and fair, white and red, like them" (WIN §31). Gods and men resemble each other in the gymnasium: "The youth tried to rival his gods; and his increased beauty passed back into them" (WIN §31), so that the statues of the gods can be read as made from men who made themselves like gods. Pater then quotes, in English and Greek, the boast of Critobulus in Xenophon's *Symposium*, "I take the gods to witness, I had rather have a fair body than a king's crown" (WIN §31), which the note at WIN §31 identifies.[112] The phrase returns as an exclamation: "A perfect world, if the gods could have seemed for ever only fleet and fair, white and red!" (WIN §31). The repetition can be read as a farewell. Pater immediately bids us not regret that this youth of humanity passed "into a mournful maturity", for the spirit was to find "the ideal of that youth still red with life in the grave" (WIN §31), which can be read as the Renaissance discovery of Greek beauty in buried marbles.

## See also

Animal nature; Charito-blepharos; Distinction; Gymnastics; Worship of the body.

# Forma universale

*The universal form of beauty to which Michelangelo's sonnets rise from the beauty that pleases the eye · The Renaissance*

*forma universale*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Italian, "the universal form": the single form of beauty of which all beautiful things are instances.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo is always pressing forward from the outward beauty to apprehend the unseen beauty: "*trascenda nella forma universale*—that abstract form of beauty, about which the Platonists reason" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §14 renders the phrase "May it rise to the universal form", and says that "Pater connects the movement beyond visible beauty with the Platonic universal form".

**A place to read.** MIC §14.

## Meaning

In Plato's *Symposium* Diotima teaches that the lover rises from one beautiful body to all beautiful bodies, then to beautiful souls, laws and sciences, and at last to beauty itself, "pure, clear, unmixed", not in any face

[112] Xenophon, *Symposium* 4.11.

or body but by itself and with itself.[113] The Florentine Platonists of the fifteenth century made that ascent the theory of love, and Michelangelo's sonnets took it up. The *forma universale* is the beauty at the top of the ladder: the form of which every beautiful thing is a participation.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second half of a sentence in the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, whose first half belongs to Dante (see Devout materialism): "while Michelangelo is always pressing forward from the outward beauty—*il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace*, to apprehend the unseen beauty; *trascenda nella forma universale*—that abstract form of beauty, about which the Platonists reason" (MIC §14; see Outward beauty; Unseen beauty). The two Italian phrases, both from Michelangelo's sonnet "Non vider gli occhi miei cosa mortale", mark the two ends of the ascent, which the edition's notes render "The outward beauty that pleases the eyes" and "May it rise to the universal form".

The sentence makes the movement permanent. Michelangelo is "always pressing forward": he never rests in the beauty he sees, but treats it as a step. The essay has already said that in his poems "frost and fire are almost the only images" (MIC §14; see Refining fire), and the next sentence finds in him "the houseless and complaining spirit" (MIC §14; see Houseless spirit). A poetry that always presses through the visible to the universal leaves the visible thin.

The English phrase "universal formula" in the Preface makes a telling contrast. Writers on art have tried "to find some universal formula" for beauty, and the student of æsthetics seeks instead "the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it" (PRE §1; see Universal formula). The Platonist's universal form and the theorist's universal formula are both what Pater's critic declines to look for. Yet he admires Michelangelo's search for the universal form. The difference can be read in what each search produces: the theorist's formula replaces the works, while Michelangelo's longing for the universal form is itself a feeling, one of the moods that his sonnets and his figures express.

The phrase can be read as placing Michelangelo on the Platonic side of the book's great division. Dante keeps the body in heaven; Michelangelo presses through it (see Bodily form). Pater, whose own allegiance is to the senses, honours the Platonist without following him, and finds the value of the *forma universale* not in its truth but in the passion with which a great artist sought it.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which *forma universale* occurs, with the Preface's paragraph on the "universal formula", in the order of the book.

[113] Plato, *Symposium* 210a–212a.

**PRE §1** The true student of æsthetics seeks not beauty's universal formula but its special manifestation.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo presses forward from the outward beauty to the forma universale, the abstract form of beauty of the Platonists.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §14 renders *il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace* as "The outward beauty that pleases the eyes", and *trascenda nella forma universale* as "May it rise to the universal form", adding that "Pater connects the movement beyond visible beauty with the Platonic universal form".

## See also

Bodily form; Devout materialism; Houseless spirit; Outward beauty; Refining fire; Universal formula; Unseen beauty.

# Goddess of pleasure

*Botticelli's Venus, conceived with sadness · The Renaissance*
*the goddess of pleasure*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The goddess of pleasure is Venus, the Roman name of the Greek Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater writes that "what is unmistakable is the sadness with which he has conceived the goddess of pleasure, as the depository of a great power over the lives of men" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at BOT §8 names the picture "The Birth of Venus".

**A place to read.** BOT §§8–9.

## Meaning

Venus was pleasure's goddess in Latin poetry: Lucretius opens his poem on nature by calling her "the pleasure of men and gods".[114] Plato's Pausanias had already divided her in two, the heavenly Aphrodite of the mind and the common Aphrodite of the body,[115] and Ficino's commentary on the *Symposium*, written in Botticelli's Florence, made the two Venuses a commonplace of its Platonism. Pater's periphrasis takes the plainest of her titles. It does not say love or beauty but pleasure, the word the Preface had made the critic's measure (see Pleasure).

[114] Lucretius, *De rerum natura* I.1: *hominum divumque voluptas*.

[115] Plato, *Symposium* 180d–e.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in two paragraphs, and each time Pater sets a shadow on it. In the Birth of Venus she rises before the day's work: "Men go forth to their labours until the evening; but she is awake before them, and you might think that the sorrow in her face was at the thought of the whole long day of love yet to come" (BOT §8). The first clause is the Psalmist's, "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening",[116] and Pater sets love beside the labour of the day as a second labour, with its own length and weariness. The paragraph closes on its judgement. Botticelli meant the imagery to be pleasurable, and it was partly the incompleteness of the resources of his time, and partly his own predilection for minor tones, that subdued it (see Minor tones); what is unmistakable is the sadness of the sentence quoted above (BOT §8).

"Depository" is a banker's word, or a lawyer's: the place where something is lodged in trust. The word can be read as saying that the power does not belong to Venus as a possession to be enjoyed; it is deposited in her, and she must answer for it. The sadness can be read as the sadness of responsibility, the goddess knowing what her power will do in the lives it touches. The next paragraph extends the reading through Botticelli's work: "He paints the story of the goddess of pleasure in other episodes besides that of her birth from the sea, but never without some shadow of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers" (BOT §9; see Wan). The same face reappears as Judith, as Justice and as Truth (BOT §9; see Veritas), so that pleasure, vengeance, judgement and truth wear one look.

The phrase is the essay's sharpest paradox, and the book's. The critic who asks of each work its "peculiar quality of pleasure" (BOT §1; see Peculiar quality of pleasure) finds in Botticelli a pleasure whose very goddess is sad. Pater does not resolve the paradox; he calls the sadness "unmistakable" and lets it stand. It can be read as the first statement of what the Conclusion will say plainly, that the highest pleasures are sharpened by the knowledge that they pass (see Quickened, multiplied consciousness). Botticelli's Venus, awake before the labourers, already knows how long the day is.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §8** Botticelli conceived the goddess of pleasure with sadness, as the depository of a great power over the lives of men.

**BOT §9** He never paints the goddess of pleasure without some shadow of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers.

[116] Psalm 104:23 (King James Version).

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase. The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus, although it shows the goddess being carried to shore after her birth".

## See also

Emblematical; First impression; Minor tones; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Pleasure; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Veritas; Wan.

# Gymnastics

*the Greek system of gymnastics*

Attested: *gymnastics* (WIN §31). *Gymnastics*, from the Greek *gymnastikē*, the art of training, from *gymnos*, naked, was the training of the body by exercise, practised naked in the gymnasium and the palaestra. Pater gives it a religious origin: "The Greek system of gymnastics originated as part of a religious ritual" (WIN §31), and the worshipper was to make himself "fleet and fair, white and red", like his gods. The claim makes the athlete's body an offering and the gymnasium a sanctuary, and it joins the essay's two accounts of Greek origins: Greek art arises out of Greek religion "under happy conditions" (WIN §26; see Myth), and the beauty of the body arises out of the same worship. From there the circle closes. The beauty of the palaestra and of the artist's workshop "reacted on one another" (WIN §31; see Palaestra), and the youth's increased beauty "passed back into" his gods (WIN §31). Pater does not mention it, but Plato's *Republic* had made gymnastic, with music, one of the two parts of the education of its guardians,[117] and the *Lysis*, whose youths stand in the essay for what Plato offered Winckelmann, is set in a newly built wrestling-school (WIN §7; see Affinity).[118] Gymnastics, in the essay, is where Greek religion, Greek beauty and Greek art meet in one practice.

## See also

Affinity; Fleet and fair; Myth; Palaestra.

# Handiwork

*handiwork*

Attested: *handiwork* (FRE §10). Work made by hand, and especially the craftsman's made object. The two cups of Amis and Amile, "children's cups, of wood, but adorned with gold and precious stones", serve the heroes "almost like living things", with "that well-known effect of a beautiful

[117] Plato, *Republic* II, 376e.

[118] Plato, *Lysis* 203a–204a.

object, kept constantly before the eye in a story or poem, of keeping sensation well awake" (FRE §10; see Conceit). Pater adds that through them "witness is borne to the enjoyment of beautiful handiwork by a primitive people, their simple wonder at it, so that they give it an oddly significant place among the factors of a human history" (FRE §10). The comparison he draws is Othello's handkerchief (FRE §10; see Sense of fate). The phrase can be read as Pater's first statement of an interest the book keeps, in the made object as a source of pleasure in its own right.

## See also

Conceit; Eye of the fancy; Inward similitude; Sense of fate.

# Heiterkeit

*The German word for the serenity of the Greeks, which Pater carries from the Hellenic ideal to Winckelmann, to Raphael and to Goethe · The Renaissance*

*Heiterkeit*; *serenity*

## At a Glance

**The word.** German, "serenity", "cheerfulness": the clearness of a bright sky, and so a temper bright and calm at once.

**In *The Renaissance*.** *Heiterkeit*, "blitheness or repose", is with *Allgemeinheit* one of "the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal" (WIN §35).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §35 renders it "Serenity or blitheness" and says that the word "combines cheerfulness, clarity and serenity".

**A place to read.** WIN §43, the first sentences.

## Meaning

German *heiter* is first said of the weather: a clear, bright sky, unclouded. Of a person it means cheerful, serene, untroubled, and *Heiterkeit* is the state, a cheerfulness that has calm in it rather than excitement. English has no single word for the pair, and Pater uses several. At WIN §35 he gives "blitheness or repose", at WIN §43 and §51 "serenity", at WIN §46 "pagan blitheness". The variety is itself a gloss: the German word holds the gladness of "blithe" and the stillness of "repose" together, and Pater needs both halves of his English to render it (see Blitheness; Repose).

## Use in the book

The word first appears beside its partner in the thirty-fifth paragraph, where *Heiterkeit* and *Allgemeinheit*, serenity and breadth, are named the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit).

There it is a quality of Greek sculpture: the calm of a figure from which every passing passion has been purged.

The forty-third paragraph moves it from the statues to their critic. "One result of this temperament is a serenity—Heiterkeit—which characterises Winckelmann's handling of the sensuous side of Greek art. This serenity is, perhaps, in great measure, a negative quality: it is the absence of any sense of want, or corruption, or shame" (WIN §43). The definition is the most exact in the essay. Winckelmann's serenity here is less an achievement than an absence, the state of a man who has never felt the need to resist what he enjoys. Winckelmann deals with the sensuous element in Greek art "in the pagan manner" (WIN §43; see Sensuous element), and the paragraph sets him against the artist who, under Christian asceticism, has found it hard to pursue his life "without something of conscious disavowal of a spiritual world", and so finds in it "a kind of intoxication" (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism; Intoxication). He "fingers those pagan marbles with unsinged hands" (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism), and the unsinged hand is the image of *Heiterkeit*: nothing has burned him because nothing has been forbidden.

The forty-sixth paragraph finds the same quality where it seems least at home. In Christian art "the native blitheness of art asserted itself", and the young Raphael could "infuse that Heiterkeit, that pagan blitheness, into religious works" (WIN §46; see Blitheness). *Heiterkeit* is here no longer the possession of one race or one temperament; it is native to art itself, and can survive inside a religion of sorrow.

The last use gives the word to Goethe. Goethe's Hellenism had "the Allgemeinheit and Heiterkeit, the completeness and serenity," of an intellectualism (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism). The serenity is the same word, but it has changed its ground. Winckelmann's *Heiterkeit* was innocence; Goethe's is mastery, the calm of a mind that has passed through the many claims of modern life and put each in its place (see Im Ganzen). The essay can be read as tracing one word through four states: the calm of the statues, the innocence of their lover, the smile of Christian art and the watchfulness of the modern mind. Its question at the end is whether the fourth can still be serene, and its answer, in the romances of Goethe and Hugo that reflect upon modern life "blitheness and repose" (WIN §53; see Dénouement), is yes.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which *Heiterkeit* occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §35** Heiterkeit, blitheness or repose, and Allgemeinheit are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal.

**WIN §43** Winckelmann's serenity, Heiterkeit, is the absence of any sense of want, or corruption, or shame.

**WIN §46** The young Raphael infused that Heiterkeit, that pagan blitheness, into religious works.

**WIN §51** Goethe's Hellenism is the Allgemeinheit and Heiterkeit, the completeness and serenity, of an exigent intellectualism.

## Later readings

Independently of Pater, the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche put "Greek serenity", *griechische Heiterkeit*, at the centre of *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). The true serenity of the Greeks, he argued, was a bright image made by eyes that had looked into the horror of nature; the serenity the moderns praised was the late cheerfulness of a slave with nothing great to strive for; and Winckelmann, Goethe and Schiller, the noblest of those who sought the Greeks, had not reached the core of Greek nature. His preface of 1886 asks whether that later serenity was only a sunset.[119] Pater's essay of 1867 already finds the sadness beneath the calm, in the mournful mysteries and the gods troubled with thoughts of dispossession (WIN §45; see Dispossession), but keeps the calm as real rather than a disguise.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Blitheness; Christian asceticism; Dénouement; Dispossession; Exigent intellectualism; Im Ganzen; Intoxication; Repose; Sensuous element.

# Hellenic ideal

*The Greek art and life in which man is at unity with himself, with his body and with the world, and which already holds the seeds of what will replace it · The Renaissance*

*the Hellenic ideal*; *the Greek ideal*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The perfect form of human life and art that Greece realised, as the Winckelmann essay conceives it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Hellenic ideal is that "in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world" (WIN §44).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §35 says that Pater's pair of English glosses for *Heiterkeit* is important: "his Hellenic ideal has both liveliness and repose".

**A place to read.** WIN §§44–45.

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[119] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (Leipzig, 1872), §§9, 11, 20; "Versuch einer Selbstkritik" (1886), §1.

## Meaning

An ideal, from the Greek *idea*, form, is the perfect pattern of a kind of thing, the form it would take if nothing hindered it. In German aesthetics "the ideal" was beauty fully realised in art, and Greek sculpture was its pattern (see Ideal art). Pater's phrase takes the term from art into life. The Hellenic ideal is a sculpture and a way of living at once, and the essay's claim is that in Greece the two were the same thing.

## Use in the book

The phrase first gathers the essay's account of sculpture. *Heiterkeit* and *Allgemeinheit*, serenity and breadth, are "the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal" (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit; Heiterkeit); the Hellenic ideal "has nothing in common with the grotesque" (WIN §38; see Grotesque), and lets passion play over its surface without losing its depth (WIN §38; see Impassivity). Sculpture is its proper medium, and philosophy may give reasons why sculpture rather than poetry should be "the most sincere and exact expression of the Greek ideal" (WIN §9; see Plastic art).

The forty-fourth paragraph then defines it from the side of life, and in the same sentence begins to let it go. "The longer we contemplate that Hellenic ideal, in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world, the more we may be inclined to regret that he should ever have passed beyond it, to contend for a perfection that makes the blood turbid, and frets the flesh, and discredits the actual world about us" (WIN §44). Three unities, with the self, the body and the world, make the ideal; three wounds, of the blood, the flesh and the world, are what the later spirit paid for going beyond it. Yet Pater does not let the regret stand. A conflict had to come, "that some sharper note should grieve the existing harmony", if man was to escape the ennui that attaches even to "the realisation of the perfect life" (WIN §44; see Ennui), and that conflict is already Greek. "In Greek tragedy this conflict has begun: man finds himself face to face with rival claims" (WIN §44). Tragedy treats it with serenity, as a spectacle of the dignity of the human spirit (WIN §44; see Dignity of human nature). "But it is not only in tragedy that the Greek spirit showed itself capable of thus bringing joy out of matter in itself full of discouragements" (WIN §44), and Theocritus, with his note of romantic sadness, keeps the same "blithe and steady poise" (WIN §44; see Blithe poise).

The forty-fifth paragraph goes further and finds the undoing of the ideal inside it. Winckelmann, Pater says, missed this. "Nay, a sort of preparation for the romantic temper is noticeable even within the limits of the Greek ideal itself, which for his part Winckelmann failed to see" (WIN §45). Greek religion has its mournful mysteries (WIN §45; see Mournful mysteries), the Olympians are troubled with thoughts of dispossession (WIN §45; see Dispossession), and the colourless abstraction of the gods is already "a

premonition" of the pale medieval artists (WIN §45; see Abstraction; Impassivity). The ideal of unity contains the seeds of division.

The essay's judgement on the Hellenic ideal is thus double. It is the highest thing the book describes, and it could not last; it is a lost unity, and its loss was necessary to the larger music that followed. The essay can be read as refusing both the nostalgia that would return to it and the Christian contempt that would discard it. For Goethe, in its last pages, the problem is whether "the blitheness and universality of the antique ideal" can "be communicated to artistic productions, which shall contain the fulness of the experience of the modern world" (WIN §52; see Universality).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the Hellenic or Greek ideal is named, in the order of the book.

**WIN §9** Philosophy may show why sculpture should be the most sincere and exact expression of the Greek ideal.

**WIN §32** The Greek ideal expressed itself pre-eminently in sculpture.

**WIN §35** Heiterkeit and Allgemeinheit are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal.

**WIN §38** The Hellenic ideal has nothing in common with the grotesque.

**WIN §44** In the Hellenic ideal man is at unity with himself, his physical nature and the outward world; yet a conflict had to come.

**WIN §45** A preparation for the romantic temper is noticeable even within the limits of the Greek ideal.

## See also

Abstraction; Allgemeinheit; Blithe poise; Dignity of human nature; Dispossession; Ennui; Grotesque; Heiterkeit; Ideal art; Impassivity; Mournful mysteries; Plastic art; Universality.

# Imaginative colouring

*Colour as a spirit upon things, not a pleasure added to them · The Renaissance*

*imaginative colouring*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Imaginative colouring is colour used to express what the painter imagines and feels, rather than to copy the colours of nature.

**In *The Renaissance*.** To understand imaginative colouring is to see "that all colour is no mere delightful quality of natural things, but a spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BOT §8.

## Meaning

"Colouring" was the painter's word for his handling of colour, as one spoke of Titian's colouring. "Imaginative" puts the handling under the imagination, the power that the English Romantics had set above the fancy as the faculty that shapes and unifies.[120] Pater's phrase for the faculty that art addresses "through the senses" is the "imaginative reason" (GIO §1; see Imaginative reason). Imaginative colouring is that faculty at work in pigment.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the turn of the paragraph on the Birth of Venus, between a judgement and its reversal. The judgement is the viewer's second thought: after the first pleasure in its quaintness, the colour may seem "cadaverous or at least cold" (BOT §8; see Cadaverous). The reversal follows: "And yet, the more you come to understand what imaginative colouring really is", the spirit quoted above, "the better you will like this peculiar quality of colour" (BOT §8).

The sentence turns on the word "spirit", used twice. Colour is a spirit upon things, and by it they become expressive to the spirit: the same word names what is in the object and what receives it in us. This can be read as Pater's version of the Preface's "virtue", a power in things that answers to a power in the person (see Virtue). It also reverses the order of value with which the sentence began. The words "delightful quality" name the pleasure colour gives the eye, and "no mere" puts it in its place; what matters is that colour makes things speak. A cold colour may speak more truly than a warm one, if what it has to say is cold.

The phrase "this peculiar quality of colour" can be read as an echo of the essay's opening question about "the peculiar quality of pleasure" (BOT §1; see Peculiar quality of pleasure). Pater's argument depends on a change in the viewer. The words "the more you come to understand" make taste an education, and the liking grows with the understanding: "the better you will like". The judgement "cadaverous" is not denied. It is outgrown, as the verdict "abject" on the Madonnas is outgrown in the paragraph before (BOT §7; see Abject).

The phrase belongs with the book's other accounts of colour that does not copy. Wordsworth's "strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things" (PRE §5; see Life in natural things) is a poet's version of colour as a spirit

[120] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (1817), chapter 13.

upon things, and the Giorgione essay's picture that is "a space of such fallen light" (GIO §2) is a painter's. Imaginative colouring can be read as the meeting point of the book's Hellenism of pure form and its love of the senses (see Colour): colour is admitted, but as meaning.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §8** The more you understand imaginative colouring, the better you will like Botticelli's peculiar quality of colour.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Abject; Cadaverous; Colour; Imaginative reason; Life in natural things; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Virtue.

# Intellectual or imaginative enjoyment

*The pleasures the Renaissance seeks out and renews · The Renaissance intellectual or imaginative enjoyment*; *intellectual and imaginative enjoyment*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Enjoyment is the having and tasting of a good; intellectual or imaginative enjoyment is pleasure of the mind and of the imagination, as against bodily pleasure.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The desire that makes the Renaissance urges men "to search out first one and then another means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment", old and forgotten sources and new ones (FRE §1). The "dark age" is the long period "in which so many sources of intellectual and imaginative enjoyment had actually disappeared" (FRE §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §1, from "For us the Renaissance" to the end.

## Meaning

"Enjoyment", from the Old French *enjoir*, to rejoice in, is the possession and use of something with pleasure. The pairing of intellectual and imaginative pleasures runs through the book, from the Preface's "the things of the intellect and the imagination" (PRE §§7, 9) to the Conclusion's "intellectual excitement" (CON §§4, 6); the word "enjoyment" stresses the taking of pleasure, not only the thing that gives it.

## Use in the book

Pater's definition of the Renaissance is a definition by enjoyment (FRE §1; see Renaissance). The love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake, and "the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life", urge those who feel them "to search out first one and then another means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment" (FRE §1; see For their own sake). The movement is a search, and what it seeks is enjoyment. Its two directions can be read as recovery, "old and forgotten sources of this enjoyment", and invention, "the divination of fresh sources thereof—new experiences, new subjects of poetry, new forms of art" (FRE §1; see Revival of classical antiquity). "Divination" is a strong word: the Renaissance does not only find its pleasures but guesses at pleasures not yet there, as Winckelmann later "divines those channels of ancient art, in which its life still circulates" (WIN §22; see Divination).

The paragraph ends by measuring the outbreak against a loss. It comes after the true "dark age", in which "so many sources of intellectual and imaginative enjoyment had actually disappeared", and so "is rightly called a Renaissance, a revival" (FRE §1; see Dark age). A dark age, on this account, is one in which the instinct was crushed and its sources lost, and a rebirth is their return.

The phrase can be read as the bridge between the Preface's critic and the historian of the first essay. The critic asks what pleasure a work gives (PRE §2; see Pleasure); the historian finds an age defined by the search for such pleasures. "Enjoyment" is the more active word of the two, the having and using of a good, and it suits a movement that goes out to look. The Conclusion carries the same search into a single life (CON §6; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, twice.

**FRE §1** The Renaissance urges men to search out means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment, old and new; the dark age was one in which many sources of such enjoyment had disappeared.

## See also

Dark age; Divination; For their own sake; Pleasure; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Renaissance; Revival of classical antiquity.

# Interfusion of beauty and terror

*The union of extreme beauty and extreme terror that shaped itself in Leonardo's mind and never left him · The Renaissance*

*interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror*; *interfusion*; *interfuses*, *interfused*

## At a Glance

**The word.** "Interfusion" is a pouring of one thing into another until they are blended through.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "And in such studies some interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror shaped itself, as an image that might be seen and touched, in the mind of this gracious youth, so fixed that for the rest of his life it never left him" (LEO §11).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §11.

## Meaning

The Latin *interfundere* is to pour between, to spread through. "Interfused" had been given its English weight by Wordsworth's "a sense sublime / Of something far more deeply interfused" in the lines on Tintern Abbey (1798).[121] An interfusion is not a juxtaposition: the two things are mixed in every part. Beauty and terror had been held apart by the theory Pater inherited. The Irish statesman and writer Edmund Burke made terror the ruling principle of the sublime and gave beauty to smallness, smoothness and delicacy, so that the two were opposite kinds of effect.[122] Pater's phrase sets them in one image, as Shelley had found "the tempestuous loveliness of terror" in the Medusa of the Uffizi (see Fascination of corruption).

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the eleventh paragraph of the Leonardo essay. "In such studies" looks back to the study of nature in the paragraphs before, and to the two ideas that had touched Leonardo's mind in childhood "beyond the depth of other impressions—the smiling of women and the motion of great waters" (LEO §10; see Motion of great waters; Passing of a smile). The interfusion can be read as those two joined: the smile is the beauty, the great waters the terror. The interfusion "shaped itself, as an image that might be seen and touched", and it was "so fixed that for the rest of his life it never left him" (LEO §11). Pater describes it as a thing in the mind with a shape of its own, and the rest of the paragraph shows Leonardo hunting it in the world: "As if catching glimpses of it in the strange eyes or hair of chance people, he would follow such about the streets of Florence till the sun went down, of whom many sketches of his remain" (LEO §11).

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[121] William Wordsworth, "Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey" (1798), lines 95–96.

[122] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), part II, section 2, and part III, sections 13–18 and 27.

The rest of the paragraph shows the image in its parts. Some of the sketches have "that remote beauty which may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully" (LEO §11; see Remote beauty). With it is mingled "an element of mockery also", so that he caricatures even Dante (LEO §11; see Caricature; Mockery). And Leonardo's hand has its grotesques, as nature has hers, the rent rock and the skeleton among them (LEO §11; see Grotesque). "Mingled inextricably" repeats the claim of "interfusion": the elements cannot be separated.

The essay follows the image through the work. The Medusa joins "exquisitely finished beauty" to the "fascination of corruption" (LEO §12; see Fascination of corruption); the drawing of the Madonna and Child sets them in "half-reassured terror" before a griffin (LEO §22; see Griffin); in the battle cartoon, through the accounts given, "we may discern some lust of terrible things in it, so that even the horses tore each other with their teeth", and yet one fragment of it shows "a waving field of lovely armour" (LEO §33). The smile that plays over all Leonardo's work, hers among it, has "always ... a touch of something sinister in it" (LEO §30; see Unfathomable smile). On this reading the phrase of the eleventh paragraph is the key to the whole essay, and the Gioconda is the image "that might be seen and touched", found at last in a living woman.

The word "interfusion" has a counterpart in the Michelangelo essay, which ends on "That strange interfusion of sweetness and strength" as the true character of Michelangelo (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength). The two essays can be read as defining their artists by two interfusions. In Michelangelo sweetness enters strength and redeems it; in Leonardo terror enters beauty and is never wholly redeemed. The Giorgione essay uses the verb in a milder sense, of painting into which "just a little interfused sense of the poetry of flowers" comes (GIO §2) and of Giorgione, who "interfuses his painted work with a high-strung sort of poetry" (GIO §12).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "interfusion" or the verb "interfuse" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §21** That strange interfusion of sweetness and strength is found not in Michelangelo's followers but in those before him, and in Blake and Hugo.

**LEO §11** An interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror shaped itself in Leonardo's mind and never left him.

**GIO §2** In Japanese fan-painting a little interfused sense of the poetry of flowers comes into abstract colour.

**GIO §12** Giorgione interfuses his painted work with a high-strung sort of poetry.

## Later readings

Independently of Pater, Rilke wrote near the start of the first of the *Duino Elegies* (1923) that the beautiful is nothing but the onset of the terrible, *des Schrecklichen Anfang*, which we can still just bear.[123]

## See also

Caricature; Fascination of corruption; Griffin; Grotesque; Mockery; Motion of great waters; Passing of a smile; Remote beauty; Sweetness and strength; Unfathomable smile.

### Inward harmony

*inward harmony*

Attested: *inward harmony* (PIC §7). Agreement within a person, the parts of a character fitted together as notes in a chord. The phrase follows the portrait of the young Pico, quoted from the life by his nephew in the English of Sir Thomas More, the English humanist and statesman: "It is thus that Sir Thomas More translates the words of the biographer of Pico, who, even in outward form and appearance, seems an image of that inward harmony and completeness, of which he is so perfect an example" (PIC §7). The outward beauty is an image of the inward, as the Platonists taught; Pater says only that it "seems" so. Harmony is a word the essay returns to. Pico explains "the harmony between Plato and Moses" (PIC §13), and the surfaces of the religions "could never unite in any harmony of design" (PIC §4); the man can be read as having the harmony his writings sought. His title, Count of Concordia, stands on the collected edition of his works,[124] and can be read as naming the same aim.

## See also

Analogue.

### Lightness and grace

*lightness and grace*

Attested: *lightness and grace* (FRE §23). Ease and charm of manner, the opposite of weight and labour. Of Aucassin and Nicolette Pater says that "All the charm of the piece is in its details, in a turn of peculiar lightness and grace given to the situations and traits of sentiment, especially in its quaint fragments of early French prose" (FRE §23; see Eye of the fancy). The literature to which, Fauriel thought, the tale belongs probably reached its audience "by lightness of form and comparative homeliness of interest"

[123] Rainer Maria Rilke, *Duineser Elegien* (1923), first elegy, lines 4–5.

[124] *Opera Joannis Pici Mirandule Comitis Concordie* (Strasbourg, 1504), title page.

(FRE §20), below the intenser lyrics of Provence. Lightness here is a virtue of manner, not of matter: the subject is "a great sorrow" (FRE §22; see Matter and manner). Grace returns as the quality of the late French Renaissance, whose charm is "full of the grace which comes of long study and reiterated refinements" (BEL §17), and as "this grace or sweetness in Michelangelo" (MIC §2; see Sweetness).

## See also

Eye of the fancy; Matter and manner; Sweetness.

## Lineaments

*lineaments*

Attested: *lineaments* (LEO §31). The Latin *lineamentum*, from *linea*, a line, is a stroke of the pen, and in the plural the lines that make up a face: its features and the drawing of them. Pater uses the word once, at the end of the long sentence on La Gioconda in which, like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and has been a diver in deep seas, Leda and Saint Anne: "and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). Lineaments are usually what stays fixed in a face, the lines by which it is known; Pater's are "changing", still being moulded. The Conclusion can be read as making the same claim of every face: "That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them" (CON §2). The music of the sentence may echo of the legend told a paragraph before, that "by artificial means, the presence of mimes and flute-players", the subtle expression "was protracted on the face" (LEO §30; see Portraiture). The flute-players held an expression on the face for the painter; in Pater's sentence all history has passed over the face like music.

## See also

Beauty wrought from within; Portraiture; Unfathomable smile.

## Meditative sweetness

*The prevailing tone of Michelangelo's sonnets, a sweetness of reflection in a charmed space of his life · The Renaissance*

*meditative sweetness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A sweetness that comes from meditation: the gentleness of a mind turned in upon itself in calm reflection.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Their prevailing tone is a calm and meditative sweetness" (MIC §12).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §12.

## Meaning

To meditate, from the Latin *meditari*, is to think over, to ponder; in religious usage it is to dwell on a subject in prayerful thought. Meditative sweetness is thus the sweetness of a mind that dwells: not the immediate sweetness of sense, of a taste or a sound, but one that comes from long reflection and is felt as calm.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the twelfth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, a short paragraph on the friendship with Vittoria Colonna and the poems it gave rise to: "It was just because Vittoria raised no great passion that the space in his life where she reigns has such peculiar suavity; and the spirit of the sonnets is lost if we once take them out of that dreamy atmosphere in which men have things as they will, because the hold of all outward things upon them is faint and uncertain. Their prevailing tone is a calm and meditative sweetness" (MIC §12; see Suavity). The cry of distress, the paragraph ends, is there only "as a mere residue", a trace of "bracing chalybeate salt" in the song (MIC §12; see Chalybeate).

The paragraph is an argument about tone. Critics had read the sonnets as "a mere cry of distress, a lover's complaint over the obduracy of Vittoria Colonna" (MIC §10); Pater answers that the distress is only "a mere residue", and that the tone is something else. Its cause is a paradox: the space is sweet "just because Vittoria raised no great passion". A great passion would have brought distress; a friendship that did not possess him left room for meditation. The sweetness is "meditative" because the feeling has withdrawn from the outward world, whose hold on him is "faint and uncertain", into "that dreamy atmosphere in which men have things as they will".

The image of the spring completes the account. The song "rises like a clear, sweet spring", and the distress is the iron in it, "bracing" rather than bitter. The sweetness and the strength are again together, as the essay's first paragraph requires (see Ex forti dulcedo), but here they are in a new proportion: the sweetness prevails, and the strength is a trace. The next paragraph names the condition: "This charmed and temperate space in Michelangelo's life, without which its excessive strength would have been so imperfect" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment).

The phrase gathers the essay's other words for the gentler side of Michelangelo. His professed disciples "seem not to feel his grave and temperate sweetness" (MIC §17; see Theatricality); his poems record "the

struggle of a desolating passion, which yearns to be resigned and sweet and pensive, as Dante's was" (MIC §9; see Attune). In the meditative sweetness of the Colonna sonnets the yearning is fulfilled: the passion has become pensive.

The phrase also recalls the "meditative subtlety" that Botticelli, in the middle of the fifteenth century, had "already anticipated" (BOT §1; see Meditative subtlety). The two phrases can be read as naming the gifts of the late Florentine imagination: a subtlety of thought in the painter, a sweetness of feeling in the poet.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §12** The prevailing tone of Michelangelo's sonnets is a calm and meditative sweetness; the cry of distress is a mere residue.

## See also

Attune; Chalybeate; Ex forti dulcedo; Ideal sentiment; Meditative subtlety; Suavity; Theatricality.

# Moral sexlessness

*a moral sexlessness*

Attested: *moral sexlessness* (WIN §42). "Sexless" is without sex, neither male nor female; "moral" moves the word from the body to the character. Pater uses the phrase in the forty-second paragraph, after the statement that the beauty of the Greek statues "was a sexless beauty" and that the statues of the gods had the least traces of sex (WIN §42; see Sexless beauty). "Here there is a moral sexlessness, a kind of ineffectual wholeness of nature, yet with a true beauty and significance of its own" (WIN §42). The sentence is carefully balanced. The wholeness is "ineffectual", unable to act or to beget, and yet it has beauty and significance; it is the wholeness of the youths of Greek sculpture, "still as if suspended between growth and completion" (WIN §40), and of the adorante, "characterless" because untouched by the accidents of life (WIN §40; see Adorante). The paragraph places it in the context of Winckelmann's own temperament and of the friendships "which kept him always in direct contact with the spirit of youth" (WIN §42), and the phrase can be read as Pater's tactful name for what the essay finds in both: a beauty that is complete in itself because it is not yet, or not any longer, divided by desire. The same tact governs the earlier account of the friendships, which contain "of passion, of physical excitement" only enough to stimulate the eye (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form).

## See also

Adorante; Beauty of living form; Doubtful sex; Sexless beauty.

*The beauty that pleases the eye, from which Michelangelo always presses on to the unseen · The Renaissance*
*outward beauty*; *outward*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Beauty as it appears to the senses: the visible beauty of a face or a body, as against the beauty of mind or soul.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo "is always pressing forward from the outward beauty—*il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace*, to apprehend the unseen beauty" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §14 renders *il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace* "The outward beauty that pleases the eyes", and says that "The phrase describes visible beauty as the starting point of ascent".

**A place to read.** MIC §14.

## Meaning

"Outward" is what is on the outside, and so what is visible; its opposite, in the English of devotion and philosophy, is "inward", what lies within the soul. The pair is Saint Paul's "outward man" and "inward man", in the King James wording, and the inner man is already Plato's;[125] in the Platonic tradition it maps onto the visible and the intelligible. Outward beauty is thus beauty at the first step of the Platonic ladder: real, but a beginning.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second half of a sentence in the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, set against Dante's devout materialism (see Devout materialism): Michelangelo is "always pressing forward from the outward beauty—*il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace*, to apprehend the unseen beauty" (MIC §14; see Forma universale; Unseen beauty). The English is Pater's version of the Italian, "the beauty outside", and the Italian line adds what the English leaves implicit: it is the beauty "that pleases the eyes".

"Pressing forward from" defines the relation. The outward beauty is a starting point, as the edition's note says, and Michelangelo does not stay with it; he uses it to reach something else. That is the Platonic use of beauty that the Pico essay had described in Pico's commentary on the canzone of Girolamo Benivieni, which tries "to define the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty" (PIC §11; see Platonic commentary). The outward beauty is valued, on this view, as a way out of itself.

[125] 2 Corinthians 4:16; Plato, *Republic* IX, 589a–b.

The adjective runs through the book as one term of a contrast, and its value changes with the speaker. In the friendship of Amis and Amile the likeness of the two heroes runs through the story "like an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls" (FRE §10; see Doppelgänger); Pico, "even in outward form and appearance, seems an image of that inward harmony" (PIC §7). In these the outward expresses the inward and is in accord with it. In the della Robbia essay the Greek lived "a mere outward life", and so Greek sculpture "sacrificed so much of what was inward and unseen" that it could not satisfy Michelangelo (ROB §9; see Inwardness). In the Winckelmann essay, by contrast, even Greek thought "has indeed committed itself to a train of reflexion which must end in defiance of form, of all that is outward" (WIN §28), and the abstraction of the Greek gods, "That high indifference to the outward", "has already a touch of the corpse in it", with Angelico already in view (WIN §45).

The two halves of the book, on this reading, weigh the outward differently. The Michelangelo essay, describing a Platonist, lets the outward beauty be passed through; the Winckelmann essay, describing the Greeks, warns against leaving it behind. Pater's own position, set out in the Preface and the Conclusion, is with the outward: impressions, sensations, "the face of one's friend" (CON §5). He honours Michelangelo's movement past the outward without making it himself (see Forma universale).

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which the outward is set against the inward or the unseen, in the order of the book.

**FRE §10** The likeness of Amis and Amile is like an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls.

**PIC §7** Pico, even in outward form, seems an image of inward harmony.

**BOT §4** To Botticelli the outward image awakes a mood of his own, which it clothes with visible circumstance.

**ROB §9** Michelangelo, living not a mere outward life like the Greek, could not be satisfied by a system that sacrificed the inward and unseen.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo is always pressing forward from the outward beauty to apprehend the unseen beauty.

**LEO §25** The smile of Leonardo's Saint John would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture.

**LEO §31** The thoughts of the world have refined the outward form of La Gioconda, a beauty wrought out from within.

**WIN §27** For Angelico all that is outward in his work is only the symbol of an inexpressible world.

**WIN §28** Greek thought has committed itself to a reflexion that must end in defiance of form, of all that is outward.

**WIN §45** The high indifference to the outward of the abstract Greek gods has already a touch of the corpse in it.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §14 renders *il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace* "The outward beauty that pleases the eyes", and says that "The phrase describes visible beauty as the starting point of ascent".

## See also

Devout materialism; Doppelgänger; Forma universale; Inwardness; Platonic commentary; Unseen beauty.

# Overwrought delicacy

*The refinement of Troubadour poetry, carried to excess · The Renaissance overwrought delicacy*; *delicacy*, *delicacies*; *overwrought*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Delicacy is fineness, subtlety and sensitiveness; overwrought, it is worked too far, refined past health into nervous excess.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "All through it one feels the influence of that faint air of overwrought delicacy, almost of wantonness, which was so strong a characteristic of the poetry of the Troubadours" (FRE §24). Old French poetry elsewhere has "A light, aerial delicacy, a simple elegance" (BEL §2), and only in poetry, "this varied literary form", can art command "that width, variety, delicacy of resources" (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §24.

## Meaning

"Delicacy" is formed in English from "delicate", the Latin *delicatus*, pleasing, dainty, luxurious; it can mean fineness of perception or of workmanship, but also a softness that cannot bear rough things. "Overwrought" is the past participle of "overwork": worked over too much, as a piece of ornament or a nervous temper may be. The phrase keeps both senses and makes the excess part of the charm.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens Pater's description of the atmosphere of Aucassin and Nicolette. "All through it one feels the influence of that faint air of overwrought delicacy, almost of wantonness, which was so strong a characteristic of the poetry of the Troubadours" (FRE §24; see

Wantonness; Troubadour). He traces it to the poets' exclusive audience and its taste for a beauty with little of the open air in it (FRE §24; see Troubadour). The delicacy is a hothouse quality. "There is a languid Eastern deliciousness in the very scenery of the story, the full-blown roses, the chamber painted in some mysterious manner where Nicolette is imprisoned, the cool brown marble, the almost nameless colours, the odour of plucked grass and flowers" (FRE §24), and Nicolette, "the beautiful, weird, foreign girl", is "the best illustration of the quality I mean" (FRE §24; see Fay).

"Faint air" and "almost" hedge the judgement, and the hedges are part of it: the quality is felt, not stated, and it stops short of vice. The phrase can be read as the first statement of a taste the book returns to and judges. The early sweetness of the Renaissance is "a languid excess of sweetness even" (FRE §19; see Sweetness), and the end of the Renaissance in France has "that subtle and delicate sweetness which belongs to a refined and comely decadence" (PRE §6; see Decadence). The Du Bellay essay sets a healthier delicacy beside it: "A light, aerial delicacy, a simple elegance" is the mark of the poetry of Villon, of the Hours of Anne of Brittany and of French Gothic carving (BEL §2; see Aerial delicacy).

In the later essays delicacy becomes a power. Leonardo's "microscopic sense of finish" is satisfied by nature's "finesse, or delicacy of operation" (LEO §17); the experience of the world "lives only in the delicacy" with which it has moulded the face of La Gioconda (LEO §31). The modern arts of painting, music and poetry can translate "every delicacy of thought and feeling" (WIN §33), and the last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay finds in poetry, "this varied literary form", the "delicacy of resources" that modern life requires (WIN §53; see Literary form). The delicacy that was overwrought in the Troubadours can be read as what the book asks of modern poetry. "Overwrought" comes once more, of Leonardo's mechanical dreams, "thrown off by the overwrought and labouring brain" (LEO §10).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "delicacy", "delicacies" or "overwrought" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §24** A faint air of overwrought delicacy, almost of wantonness, characteristic of the Troubadours, runs through Aucassin and Nicolette.

**LEO §10** Leonardo's mechanical inventions were dreams thrown off by an overwrought and labouring brain.

**LEO §17** Nature satisfies Leonardo's microscopic sense of finish by her delicacy of operation.

**LEO §31** The experience of the world lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded La Gioconda's face.

**BEL §2** A light, aerial delicacy marks Villon's poetry, the Hours of Anne of Brittany and French Gothic carving.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's friendships stimulate the eye to the finest delicacies of colour and form.

**WIN §33** The romantic arts can translate every delicacy of thought and feeling.

**WIN §53** Only in poetry, this varied literary form, can art command the width, variety and delicacy of resources to deal with modern life.

## See also

Aerial delicacy; Decadence; Fay; Literary form; Sweetness; Troubadour; Wantonness.

# Palaestra

*The Greek wrestling-school, which Pater makes the measure of true Greek art: a severe and chastened grace, learned from trained bodies · The Renaissance*

*the palaestra*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Latin from the Greek *palaistra*, a wrestling-school: the court where Greek youths wrestled and trained.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Greece the beauty of the palaestra and the beauty of the sculptor's workshop "reacted on one another" (WIN §31).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §7 says that Plato's *Lysis* "begins with young men gathering at a wrestling school".

**A place to read.** WIN §§20, 31.

## Meaning

*Palaistra* comes from *palaiein*, to wrestle. The palaestra was an open court, surrounded by colonnades and rooms, where boys and young men learned wrestling and other exercises under a trainer; it might stand alone or form part of a larger gymnasium. It was also a place to talk and to be seen, and in Plato's dialogues Socrates goes there to find the young: the *Lysis* opens at a newly built palaestra, and the *Charmides* at the wrestling-school of Taureas.[126] Pater uses the word for what the place produced, a beauty of bodies formed by discipline, and for the art that learned from it.

[126] Plato, *Lysis* 203a–204a; *Charmides* 153a.

## Use in the book

The word first appears as a standard Winckelmann could not meet. His great book on ancient art came before many of the most significant Greek originals were known: "It is since his time that many of the most significant examples of Greek art have been submitted to criticism. He had seen little or nothing of what we ascribe to the age of Pheidias; and his conception of Greek art tends, therefore, to put the mere elegance of the imperial society of ancient Rome in place of the severe and chastened grace of the palaestra. For the most part he had to penetrate to Greek art through copies, imitations, and later Roman art itself; and it is not surprising that this turbid medium has left in Winckelmann's actual results much that a more privileged criticism can correct" (WIN §20). The palaestra here is a name for the true Greek manner, severe, chastened, athletic, against the elegance of the Roman copies that Winckelmann knew. "A more privileged criticism" is Pater's own generation's, which could see the Parthenon marbles in London and the Aegina pediments in Munich; Pater does not name them here, but his later essay "The Marbles of Aegina" (1880) can be read as that more privileged criticism at work (see Archaic immobility).

The second use explains why the palaestra should be the measure. "The beauty of the palaestra, and the beauty of the artist's workshop, reacted on one another" (WIN §31): the youth tried to rival his gods, and his beauty passed back into them (WIN §31; see Fleet and fair). Greek art, on this account, did not idealise from nothing. The sculptor had trained bodies before him, and the bodies were trained to resemble the statues; art and life worked on each other until the ideal and the real met. The essay's other athletes confirm the point: the youths of Plato's *Lysis*, "finding the end of all endeavour in the aspects of the human form" (WIN §7; see Affinity), and the adorante, "a youth who has gained the wrestler's prize" (WIN §40; see Adorante), the single instance in which "all these effects" of the paragraph are united.

The word can be read as Pater's correction of Winckelmann from within. Winckelmann saw Greece through Rome; Pater asks the reader to see it through the palaestra, and the change is from elegance to discipline, from a decorative antiquity to an athletic one. The grace he praises is "severe and chastened", the word he gives the Dorian worship of Apollo, "rational, chastened, debonair" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities). Greek beauty, in the essay, is a trained beauty, and the training is moral as well as physical.

## Places to read

The two paragraphs in which the word occurs, with WIN §7, where the note sets the youths of the Lysis at a wrestling school, and WIN §40, where the wrestler appears, in the order of the book.

**WIN §7** The brilliant youths of the Lysis find the end of all endeavour in the aspects of the human form.

**WIN §20** Winckelmann puts the elegance of imperial Rome in place of the severe and chastened grace of the palaestra.

**WIN §31** The beauty of the palaestra and the beauty of the artist's workshop reacted on one another.

**WIN §40** The adorante of Berlin is a youth who has gained the wrestler's prize.

## See also

Adorante; Affinity; Archaic immobility; Chthonian divinities; Fleet and fair; Gymnastics.

## Pensive pleasure

*pensive pleasure*; *pensive*

Attested: *pensive pleasure* (BEL §13); *pensive* in four further paragraphs (FRE §31; MIC §9; LEO §§10, 26). Pensive is thoughtful with a touch of sadness, from the French *pensif*, from *penser*, to think. Pater uses the phrase of the pleasure the Pleiad's poetry gives now. It is one of "the decorations of an age" (BEL §13; see Decorative). "We feel a pensive pleasure in gazing on these faded adornments, and observing how a group of actual men and women pleased themselves long ago" (BEL §13). The pleasure is double. It is taken in the adornments, and in the thought of the people who were pleased by them, and the thought makes it pensive: the adornments are faded and the men and women gone. The phrase can be read as naming the historical pleasure that the essay goes on to distinguish from the æsthetic one, the pleasure of seeing how others were pleased (BEL §21; see Æsthetic value). The word's other uses keep its mildness: Aucassin is the very image of the Provençal love-god "grown to pensive youth" (FRE §31), the figures of Florentine life that passed on to the wall through the cheerful painter Leonardo no longer was came out "a little mellower and more pensive" (LEO §10; see Objective painter), and Goethe wrote a "pensive sketch" of the Last Supper's sad fortunes (LEO §26).

## See also

Æsthetic value; Decorative; Objective painter; Pleasure; Rococo.

## Personal type

*personal type*; *type of personal beauty*

Attested: *personal type* (GIO §§16, 17); *type of personal beauty* (FRE §24). A personal type is a kind of person, the bearing, face and manner that a painter chooses and repeats, or that a society forms in its members. Pater uses the phrase twice of Giorgione's world. The "distinction" of the

Concert is its evenness of perfection "alike in design, in execution, and in choice of personal type" (GIO §16; see Distinction), so that the choice of the figures' type is part of the art. The next paragraph says where Giorgione learned it: among "people of courtesy", into whose differences of personal type, manner and dress he was initiated (GIO §17; see Distinction; Natural child). The Two Early French Stories essay had found the same refinement in the Troubadours, often "men of great rank", who wrote "for an exclusive audience" and "came to value a type of personal beauty which has in it but little of the influence of the open air and sunshine" (FRE §24; see Troubadour). The two uses can be read side by side. Each society of courtesy forms a personal type, and each art that serves it learns to paint or sing it.

## See also

Distinction; Natural child; Parti-coloured; Troubadour.

# Physical beauty

*The beauty of the body, cared for and strained · The Renaissance physical beauty*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Physical beauty is the beauty of the body and of material things, as distinct from beauty of mind or character.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The care for physical beauty" is the first motive of the Renaissance the Preface names, already pronounced in the middle age (PRE §6). The medieval spirit of Abelard's Paris has "its care for physical beauty, its worship of the body" (FRE §4). In Leonardo "the expression of physical beauty at this or that point seems strained and marred in the effort" (LEO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PRE §6 with FRE §4.

## Meaning

"Physical", from the Greek *physis*, nature, is what belongs to the material world and the body. The phrase sets the beauty of the body against beauty of mind or character, and Pater uses it without suspicion.

## Use in the book

The Preface lists the motives of "This outbreak of the human spirit" which "may be traced far into the middle age itself": "the care for physical beauty, the worship of the body, the breaking down of those limits which the religious system of the middle age imposed on the heart and the imagination" (PRE §6; see Renaissance). Physical beauty comes first, and

the word "care" can be taken as making it an attention, almost a discipline. The first essay finds it in the spirit that goes out from Abelard's Paris, "with its qualities already well defined, its intimacy, its languid sweetness, its rebellion, its subtle skill in dividing the elements of human passion, its care for physical beauty, its worship of the body, which penetrated the early literature of Italy, and finds an echo even in Dante" (FRE §4). The same pair returns as "their care for beauty, ... their worship of the body" in the account of the medieval Renaissance's rebellion (FRE §32; see Worship of the body).

In the essay on Leonardo physical beauty is in conflict with the mind. His curiosity "tended to make him go too far below that outside of things in which art really begins and ends", and in the struggle between "the reason and its ideas, and the senses, the desire of beauty", physical beauty suffers: "Often the expression of physical beauty at this or that point seems strained and marred in the effort, as in those heavy German foreheads—too heavy and German for perfect beauty" (LEO §20). The phrase that opened the Renaissance can be read here as marking the cost of the larger vision Leonardo sought. The Winckelmann essay, where the beauty of the body is most fully studied, does not use the phrase, but speaks of "the pride of human form" (WIN §14; see Beauty of living form) and "the perfect animal nature of the Greeks" (WIN §29; see Animal nature).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The care for physical beauty is the first of the motives of the Renaissance traced into the middle age.

**FRE §4** The spirit of Abelard's Paris has its care for physical beauty and its worship of the body.

**LEO §20** In Leonardo's struggle between curiosity and the desire of beauty, physical beauty is strained and marred.

## See also

Animal nature; Beauty; Beauty of living form; Desire of beauty; Renaissance; Worship of the body.

# Physical life

*The life of the body seen as the science of the day saw it: a passing combination of elements, which the Conclusion takes as its starting-point · The Renaissance*

*physical life*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The life of the body, considered as matter in motion under the laws of physics and chemistry.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Let us begin with that which is without—our physical life" (CON §2).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §2 says that Pater "begins with a bodily sensation of relief in water", which "first supplies an example for scientific analysis and then furnishes a metaphor for the movement of consciousness".

**A place to read.** CON §2.

## Meaning

*Physical* is from the Greek *physis*, nature, the growing and becoming of things, and in Greek philosophy *ta physika* were the works on nature as against those on ethics or logic. In English the word came to mean bodily, as against mental or spiritual, and in the nineteenth century it took on the sense of the sciences that treat matter and force. "Physical life" in Pater's decade meant the life of the body as the physiologists described it: a set of chemical and mechanical processes, continuous with those of the world outside.

Pater's sentences of 1868 have a close neighbour in the English biologist Thomas Henry Huxley's lecture "On the Physical Basis of Life", given in Edinburgh on 8 November 1868, a month after Pater's review of William Morris appeared, and printed in the *Fortnightly Review* in February 1869.[127] The two are independent, but they share a vocabulary and a claim: that the body is made of the same matter as the world, and that life is a process of that matter. Huxley drew from it the case for a scientific materialism held as a method; Pater drew from it an ethic of the passing moment.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes three times, all in the second paragraph of the Conclusion, and it is the first step of the argument. Pater announces his method: modern thought tends to regard all things "as inconstant modes or fashions" (CON §2; see Inconstant modes or fashions), and he will test that tendency first on what seems most solid. "Let us begin with that which is without—our physical life." The body is "without", outside the mind, and the paragraph will show that even what is without does not hold still.

The example is chosen with care. Pater asks us to fix upon it "in one of its more exquisite intervals", and his instance is the moment "of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat" (CON §2; see Recoil). Pater does not begin with the body at rest but with the body at a moment of

[127] Thomas Henry Huxley, "On the Physical Basis of Life", *Fortnightly Review*, n.s. 5 (February 1869); in *Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews* (London, 1870), with the note that it was delivered in Edinburgh on 8 November 1868.

pleasure, and the pleasure is a sensation of change, heat answered by cold. Then the question, what the whole physical life is in that moment "but a combination of natural elements" (CON §2; see Natural elements). The pleasure is resolved into chemistry. The same elements are found far from the body, and our physical life "is a perpetual motion of them" (CON §2; see Perpetual motion), the passage of the blood, the waste and repair of the eye, the changes of the brain under light and sound (see Elementary forces). By the end of the paragraph the outline of face and limb is "but an image of ours", a design in a web whose threads pass out beyond it (CON §2; see Web), and life itself is flame-like, a "concurrence" of forces (CON §2; see Flame-like).

The order matters. The Conclusion can be read as beginning with the physical because the physical is the strongest case for permanence, and if the body is a perpetual motion then the mind, which the third paragraph treats, must be more so: "the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring" (CON §3; see Whirlpool). Pater's physiology is the ground of his psychology, and the first word of the argument is the word that the science of 1868 made its own.

The rest of the book uses "physical" for the body's share in feeling, and those uses prepare the Conclusion's. Winckelmann's enthusiasm, "dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament", reinforces the purer emotions of the intellect "with an almost physical excitement" (WIN §14; see Intellectual excitement); his friendships contain of passion and physical excitement only so much as sharpens the eye (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form); and the Hellenic ideal is one in which man is at unity "with his physical nature" (WIN §44; see Unity with one's self). The Winckelmann essay praised the Greek because the body and the mind were one in him. The Conclusion keeps the unity and changes its sign: the mind is as unstable as the body, because both are made of the same moving elements.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "physical life" occurs, with the paragraphs on physical excitement and the physical nature of the Greek, in the order of the book.

**WIN §14** Winckelmann's enthusiasm, dependent on bodily temperament, reinforces the purer emotions of the intellect with an almost physical excitement.

**WIN §19** Of passion, of physical excitement, his friendships contain only so much as stimulates the eye.

**WIN §44** In the Hellenic ideal man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world.

**CON §2** Let us begin with that which is without, our physical life, a perpetual motion of natural elements.

**C73 §2** In 1873 the paragraph is the same in substance.

## See also

Beauty of living form; Elementary forces; Flame-like; Inconstant modes or fashions; Intellectual excitement; Natural elements; Perpetual motion; Recoil; Unity with one's self; Web; Whirlpool.

## Picturesque

*picturesque*

Attested: *picturesque* (PIC §16; GIO §§6, 17). The Italian *pittoresco*, in the manner of a painter, passed through the French *pittoresque* into English "picturesque", and the word became in the eighteenth century the name of a taste: the rough, irregular and varied scene that pleases as a picture pleases, made popular by the travel books of the clergyman William Gilpin and set by the landowner and writer Uvedale Price between the beautiful and the sublime.[128] Pater's chief use turns that taste around. A river-side in France is superior, "for most conditions of the picturesque", to a Swiss valley, because there "mere topography, the simple material, counts for so little" (GIO §6; see Dominant tone; Topography). The picturesque tourist went in search of the striking scene; Pater can be read as preferring the quiet one, because what makes a scene a picture is not its matter but the light that transforms it. The word keeps its older sense elsewhere. The condottiere Tuzio Costanzo, in his towers at Castelfranco, is "a picturesque remnant of medieval manners, amid a civilisation rapidly changing" (GIO §17; see Condottiére), and the Pico essay finds a "picturesque union of contrasts" in the art of the late fifteenth century (PIC §16; see Picturesque union of contrasts). In those uses the picturesque is the charm of the old surviving among the new.

## See also

Condottiére; Dominant tone; Picturesque union of contrasts; Topography.

## Play

*The hours of relaxed attention in which the happier powers in things have their way with us, the favourite subject of Giorgione's school · The Renaissance play*

[128] William Gilpin, *Observations on the River Wye* (London, 1782) and *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and On Sketching Landscape* (London, 1792); Uvedale Price, *An Essay on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful* (London, 1794).

## At a Glance

**The word.** What is done for its own delight, not for use; and the free movement of a thing that is not held.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Often such moments are really our moments of play, and we are surprised at the unexpected blessedness of what may seem our least important part of time" (GIO §22).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §22 says that Pater "imagines their recital", the reading of the Italian story-teller Matteo Bandello's tales, "as one of the intervals of listening characteristic of Giorgionesque life".

**A place to read.** GIO §22.

## Meaning

The Old English *plega* meant quick movement and exercise as well as sport and amusement, and the word keeps both senses: children play, and so do light and water and the muscles of a face. Play in the first sense is activity for its own sake, without an end beyond itself; in the second it is free movement, motion that is not constrained. Pater's use in the Giorgione essay joins them.

## Use in the book

The word gathers the twenty-second paragraph. The essay has just said that in Giorgione's school life is conceived "as a sort of listening" (GIO §22; see Listening), and goes on: "Often such moments are really our moments of play, and we are surprised at the unexpected blessedness of what may seem our least important part of time; not merely because play is in many instances that to which people really apply their own best powers, but also because at such times, the stress of our servile, everyday attentiveness being relaxed, the happier powers in things without are permitted free passage, and have their way with us" (GIO §22; see Servile attentiveness). The sentence gives play two reasons. The first is ours: play is "in many instances that to which people really apply their own best powers". The second belongs to things: when attention relaxes, "the happier powers in things without" come in freely. Play is both an activity and a receptivity, and the second is the more surprising.

The paragraph then moves from life to the pictures: "from music, the school of Giorgione passes often to the play which is like music; to those masques in which men avowedly do but play at real life" (GIO §22; see Masque). Play is now a subject, and the school's genre pictures had already been defined as "morsels of actual life, conversation or music or play" (GIO §12; see Genre). Giorgione's pictures can be read as play in both senses. They show people at play, and they are themselves objects for an hour of relaxed attention, carried into a cabinet "to be used, at will, as a means of self-education, stimulus or solace" (GIO §12; see Animated presence).

The thought can be set beside Schiller's. Schiller had argued, in the fifteenth of his letters on aesthetic education (1795), that man plays only when he is human in the full sense of the word, and is fully human only when he plays.[129] Pater's sentence is quieter, but it can be read as sharing the conviction that play is the most serious use of freedom. The other sense of the word runs through the book and supports it. Light plays: in its primary aspect a great picture has no more definite message for us than "an accidental play of sunlight and shadow" (GIO §2; see Abstract painting). Intelligence plays: in the Two Early French Stories the name of Abelard connects the liberty of the heart with "the free play of human intelligence around all subjects presented to it" (FRE §2; see Free play). Sculpture seeks "the expression and the play of life" (ROB §6), and the Hellenic ideal "allows passion to play lightly over the surface of the individual form" (WIN §38; see Play of life). In each the play is free movement over a surface that is not disturbed by it, and that is what the Giorgione essay asks of an hour of leisure.

## Places to read

A selection of the paragraphs in which "play" names recreation or free movement, in the order of the book; the word and its forms occur in twenty-two paragraphs in all.

**FRE §2** The name of Abelard connects the liberty of heart with the free play of human intelligence around all subjects.

**ROB §6** To secure the expression and the play of life is the problem the three great styles in sculpture have solved.

**GIO §2** In its primary aspect a great picture has no more definite message than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow.

**GIO §12** Giorgione's genre pictures are morsels of actual life, conversation or music or play.

**GIO §22** Our moments of play have an unexpected blessedness; the school passes to the play which is like music.

**BEL §16** As the Pleiad poets play, real passions insinuate themselves, and the reality of death.

**WIN §38** The Hellenic ideal allows passion to play lightly over the surface of the individual form.

**CON §3** When reflexion begins to play upon objects they are dissipated under its influence.

## See also

Abstract painting; Animated presence; Free play; Genre; Listening; Masque; Play of life; Servile attentiveness.

[129] Friedrich Schiller, *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (1795), letter 15.

*What the objects of criticism produce · The Renaissance*
*pleasurable sensations*, *pleasurable sensation*; *pleasurable*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A sensation is what is felt through the senses, and a pleasurable one is felt with pleasure.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The æsthetic critic regards all the objects with which he has to do "as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations, each of a more or less peculiar or unique kind" (PRE §3). Rome was "so full of pleasurable sensation for men of an imaginative temperament" like Du Bellay (BEL §12).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PRE §3.

## Meaning

"Sensation" comes from the Latin *sensus*, feeling, perception. The psychology of Pater's day built the mind up from sensations grounded in the physiology of the nerves, as in Alexander Bain's *The Senses and the Intellect* (London, 1855); Pater's phrase brings that vocabulary into criticism.

## Use in the book

In the Preface the phrase defines what works of art do. The æsthetic critic regards all works of art and the fairer forms of nature and human life "as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations" (PRE §3; see Æsthetic criticism; Powers or forces). The language is a physicist's and a physiologist's: forces produce sensations, as light produces sight. The next words keep the sensations particular, each "of a more or less peculiar or unique kind", and the critic "wishes to explain" the influence "by analysing and reducing it to its elements" (PRE §3). Sensation is the starting point; analysis, not sensation, is the critic's work.

The adjective returns three times. Antiquarianism can set the reader at a point of view "from which what gave pleasure to the past is pleasurable for him also" (FRE §23; see Antiquarianism). Botticelli "meant all this imagery to be altogether pleasurable" in the Birth of Venus, though his means and his predilection for minor tones subdued it (BOT §8; see Minor tones). Rome, for Du Bellay, was "so full of pleasurable sensation for men of an imaginative temperament such as his", yet his thoughts went back "painfully, longingly" to the Loire (BEL §12; see Home-sickness). The pleasurable sensation, in that case, is what home-sickness overcomes.

The noun has a short history of its own in the book. The Renaissance wins for the mind "a new kingdom of feeling and sensation and thought"

(FRE §6), sensation standing between feeling and thought as one of its three provinces. The chief question about Botticelli begins "What is the peculiar sensation" before it asks for the peculiar quality of pleasure (BOT §1; see Peculiar quality of pleasure), and so carries the Preface's "peculiar or unique kind" into an essay. In the Conclusion sensations are among the last things analysis reaches, with "the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations" (CON §3). The Preface's unit of æsthetic experience can be read as becoming there the Conclusion's last residue of experience itself.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the adjective occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** The æsthetic critic regards all objects as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations of a peculiar kind.

**FRE §23** Antiquarianism sets the reader where what gave pleasure to the past is pleasurable for him also.

**BOT §8** Botticelli meant the imagery of his Venus to be altogether pleasurable, though it is subdued and chilled.

**BEL §12** Rome was full of pleasurable sensation for an imaginative temperament, yet Du Bellay longed for the Loire.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Antiquarianism; Home-sickness; Minor tones; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Pleasure; Powers or forces.

# Pleasure

*The critic's measure and its particular qualities · The Renaissance*
*pleasure, pleasures*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Pleasure is the feeling of satisfaction or delight that something gives, of the senses or of the mind.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The critic's questions turn on it: "Does it give me pleasure? and if so, what sort or degree of pleasure?" (PRE §2). Each work affects one "with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure" (PRE §3), and the chief question about a painter is "the peculiar quality of pleasure" his work excites (BOT §1; see Peculiar quality of pleasure). To the true admirers of Michelangelo, "the true type of the Michelangelesque" is "sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1), and poetry is "all literary production which attains the power of giving pleasure by its form" (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §2 says that Pater repeats the question "almost verbatim" in the essay on Botticelli.

**A place to read.** PRE §2 with BOT §1, the question asked and then put to a painter.

## Meaning

The word comes from the French *plaisir*, from the Latin *placere*, to please. In English philosophy pleasure was a central word of the utilitarians, who from Jeremy Bentham's *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789) made it, with pain, the measure of good, and asked how pleasures differ in quantity and, with John Stuart Mill in the second chapter of his *Utilitarianism* (1863), in quality. Pater's "what sort or degree of pleasure" can be read as asking both questions of a work of art.

## Use in the book

The Preface's questions make pleasure the critic's measure. After asking what the song or picture is "to me" (PRE §2; see Engaging personality), they go on: "What effect does it really produce on me? Does it give me pleasure? and if so, what sort or degree of pleasure? How is my nature modified by its presence, and under its influence?" (PRE §2). The questions narrow from the effect on me to whether there is pleasure, then to its kind or strength ("what sort or degree"), then to the change it works in the person. The objects of criticism are "powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations, each of a more or less peculiar or unique kind" (PRE §3; see Pleasurable sensation), and each is valuable "for the property each has of affecting one with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure" (PRE §3). Pleasure is never treated as one thing. The Preface asks for its kinds, and the essays name them.

The essay on Botticelli puts the Preface's question to a painter in almost the same words, asking for "the peculiar quality of pleasure" his work excites (BOT §1; see Peculiar quality of pleasure). The answer is the mingled sadness of his sacred and pagan figures. What is unmistakable in his Venus is the sadness with which he has conceived "the goddess of pleasure" (BOT §8; see Goddess of pleasure), and he never painted her "without some shadow of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers" (BOT §9). The essay ends by giving such painters, with their "peculiar quality of pleasure", a place in general culture (BOT §10; see General criticism).

The essay on Michelangelo gives pleasure a partner. Strangeness, surprise, is "an element in all true works of art", but "that they shall give pleasure and exert a charm over us is indispensable too"; to the true admirers of Michelangelo the true type of the Michelangelesque is "sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1; see Pleasure with surprise). Pleasure alone would be mere charm, and surprise alone mere strangeness.

The essay on Du Bellay finds a pleasure of a fainter kind. Of the decorations of the sixteenth century Pater writes that we feel "a pensive

pleasure in gazing on these faded adornments" (BEL §13; see Pensive pleasure); the Pleiad school has "a certain silvery grace of fancy, nearly all the pleasure of which is in the surprise at the happy and dexterous way in which a thing slight in itself is handled" (BEL §28; see Pure effect). And the Winckelmann essay closes on a definition of poetry by its pleasure: "Let us understand by poetry all literary production which attains the power of giving pleasure by its form, as distinct from its matter" (WIN §53; see Matter and form).

In the first essay pleasure is the medieval Renaissance's offence. Its people, "In their search after the pleasures of the senses and the imagination, in their care for beauty, in their worship of the body", were "impelled beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal" (FRE §32; see Worship of the body). Pater does not make the Preface's pleasure into a creed; he makes it a measure, and the Conclusion's quickened consciousness may be taken as its last form, a pleasure in the quality of moments (see Quickened, multiplied consciousness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** The critic asks whether a work gives him pleasure, and of what sort or degree, and the answers are his original facts.

**PRE §3** Each work affects one with a special, unique impression of pleasure; the critic disengages the virtue that produces the impression of beauty or pleasure.

**PRE §8** Art, philosophy, religion and the life of refined pleasure and action usually move in separate circles.

**FRE §2** Medieval ecclesiastical art was done in great measure for pleasure's sake.

**FRE §23** Antiquarianism can make what gave pleasure to the past pleasurable again, but only where there is real æsthetic charm.

**FRE §32** The search after the pleasures of the senses and the imagination carried people beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal.

**PIC §11** Pico had wandered over "the crooked hills of delicious pleasure" before he burned his love-songs.

**BOT §1** The chief question a critic has to answer is the peculiar quality of pleasure a painter's work excites.

**BOT §8** Botticelli conceived the goddess of pleasure with sadness, as the depository of a great power over men's lives.

**BOT §9** Botticelli never paints the goddess of pleasure without some shadow of death.

**BOT §10** Some artists convey a peculiar quality of pleasure found nowhere else, and have their place in general culture.

**MIC §1** True works of art must give pleasure as well as surprise; the Michelangelesque is pleasure with surprise.

**MIC §10** Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna, together in an empty church, were already tasting the sunless pleasures of weary people.

**BEL §13** We feel a pensive pleasure in the faded adornments of the sixteenth century.

**BEL §17** The charm of the school Ronsard founded is as for princes weary of love, of pleasure or of action.

**BEL §18** In the Pleiad's poetry the fireside often appears, with the pleasures of the frosty season, about the vast emblazoned chimneys.

**BEL §28** Nearly all the pleasure of the Pleiad's fancy is in the surprise at the dexterous handling of a slight thing.

**WIN §53** Poetry is all literary production that gives pleasure by its form, as distinct from its matter.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §2 calls the critic's question "a practical test for the ensuing essays" and observes that in "Sandro Botticelli" Pater "repeats it almost verbatim before turning to the distinctive quality he feels in the painter's work".

## See also

Energy of conception; Engaging personality; General criticism; General culture; Goddess of pleasure; Impression; Matter and form; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Pensive pleasure; Pleasurable sensation; Pleasure with surprise; Pure effect; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Worship of the body.

# Pleasure with surprise

*The double effect of true art, which must excite and also charm · The Renaissance*

*pleasure with surprise*; *surprise*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Pleasure joined to surprise: the delight that comes with the unexpected.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The true type of the Michelangelesque is "sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §1.

## Meaning

Surprise, from the French *surprendre*, to take unawares, was first a military word for a sudden attack and came to mean the feeling of being caught by the unexpected. Pleasure is the book's central term for the effect of beauty (see Pleasure). Joined by "with", the two make a compound effect: not pleasure followed by surprise, nor surprise softened into pleasure, but both at once.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the definition of the Michelangelesque that closes the first paragraph of the Michelangelo essay (MIC §1; see Michelangelesque; Energy of conception), and it summarises the two sentences before. The first gives surprise: that true works of art "shall excite or surprise us is indispensable". The second gives pleasure: that they "shall give pleasure and exert a charm over us is indispensable too" (MIC §1; see Blossoming of the aloe). Both are "indispensable", and the phrase "pleasure with surprise" holds them in one breath.

The phrase stands beside "sweetness and strength" in a pair of pairs, and the two match. Strength surprises; sweetness pleases. A work that only surprises is strange and no more, and a work that only pleases may be merely pretty; Michelangelo's has both. The order is worth noting: pleasure comes first in the phrase, though surprise comes first in the argument. The essay is written against critics who see only strength, and so it puts pleasure, the neglected term, in front.

The book uses "surprise" in two ways. Most often people are surprised: Fauriel at the refinement of a thirteenth-century tale (FRE §22), children at the whiteness of a ceiling (BOT §7), we who come "with some surprise" on the neglected works of the earlier fifteenth-century sculptors (ROB §1). In four places, the Michelangelo sentence among them, surprise is a quality or effect of art or nature. Leonardo seeks "to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises", the surprises of nature (LEO §17; see Curiosity); the Pleiad's grace of fancy has nearly all its pleasure "in the surprise at the happy and dexterous way in which a thing slight in itself is handled" (BEL §28); and Greek sculpture keeps passion low, "never winding up the features to one note of anger, or desire, or surprise" (WIN §38; see Law of restraint).

Set side by side, the places make a scale. Greek sculpture excludes surprise, because surprise is a passing state and the Greek ideal is repose (see Expectancy and reception). The Pleiad's grace of fancy has nearly all its pleasure in surprise, the light delight in a slight thing deftly turned. Michelangelo stands between: his art surprises, by its energy and strangeness, and pleases, by a sweetness recovered "touch by touch". The

Romantic doctrine that beauty needs strangeness, which Pater would put in a formula in his essay "Romanticism" (1876), later the Postscript to *Appreciations* (see Strangeness), is here held in balance with its classical opposite.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which surprise is a quality or effect of art or nature, in the order of the book; the ten uses, in nine paragraphs, in which persons are surprised (FRE §22; BOT §7; ROB §1; LEO §§12, 25, 33; GIO §22; BEL §9; WIN §5, twice there), and the "not surprising" of WIN §20, are not listed.

**MIC §1** True works of art must excite or surprise us; the true type of the Michelangelesque is pleasure with surprise.

**LEO §17** Leonardo seeks to satisfy a boundless curiosity by nature's perpetual surprises.

**BEL §28** Nearly all the pleasure of the Pleiad's grace of fancy is in the surprise at the dexterous handling of a slight thing.

**WIN §38** Greek sculpture never winds up the features to one note of anger, or desire, or surprise.

## See also

Blossoming of the aloe; Curiosity; Energy of conception; Expectancy and reception; Law of restraint; Michelangelesque; Pleasure; Repose; Strangeness.

# Power and sweetness

*Strength joined to gentleness: the Michelangelesque formula found in his predecessors · The Renaissance*

*power and sweetness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Power is strength and force; sweetness is what pleases and softens. The pair names a strength that does not lose its charm.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "One longs to penetrate into the lives of the men who have given expression to so much power and sweetness" (ROB §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** ROB §1, with MIC §§1, 17.

## Meaning

The pairing is ancient: Samson's riddle of the honey in the lion's carcass, out of the strong came forth sweetness (Judges 14:14), joined the two qualities as a paradox. In Pater the pair is a critical formula. It names an art in which force and grace are held in one work, neither weakening the other.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the first paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "One longs to penetrate into the lives of the men who have given expression to so much power and sweetness" (ROB §1). The longing is disappointed in the next sentence, for their histories are lost (see Austere dignity), but the phrase has already said what the essay will find in their work.

It is the formula of the Michelangelo essay, applied to the men who came before him. There "the true type of the Michelangelesque" is "sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1), and few have understood Michelangelo's sweetness, people being "for the most part" attracted or repelled by the strength (MIC §2). The sweetness was found at last in old age, "Out of the strong came forth sweetness" (MIC §16; see Sweetness), and the "interfusion of sweetness and strength" lacking in his followers "is found in many of those who worked before him" (MIC §21; see Strength). The Michelangelo essay says where: he must be approached "through his predecessors", "through the work of the sculptors of the fifteenth century over the tombs and altars of Tuscany" (MIC §17; see Savour). Michelangelo came "through an accident" to study those works of the early Italian sculptors which "suggested much of his own grandest work, and impressed it with so deep a sweetness" (MIC §7).

The della Robbia essay, written for the book of 1873 after the Michelangelo essay had appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1871,[130] thus gives the formula its origin. The "power and sweetness" of the sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century is the source of the Michelangelesque, and the essay's argument shows how they achieved it. The power is the intensity of their expression, which "might otherwise have stiffened into caricature"; the sweetness is the "repose", the "subdued sabbatic joy" of their tombs (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait; Sabbatic joy). Their system of low relief and convention joins the two (see Conventionalism; Low relief).

The phrase can be read as the book's twofold measure of greatness. Sweetness alone is the languid charm of the beginnings and the decadence (see Sweetness); strength alone is the force that breaks through comely form. The art Pater sets highest has both, and he finds it, before Michelangelo, in the quiet workshops of Florence.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which sweetness is paired with power or strength, in the order of the book.

**FRE §1** In the poetry of Provence the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness.

**FRE §19** The Renaissance has not only the sweetness of the classical world but also a curious strength.

[130] Walter Pater, "The Poetry of Michelangelo", *Fortnightly Review*, November 1871; "Luca della Robbia" first appeared in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (London, 1873).

**ROB §1** One longs to know the lives of the men who expressed so much power and sweetness.

**MIC §1** The true type of the Michelangelesque is sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise.

**MIC §2** People have been attracted or repelled by Michelangelo's strength, while few have understood his sweetness.

**MIC §9** In Michelangelo's art we find resources of sweetness within its exceeding strength.

**MIC §16** In old age, out of the strong came forth sweetness.

**MIC §17** Michelangelo's disciples love his strength only and seem not to feel his grave and temperate sweetness.

**MIC §21** The interfusion of sweetness and strength is found in many who worked before Michelangelo.

## See also

Austere dignity; Conventionalism; Low relief; Sabbatic joy; Savour; Sepulchral portrait; Strength; Sweetness.

# Quaintness

*The charm of the curious and old-fashioned, which the medieval energy leaves even in graceful work · The Renaissance*

*quaintness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of being quaint: oddly and pleasingly curious, with a flavour of the old-fashioned.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Medieval art's convulsive energy is felt, "even in its most graceful products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque" (MIC §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §2, with BOT §8.

## Meaning

"Quaint" comes through the Old French *cointe* from the Latin *cognitus*, known, and in Middle English meant clever, skilfully made, even cunning; only later did it come to mean curious, unusual, and then charmingly old-fashioned (see Quaint conceit). The noun keeps something of each stage. A quaint thing is made with odd ingenuity, and its oddness pleases.

## Use in the book

The noun occurs in two essays. In the Botticelli essay it names the first impression of the Birth of Venus: "At first, perhaps, you are attracted only by a quaintness of design, which seems to recall all at once whatever you

have read of Florence in the fifteenth century; afterwards you may think that this quaintness must be incongruous with the subject, and that the colour is cadaverous or at least cold" (BOT §8; see Quaint conceit). The paragraph had described the "quaint conceit of daisies" powdered over the draperies "in the Gothic manner" (BOT §8). Quaintness is the period charm of the picture, its Florentine oddity. It attracts "at first", and then seems "incongruous"; and yet, Pater goes on, the better one understands imaginative colouring, the better one will like the picture, and its quaint design proves "a more direct inlet into the Greek temper than the works of the Greeks themselves even of the finest period" (BOT §8). The quaintness that seemed to stand between the picture and its subject turns out to be the way in.

In the Michelangelo essay the word joins the grotesque as the mark of medieval energy in its mildest form: that energy is felt, "even in its most graceful products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque" (MIC §2; see Convulsive energy; Grotesque). The scale runs from the monstrous to the quaint. The same force that makes the gargoyle makes, when it is subdued, the curious turn of a line in a graceful carving, and that turn is quaintness.

The two uses agree on the word's place. Quaintness is medieval, Gothic, a flavour of the past, the sign by which one recognises the middle age in a work. In the Michelangelo essay it is the old energy at its gentlest; in the Botticelli essay it is the surface through which the picture is first seen, and the surface proves no barrier, since through the quaint medieval design the Greek spirit is felt more directly than in the Greeks' own work.

The word can be read against the fashion of Pater's own time. The taste of the 1860s and 1870s for the medieval and the early Italian, in the Pre-Raphaelites and their circle, prized exactly this quaintness. Pater uses it with reserve. He grants the charm, and then, as in the Botticelli essay, asks what lies beneath: the sentiment, the "sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition" (BOT §9), which the quaint surface carries.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "quaintness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §8** At first one is attracted by a quaintness of design in Botticelli's Venus; afterwards it may seem incongruous with the subject.

**MIC §2** Medieval energy is felt, even in its most graceful products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque.

## See also

Convulsive energy; Grotesque; Quaint conceit.

## Quality

*quality*

Attested: *quality* (CON §6; C73 §7); *qualities* (PRE §§1, 2, 6, 7); "quality" or "qualities" in 31 further paragraphs. A quality is the "what-sort" of a thing, the Latin *qualitas*, Cicero's coinage (see Peculiar quality of pleasure). The book's first sentence of method uses it: "Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative" (PRE §1; see Relative). From there the essays speak of the "peculiar quality of pleasure" that each work gives (BOT §§1, 10; see Peculiar quality of pleasure), of a "poetical quality" or "pictorial quality" proper to each art (GIO §§1, 2; see Poetical quality; Pictorial quality). The Conclusion's last sentence moves the word from the work to the time in which it is known: art comes "proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass" (CON §6; see Art for its own sake). Quality here is the opposite of quantity. The paragraph has just asked that we get "as many pulsations as possible into the given time" (CON §6; see Pulsation), and the last sentence can be read as adding quality to number: what art gives is not only more moments but better ones. The word ends the book in the sense in which the Preface began it, the kind of thing a thing is to the one who has it.

### See also

Art for its own sake; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Pictorial quality; Poetical quality; Pulsation; Relative.

## Recherché

*recherché*

Attested: *recherché* (LEO §18). The French *recherché*, the past participle of *rechercher*, to seek out with care, means choice, rare, refined, and in English often too studied. The note at LEO §18 renders it "Rare and carefully sought out" and says that "In this description of landscape, recherché suggests an effect deliberately sought out for its rarity or refinement". Pater pairs it with "bizarre": "In him first appears the taste for what is bizarre or recherché in landscape" (LEO §18; see Bizarre). The two words divide the effect. Bizarre is the look of the thing, its strangeness; recherché is the way it was found, by search. The paragraph insists on the second. The landscape is of "places far withdrawn", its hours "selected from a thousand" (LEO §18; see Finesse), and its first sentence has made the search a principle: Leonardo "preferred always the more to the less remote" (LEO §18; see Mixed lights). The word's English edge, of something over-sought, is not in Pater's use; for him the recherché is the patient choice of a fastidious eye.

## See also

Bizarre; Finesse; Mixed lights; Remote beauty.

## Recoil

*recoil*

Attested: *recoil* (CON §2; C73 §2). To recoil is to spring back, from the Old French *reculer*, to go back, from *cul*, the backside: the word was used of an army's retreat long before it was used of a gun's kick. The Conclusion gives the body's experience that first instances its argument: "Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat" (CON §2). The scene can be read as a bather's plunge into cold water on a hot day, and the recoil is the body's start at the shock, felt as pleasure. Pater chooses a sensation that is itself a change, the meeting of heat and cold, and that lasts only while it changes; the next sentence asks what the physical life is in that moment but "a combination of natural elements" (CON §2; see Natural elements). The edition's note says that the experience first supplies an example for scientific analysis "and then furnishes a metaphor for the movement of consciousness". The water returns in the next paragraph as the stream of the mind, with its race in mid-stream (CON §3; see Mid-stream), and the Giorgione essay had found in its school's pictures the same summer water, the "presence of water", "as characteristic, and almost as suggestive, as that of music itself" (GIO §23; see Presence of water). The word can be read as the Conclusion's first pleasure, chosen because it is one that cannot be held.

## See also

Interval; Mid-stream; Natural elements; Physical life; Presence of water.

## Refined and graceful mystery

*The mystery in which Leonardo's genius tends to lose itself: not an obscurity of thought but a grace of effect · The Renaissance*

*refined and graceful mystery*; *subdued and graceful mystery*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A mystery made fine and pleasing: something withheld that charms rather than baffles.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Trenchant words "would have been out of keeping with a genius of which one characteristic is the tendency to lose itself in a refined and graceful mystery" (LEO §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §2, with LEO §§21, 30.

## Meaning

"Mystery" comes from the Greek *mystērion*, a secret rite into which one is initiated, and so a thing hidden from the uninitiated (see Mystery). Pater's adjectives change its nature. "Refined" is purified, brought to fineness, as metal is refined; "graceful" is pleasing, the quality that charms without effort (see Abstract grace); "subdued" is softened, kept low. A refined and graceful mystery is not a puzzle or a doctrine. It is a quality of effect, the sense that something is withheld, made beautiful in itself.

## Use in the book

Pater first uses the phrase as evidence in an argument. Vasari's first edition made Leonardo a bold speculator who set philosophy above Christianity (LEO §2; see Bold speculator). Pater answers: "Words of his, trenchant enough to justify this impression, are not recorded, and would have been out of keeping with a genius of which one characteristic is the tendency to lose itself in a refined and graceful mystery" (LEO §2). The argument sets "trenchant", cutting, sharp, against "mystery". A genius that loses itself in mystery does not make sharp declarations, and so the charge of unbelief rests on nothing he said. The phrase becomes evidence of character.

The same paragraph turns from the man to the work, where it is by "a certain mystery" that he "fascinates, or perhaps half repels" (LEO §2; see Fascination). The phrase then returns twice in a changed form. At the moment of *bien-être*, well-being, "a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery" (LEO §21; see Bien-être; Mysticism). And of La Gioconda, "no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery" (LEO §30; see Crude symbolism). The three uses can be read as a sequence. In the second paragraph the refined mystery is a tendency of the man; in the twenty-first it is what his art makes, and "refined" has become a verb, the action that turns mysticism into mystery; in the thirtieth it is the effect of the masterpiece, protected by the absence of any crude sign.

"Graceful" keeps the mystery on the side of pleasure. The mystery Pater values belongs to a painting that "pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul", and its opposite is twofold: the "cloudy" mysticism that the eye cannot take, and the "crude symbolism" that tells the eye too plainly. The phrase can be taken as the essay's account of its own method as well as Leonardo's. Pater does not explain the mystery; he describes it, and his best-known paragraph is a description of a face whose meaning stays withheld.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "graceful mystery" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §2** Leonardo's genius tends to lose itself in a refined and graceful mystery.

**LEO §21** In the moment of bien-être a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery.

**LEO §30** No crude symbolism disturbs the effect of La Gioconda's subdued and graceful mystery.

## See also

Abstract grace; Bien-être; Bold speculator; Crude symbolism; Fascination; Mystery; Mysticism; Suggestiveness.

## Relish

*relish*

Attested: *relish* (BEL §28). A relish is a taste, especially a lingering one, an aftertaste, and so a liking; the word came into English from the Old French *reles*, what is left behind. Pater uses it in the essay's last sentence, where the transfigured thing vanishes "but it leaves a relish behind it, a longing that the accident may happen again" (BEL §28; see Pure effect). The old sense is exact. A relish is what remains when the thing is gone, and Pater's phrase "leaves a relish behind it" says twice what the word says once. The relish is set in apposition with "a longing", and the two can be read as the two sides of the after-effect: a taste remembered, and a wish for its return.

## See also

Accident; Pure effect; Winnowing-fan.

## Remote beauty

*The beauty that lies as far beyond the acknowledged types as these lie beyond common forms, found by Leonardo in chance faces · The Renaissance*

*remote beauty*; *remote*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A beauty far removed from the ordinary, reached only by long and careful search.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Some of Leonardo's sketches of chance people "are full of a curious beauty, that remote beauty which may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully; who, starting with acknowledged types of beauty, have refined as far upon these, as these refine upon the world of common forms" (LEO §11).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §11.

## Meaning

"Remote" is the Latin *remotus*, moved back, withdrawn, from *removere*. Pater's definition of remote beauty is a proportion. Common forms stand to the acknowledged types of beauty as the acknowledged types stand to remote beauty: the second step of refinement is as long as the first. The acknowledged types are the beauty that tradition and the academies agree on, the ideal that art has already drawn out of nature. Remote beauty begins where they end.

The proportion can be set beside the doctrine of ideal beauty that Pater's readers knew from Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose third Discourse (1770) told the painter to correct nature by herself, rising from the many imperfect individuals of a kind to the central form they share.[131] Reynolds's ideal is the first step of the proportion. Pater asks for the second, and the second leads away from the centre. Where Reynolds's painter rises above "singular forms" toward what all have in common, Pater's searcher refines upon the ideal itself until he reaches what almost no one shares.

## Use in the book

Pater finds remote beauty in the street, in Leonardo's habit of following strangers. As if catching glimpses of the image of beauty mingled with terror that had fixed itself in his mind, he would follow people with strange eyes or hair "about the streets of Florence till the sun went down" (LEO §11; see Interfusion of beauty and terror), and "many sketches of his remain". "Some of these are full of a curious beauty, that remote beauty which may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully" (LEO §11). The paradox is that the remote is found in the street. It is not a far country or an ideal lady but a quality in chance faces, and it is remote because only the eye that has passed through the acknowledged types can see it there. "Apprehended" is a careful word: the beauty is caught, as one apprehends a fugitive, and "sought it carefully" makes the finding the end of a chase. The next sentence darkens it with "an element of mockery" (LEO §11; see Mockery). The search that finds remote beauty finds caricature in the same faces.

The Botticelli essay had praised a beauty that ignores the acknowledged types: his Madonnas, "conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty", yet "attract you more and more" (BOT §7; see Beauty). Leonardo's remote beauty differs in its road. Botticelli's Madonnas stand outside the types; Leonardo's chance faces are reached through them and beyond them. The method of this paragraph recurs a few pages later, when Leonardo "preferred always the more to the less remote" in his study of nature (LEO

[131] Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, Discourse III (delivered 1770).

§18; see Mixed lights; Recherché), and the landscape he paints is "of places far withdrawn" (LEO §18).

Elsewhere "remote" carries the book's sense of the past. To most of us "the antique world, in spite of its intense outlines, its own perfect self-expression, still remains faint and remote" (WIN §4; see Expression); Winckelmann, "remote in time and place, ... feels after the Hellenic world" (WIN §22); and the great works of later ages take "the reflexion of a strange light", whose source is "in a stage of society remote from ours" (WIN §23). Poetry's resources include "language in its most purged form, its remote associations and suggestions, its double and treble lights" (WIN §37). The allegorists of the Pico essay go below the surface to bring up "the supposed secondary, or still more remote meaning" (PIC §4; see In recessu divinius aliquid). Across these uses the remote is a term of value as well as of distance. What is near and common is not yet seen; what is far, in time, in meaning or in refinement, is where Pater's beauty lives, and it is reached by the same patient search that found it in the faces of Florence.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "remote" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** In Heine's tale the gods sought entertainment in remote hiding-places when the monks pursued them.

**PIC §4** The allegorists bring up the supposed secondary, or still more remote, meaning.

**LEO §11** Leonardo's sketches of chance people have that remote beauty apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully.

**LEO §18** Leonardo preferred always the more to the less remote.

**BEL §14** Ronsard's poetry is full of quaint, remote learning.

**WIN §4** The antique world still remains faint and remote to most of us.

**WIN §22** Winckelmann, remote in time and place, feels after the Hellenic world.

**WIN §23** The supreme works of later ages reflect a strange light from a stage of society remote from ours.

**WIN §37** Poetry uses language with its remote associations and suggestions.

**CON §2** The elements of the body are found in places most remote from it.

**C73 §2** The 1873 text of the same sentence.

## See also

Beauty; Common forms; Expression; In recessu divinius aliquid; Interfusion of beauty and terror; Mixed lights; Mockery; Recherché; Strangeness.

*The stillness at the centre of Greek sculpture, and what modern art can keep of it · The Renaissance*

*repose*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Rest, quiet, freedom from agitation; in the language of painting, a calm harmony that lets the eye rest.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "*Heiterkeit*—blitheness or repose, and *Allgemeinheit*—generality or breadth, are, then, the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal" (WIN §35).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §35 says that "his Hellenic ideal has both liveliness and repose".

**A place to read.** ROB §11, with WIN §§34–35, 38.

## Meaning

The French *repos*, rest, comes from the Latin *pausare*, to cease, by way of *repausare*. Repose is the rest of the body and of the dead (in Latin, *requies*), and it became a word of art criticism for the quiet that a picture or statue gives. Winckelmann made the quality the mark of Greek art: its masterpieces have a noble simplicity and a still greatness, in the attitude as in the expression, and as the depth of the sea stays calm however its surface rages, so the expression of Greek figures shows, in every passion, a great and settled soul.[132] Pater's "repose" carries this inheritance.

## Use in the book

The word belongs chiefly to the Winckelmann essay, where it renders one half of the Hellenic ideal. Sculpture "unveils man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics" (WIN §34); *Heiterkeit*, "blitheness or repose", is with *Allgemeinheit* the supreme characteristic of the Hellenic ideal (WIN §35; see Heiterkeit); under the law of restraint passion plays over the surface of the Hellenic form, which loses "nothing of its central impassivity, its depth and repose" (WIN §38; see Impassivity; Play of life). Winckelmann compares the delicate transitions of a youthful body to "a quiet sea, which, although we understand it to be in motion, we nevertheless regard as an image of repose" (WIN §40). Repose in these passages is not stillness but a depth beneath movement, the sea's calm under its surface.

The essay then counts the cost. The "colourless abstraction" of the divine forms, "the secret of their repose", is also a premonition of medieval pallor (WIN §45; see Abstraction). Repose bought by abstraction, Pater says, has already "a touch of the corpse in it" (WIN §45; see Impassivity). At

[132] Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (Dresden, 1755), on the Laocoön.

the end the word becomes the modern problem: "the problem of unity with ourselves, in blitheness and repose, is far harder than it was for the Greek" (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self), and the essay's last paragraph finds examples of modern art "reflecting upon" modern life "blitheness and repose" in the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo (WIN §53).

The della Robbia essay answers the problem in sculpture before the Winckelmann essay poses it. The Tuscan tombs are "inexhaustible in suggestions of repose, of a subdued sabbatic joy" (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait; Sabbatic joy), and the sculptors "unite" these "elements of tranquillity, of repose" to "an intense and individual expression" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism). That union is what the Greek system could not make, since its system of abstraction involved "to a certain degree the sacrifice of what we call expression" (ROB §9; see Abstraction). The twelfth paragraph gives the word a homely use: Luca's coloured terracotta is "full of coolness and repose for hand and eye" (ROB §12; see Terra cotta).

The remaining use is the oldest sense. In the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, after the death of Beatrice d'Este, Duchess of Milan, "mass was said a hundred times a day for her repose" (LEO §26). The rest of the dead and the rest of the statue touch in the Tuscan tombs, where the effigies have both.

Repose is, on this reading, the measure by which Pater judges his own age. Repose was easy for the Greek, who had little to reconcile; it is hard for the modern mind, "distracted by so many sorrows" (WIN §50). The della Robbia essay shows, on a small scale and in a humble material, that it can be had together with intense expression, and so holds out, between the lines, the hope the Winckelmann essay ends on.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "repose" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan tombs are inexhaustible in suggestions of repose; the sculptors unite repose to intense and individual expression.

**ROB §12** Luca's coloured terracotta is full of coolness and repose for hand and eye.

**LEO §26** In Santa Maria delle Grazie mass was said a hundred times a day for the repose of the Duchess Beatrice.

**WIN §34** Sculpture unveils man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics.

**WIN §35** Heiterkeit, blitheness or repose, is with Allgemeinheit the supreme characteristic of the Hellenic ideal.

**WIN §38** The Hellenic ideal lets passion play lightly over the surface, losing nothing of its depth and repose.

**WIN §40** Winckelmann compares the transitions of a youthful body to a quiet sea, an image of repose.

**WIN §45** Winckelmann's insight into the repose of sculpture seems to have involved limitation; the abstraction of the divine forms is the secret of their repose.

**WIN §47** The medieval spirit, by hastening the decline of art, had suffered the human mind to repose itself, to awake refreshed to the ancient forms.

**WIN §49** Repose, with breadth, centrality and blitheness, is a mark of Hellenic culture.

**WIN §50** For the modern world the problem of unity with ourselves, in blitheness and repose, is far harder.

**WIN §53** The romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo reflect upon modern life blitheness and repose.

## In this edition

The note at WIN §35 glosses *Heiterkeit* as "Serenity or blitheness", and says that "Pater's pair of English glosses is important: his Hellenic ideal has both liveliness and repose".

## See also

Abstraction; Blitheness; Conventionalism; Heiterkeit; Impassivity; Play of life; Reserve; Sabbatic joy; Sepulchral portrait; Terra cotta; Unity with one's self.

# Reserve

*Something kept back: in a life, in a face, in a motion · The Renaissance reserve, reserved*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What is kept back, held in store; in manner, a restraint that does not show all it feels.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the best Greek sculpture the forms are in motion, "but it is a motion ever kept in reserve, and very seldom committed to any definite action" (WIN §39).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §§38–39, with ROB §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *reservare* is to keep back, to save for later, and the oldest English senses are of things held in store, troops kept back from battle, a meaning held in reserve. From the seventeenth century the word came to

describe a manner: reserve is the habit of keeping one's feelings to oneself, a restraint that may be cold or may be dignified. Pater uses both senses, and in his account of sculpture the second grows out of the first.

## Use in the book

The plain sense of keeping in store comes first. Pico's allegorists bring up "that diviner signification held in reserve, *in recessu divinius aliquid*" (PIC §4; see In recessu divinius aliquid), and Winckelmann's choice of his own work involved "the renunciation of a crown reserved for others" (WIN §12).

The sense of manner begins in the della Robbia essay. The sculptors' histories are lost, and Pater makes the loss "part of the reserve, the austere dignity and simplicity of their existence" (ROB §1; see Austere dignity). The reserve of the lives answers the reserve of the art, low relief that refuses "all heaviness and emphasis" (ROB §4; see Refinements of shadow).

The Winckelmann essay joins the two senses in its account of the Greek gods. To "all but the highest culture", Pater writes, "the reserved faces of the gods" will seem insipid (WIN §38; see Higher culture). The faces are reserved because the law of Greek sculpture "keeps passion always below that degree of intensity at which it must necessarily be transitory" (WIN §38; see Law of restraint); and only a cultivated eye sees what they hold back. The next paragraph turns reserve into a principle of motion: "in the best Greek sculpture, the archaic immobility has been stirred, its forms are in motion; but it is a motion ever kept in reserve, and very seldom committed to any definite action" (WIN §39). The complex actions it permits are most often shown just finished, Apollo "just after the slaughter of the Python", Venus "with the apple of Paris already in her hand" (WIN §39). The motion is kept in store as troops are kept from battle, and the figure has the dignity of not spending itself.

Reserve may be the key to Pater's taste and to his prose. What he admires in the Tuscan relief, the Greek god and the sculptor's life is the same: a power felt and not expended, an expression that stops short of its climax. The reserved face can seem insipid; to "the highest culture" it is the fullest, because what it holds back is still present in it. The book's own manner is reserved in the same way, and its strongest feelings are kept, like the Greek motion, below the point of definite action.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "reserve" or "reserved" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §4** The reconcilers must bring up the supposed diviner signification held in reserve.

**ROB §1** It is part of the reserve and austere dignity of the earlier fifteenth-century sculptors' existence that their histories are lost.

**WIN §12** Winckelmann's choice involved the renunciation of a crown reserved for others.

**WIN §38** To all but the highest culture the reserved faces of the gods will have something of insipidity.

**WIN §39** In the best Greek sculpture motion is ever kept in reserve and seldom committed to definite action.

## See also

Austere dignity; Higher culture; Impassivity; In recessu divinius aliquid; Law of restraint; Refinements of shadow; Repose.

# Savour

*The taste of a work that belongs to its place and its line of descent · The Renaissance*

*savour*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Taste or flavour, especially a characteristic one; figuratively, the distinctive quality of a thing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Of Luca's earthenware: "no work is less imitable: like Tuscan wine, it loses its savour when moved from its birthplace" (ROB §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §2, with MIC §17.

## Meaning

The Latin *sapor*, taste, comes from *sapere*, which meant both to have a taste and to be wise, and gave *sapientia*, wisdom. "Savour" came into English through French with the sense of flavour, and the English Bible's salt that has lost its savour (Matthew 5:13) made the loss of savour an image of a thing that has lost what made it itself. Pater's two uses are both about losing or finding the taste of a work.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the second paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which describes Luca's glazed earthenware in its setting. "And no work is less imitable: like Tuscan wine, it loses its savour when moved from its birthplace, from the crumbling walls where it was first placed" (ROB §2). The comparison belongs to the Preface's language of virtues, in which works of art are valued "as we say, in speaking of a herb, a wine, a gem" (PRE §3; see Virtue). A wine has its savour from its soil; the earthenware has it from "the real air of a Tuscan town", from the cool streets and darkened

churches that its blue and white seems to belong to (ROB §2; see Earthenware).

The sentence makes two claims. "No work is less imitable" says that the effect cannot be copied, though the technique could be; "loses its savour when moved" says that the effect is not wholly in the object. The savour is a relation between the work and its place, and a museum, which keeps the object, cannot keep it. The claim is unusual in a book of essays on art that its readers would mostly know from galleries and engravings, and it can be read as a quiet protest against the collector's age, in which reliefs from Florentine walls were already travelling to the museums of the north.[133]

The second use is in the Michelangelo essay and concerns lineage rather than place. To distinguish "the peculiar savour of his work", one must approach Michelangelo through his predecessors, "the sculptors of the fifteenth century over the tombs and altars of Tuscany" (MIC §17; see Power and sweetness; Tradition of sentiment). Here the taste of a work is known by tasting what came before it, as a wine is known by its vineyard. The sculptors are the same in both passages, the della Robbia school and its contemporaries, and in both they are the source of a savour: Luca's work tastes of Tuscany, and Michelangelo's tastes of them.

So read, savour is Pater's figure for what the historical critic is after. The Preface asks under what conditions an impression "is experienced" (PRE §3); savour is the name for the part of an impression that depends on the conditions, on place and on descent. A critic who knew only the object would miss it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "savour" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §2** Like Tuscan wine, Luca's earthenware loses its savour when moved from its birthplace.

**MIC §17** The peculiar savour of Michelangelo's work is known through his predecessors, the Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century.

## See also

Earthenware; Local influences; Power and sweetness; Sepulchral portrait; Tradition of sentiment; Virtue.

# Sense of beauty

*The faculty that feels beauty, which Winckelmann found in a young friend and Pater in the romances of Victor Hugo · The Renaissance*

[133] The South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum) bought Luca della Robbia's glazed roundels of the Labours of the Months, from a study of the Medici palace, in 1861.

*sense of beauty*; *the sense of beauty*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The capacity to perceive beauty and be moved by it, thought of as a sense, like sight or hearing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann found in the young Friedrich von Berg "a soul created for nobleness, gifted with the sense of beauty" (WIN §16).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §14 says that Winckelmann addresses his essay "on the capacity to perceive beauty in art" to the young Friedrich Reinhold von Berg.

**A place to read.** WIN §§14–18, 23, 45.

## Meaning

To speak of a *sense* of beauty is to say that beauty is perceived, not reasoned out: that we feel it as we see colour. The Irish philosopher Francis Hutcheson had made the claim in 1725, calling the power of perceiving beauty an "internal sense".[134] Winckelmann's essay, which Pater quotes at length, puts the same idea into its title, *Abhandlung von der Fähigkeit der Empfindung des Schönen in der Kunst, und dem Unterrichte in derselben* (1763), "Treatise on the capacity for feeling the beautiful in art, and on instruction in it".[135] The title holds both halves of the question the essay asks. *Fähigkeit*, capacity, is given by nature; *Unterricht*, instruction, is given by teachers. The sense of beauty is inborn, and it must be taught.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes first in the essay's account of Winckelmann's friendships. "A letter on taste, addressed from Rome to a young nobleman, Friedrich von Berg, is the record of such a friendship" (WIN §14). The letter is the dedication of the treatise, and Pater quotes it at length. It begins with Pindar's excuse for a late ode (WIN §15; see ἰδέᾳ τε καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον), and then names its subject: "It is from yourself that the subject is taken" (WIN §16). The next sentence is Winckelmann's portrait of his friend: "Our intercourse has been short, too short both for you and me; but the first time I saw you, the affinity of our spirits was revealed to me: your culture proved that my hope was not groundless; and I found in a beautiful body a soul created for nobleness, gifted with the sense of beauty" (WIN §16; see Affinity). The order of the last clause is the order of Winckelmann's thought. He sees the body first, finds the soul in it, and crowns the soul with the sense of beauty, so that the essay's subject is a young man who is himself beautiful and can see beauty. The passage Pater calls "characteristic" (WIN

[134] Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (London, 1725), Treatise I, section 1, §10.

[135] Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Abhandlung von der Fähigkeit der Empfindung des Schönen in der Kunst, und dem Unterrichte in derselben* (Dresden, 1763).

§17) then sets out the conditions: an "impartial, vital, inborn instinct for beauty in art", which those moved only by the beauty of women seldom have, and which must be exercised in youth (WIN §18; see Beauty of art).

The twenty-third paragraph gives the sense a history. Besides the conditions of time and place, art has a standard of taste, maintained "in a purely intellectual tradition" (WIN §23; see Conscious tradition). It reaches the artist through the works of the generation before him, "which first excited, while they directed into a particular channel, his sense of beauty" (WIN §23; see Conscious tradition). The sense is no longer only inborn. Tradition wakes it and gives it its bed.

The last use carries it out of Greece. Winckelmann's conception of art excludes the bolder kind that deals with life, conflict and evil (WIN §45; see Grotesque), and Pater asks: "What would he have thought of Gilliatt, in Victor Hugo's Travailleurs de la Mer, or of the bleeding mouth of Fantine in the first part of Les Misérables, penetrated as those books are with a sense of beauty, as lively and transparent as that of a Greek?" (WIN §45). The question turns Winckelmann's own phrase against his limits. The sense of beauty that Winckelmann found in a beautiful youth Pater finds in Hugo's novels of a fisherman's ordeal and a prostitute's wound, and calls it as lively and transparent as a Greek's.

The three uses can be read as the essay's argument about beauty in small. The sense begins in nature and friendship, is formed by tradition, and in the end becomes free of its first objects. That freedom is the Preface's doctrine. The critic must remember "that beauty exists in many forms" (PRE §4; see Beauty), and needs above all "the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects" (PRE §4; see Temperament). Pater's own word for the sense is temperament: the Winckelmann essay shows the sense of beauty, and the book is written by one who has it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sense of beauty" occurs, with the paragraphs that introduce and quote Winckelmann's treatise on the capacity for feeling beauty in art, in the order of the book.

**WIN §14** A letter on taste, addressed from Rome to the young Friedrich von Berg, is the record of one of Winckelmann's friendships.

**WIN §15** Winckelmann excuses his delay in fulfilling his promise of an essay on the taste for beauty in works of art, in the words of Pindar.

**WIN §16** He found in a beautiful body a soul created for nobleness, gifted with the sense of beauty.

**WIN §17** Pater introduces a characteristic passage of the treatise.

**WIN §18** An impartial, vital, inborn instinct for beauty in art must be exercised and directed in youth.

**WIN §23** The works of the previous generation first excite, and direct into a particular channel, the artist's sense of beauty.

**WIN §45** Victor Hugo's romances are penetrated with a sense of beauty as lively and transparent as that of a Greek.

## Later readings

The Spanish-born American philosopher George Santayana called his first prose book *The Sense of Beauty* (1896), and defined beauty there as pleasure regarded as the quality of a thing, "pleasure objectified".[136] Santayana's sense, like Winckelmann's, is a power of feeling; but where Winckelmann's essay asks how it is educated, Santayana's asks what it is.

## See also

ἰδέᾳ τε καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον; Affinity; Beauty; Beauty of art; Conscious tradition; Grotesque; Temperament.

# Sensibility

*sensibility*; *sensibilities*

Attested: *sensibility* (WIN §18); *sensibilities* (MIC §16). Sensibility, from the Latin *sensibilis*, perceptible, is the capacity to feel, and in the eighteenth century it became a cult: the readiness to be moved, praised in novels and philosophy as the sign of a fine nature. Pater uses the word twice, in quotation and in his own voice, and both times of a fineness that the world does not match. Winckelmann's letter to Berg says that the beauty of art "demands a higher sensibility than the beauty of nature" (WIN §18; see Beauty of art). The sensibility the letter asks for is thus a trained one, more delicate than the response to living beauty, because its object gives no pain and must be awakened by culture. The Michelangelo essay shows the other side. In his old age Michelangelo lingers on, a revenant, "in a world too coarse to touch his faint sensibilities very closely" (MIC §16; see Revenant). Here sensibility has outlived its occasions: the man is too fine for the age, as the beauty of art is too fine for the untrained eye. The two places can be read as the two fortunes of the faculty the book most values, the one educated by art, the other left without a world fine enough to answer it.

## See also

Beauty of art; Revenant; Sense of beauty; Temperament.

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[136] George Santayana, *The Sense of Beauty: Being the Outlines of Aesthetic Theory* (New York, 1896), Part I, §11.

# Sensuous element

*The part of art that reaches the senses, which popular criticism treats as indifferent and Pater treats as almost everything · The Renaissance*

*sensuous element*, *sensuous elements*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What in a work of art is given to the senses: colour, form, sound, rhythm.

**In *The Renaissance*.** By the popular view of the arts as translations of one thought, "the sensuous element in art, and with it almost everything in art that is essentially artistic, is made a matter of indifference" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines "aesthetic" as "Pertaining to sense, perception, or the qualities felt in art."

**A place to read.** GIO §1; WIN §§32, 43.

## Meaning

"Sensuous" is what appeals to the senses, without the sexual or indulgent overtones of "sensual" (see Sensuousness). An element is a constituent, one of the parts from which a whole is made. The sensuous element of art is the part that the senses receive directly, as against the meaning that the mind draws from it.

## Use in the book

The phrase first appears in the Giorgione essay's opening argument, as what the popular error destroys. If the arts are only translations of "one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought", then "the sensuous element in art, and with it almost everything in art that is essentially artistic, is made a matter of indifference" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material). "Almost everything in art that is essentially artistic" is the claim. The sensuous element is not ornament on a meaning; it is where the art is.

The Winckelmann essay had made the same claim a decade earlier and given it a history. "All art has a sensuous element, colour, form, sound—in poetry a dexterous recalling of these, together with the profound, joyful sensuousness of motion, and each of them may be a medium for the ideal: it is partly accident which in any individual case makes the born artist, poet, or painter rather than sculptor" (WIN §32; see Development). The sentence includes poetry, whose sensuous element is "a dexterous recalling" of colour, form and sound, and the "joyful sensuousness of motion", the rhythm of verse. Every art has the element; the arts differ in which of its forms they use.

The last use asks what the element means for the artist's life. Winckelmann's serenity marks his handling of the sensuous side of Greek art: "With the sensuous element in Greek art he deals in the pagan manner;

and what is implied in that?" (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit). The answer sets two temperaments against each other. The spiritualist is glad to see "the escape of the sensuous elements from his conceptions", while "the artist steeps his thought again and again into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). Before the two, the paragraph sets the artist's own danger, with the English poet John Keats as its instance: "He may live, as Keats lived, a pure life; but his soul, like that of Plato's false astronomer, becomes more and more immersed in sense, until nothing which lacks the appeal to sense has interest for him" (WIN §43). The sensuous element is not neutral for the one who works in it; it draws him in. The popular critic of the Giorgione essay and the spiritualist of the Winckelmann essay can be read as making the same mistake from different motives: one thinks the sensuous element indifferent, the other is glad to see it go. Pater's artist, and his critic, keep it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sensuous element" or "sensuous elements" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** The popular view makes the sensuous element in art a matter of indifference.

**WIN §32** All art has a sensuous element, colour, form, sound, and each may be a medium for the ideal.

**WIN §43** Winckelmann deals with the sensuous element in Greek art in the pagan manner; the spiritualist watches the sensuous elements escape.

## See also

Development; Heiterkeit; Mode of handling; Sensuous material; Sensuousness; Spiritualise.

# Sensuousness

*The quality of art that addresses the senses: limited and naïve in early Florence, shameless and childlike in Greece, inevitable in the artistic life · The Renaissance*

*sensuousness*; *sensuously*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of appealing to the senses, without the moral charge of "sensuality".

**In *The Renaissance*.** "What he had attained so far had been the mastery of that earlier Florentine style, with its naïve and limited

sensuousness" (LEO §20). "Greek sensuousness, therefore, does not fever the conscience: it is shameless and childlike" (WIN §43).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §43 explains the words of Jonathan that follow "its inevitable sensuousness": they "supply Pater with a figure for the religious prohibition of even a small sensory pleasure".

**A place to read.** WIN §43.

## Meaning

The adjective "sensuous" appears to have been made by the poet John Milton, to escape the associations of "sensual"; his best-known use, in *Of Education* (1644), places poetry after rhetoric in the course of study, "or indeed rather precedent", as "less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate".[137] "Sensuousness" is the quality, the state of being addressed to the senses or of living in them. The word keeps Milton's distinction. Sensuality is the indulgence of appetite; sensuousness is the delight of eye and ear, and it can be innocent.

## Use in the book

The noun comes four times, and each time it measures an art or a people. In the Leonardo essay it measures the art he had mastered and was about to strain: "What he had attained so far had been the mastery of that earlier Florentine style, with its naïve and limited sensuousness" (LEO §20). "Naïve" and "limited" are not dismissals. The earlier style was content with the surface, and Leonardo's problem was "the transmutation of ideas into images" (LEO §20; see Transmutation of ideas into images): to make that narrow medium carry "divinations of a humanity too wide for it" (LEO §20; see Divination). The paragraph begins with the conflict between curiosity and "the desire of beauty", in which curiosity tended to take him too far below "that outside of things in which art really begins and ends" (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty). Sensuousness is the outside, and art begins and ends there.

In the Winckelmann essay the word becomes the centre of an argument about Greece and Christianity. "All art has a sensuous element, colour, form, sound—in poetry a dexterous recalling of these, together with the profound, joyful sensuousness of motion" (WIN §32; see Sensuous element). Then, in the paragraph on Winckelmann's handling of "the sensuous side of Greek art", the artist and the "spiritualist" are set against each other (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). The Greek could live in the senses without guilt, since the immersion was to him "religiously, at least, indifferent": "Greek sensuousness, therefore, does not fever the conscience: it is shameless and childlike" (WIN §43; see Animalism; Worship of the body). The Christian could not: "Christian asceticism, on the other hand,

[137] John Milton, *Of Reformation* (1641), book 1, the earliest known use of the adjective, and *Of Education* (1644).

discrediting the slightest touch of sense, has from time to time provoked into strong emphasis the contrast or antagonism to itself, of the artistic life, with its inevitable sensuousness" (WIN §43). Pater follows the sentence with words from the Bible, set off by dashes and without quotation marks: "I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and lo! I must die" (WIN §43). The words are Jonathan's, condemned to death for breaking an oath of his father's that he had not heard (1 Samuel 14:43). The artist's sensuousness is like the honey, a small sweetness that the ascetic law makes mortal.

"Inevitable" is the key. The artistic life cannot escape the senses, because the artist "steeps his thought again and again into the fire of colour" (WIN §43). What differs is the conscience that meets it: the Greek's, to which it is indifferent, and the Christian's, against which the artistic life has seemed hard to pursue "without something of conscious disavowal of a spiritual world", a disavowal that "imparts to genuine artistic interests a kind of intoxication" (WIN §43). Winckelmann is free of this, and handles the pagan marbles "with unsinged hands". Read beside the Leonardo essay, the word marks a scale. Florentine sensuousness was naïve and limited; Greek sensuousness was shameless and childlike; the sensuousness of the artistic life under Christian asceticism is inevitable and troubled. The adverb belongs to the same argument from the other side: the essential qualities of a picture "must first of all delight the sense, delight it as directly and sensuously as a fragment of Venetian glass" (GIO §2; see Sensuous material).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sensuousness" or "sensuously" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §20** Leonardo had mastered the earlier Florentine style with its naïve and limited sensuousness.

**GIO §2** The qualities of a picture must delight the sense as directly and sensuously as Venetian glass.

**WIN §32** All art has a sensuous element; in poetry, the profound, joyful sensuousness of motion.

**WIN §43** Greek sensuousness is shameless and childlike; Christian asceticism sets itself against the artistic life with its inevitable sensuousness.

## See also

Animalism; Desire of beauty; Divination; Sensuous element; Sensuous material; Spiritual; Spiritualise; Transmutation of ideas into images; Worship of the body.

# Sexless beauty

*The beauty of the Greek gods, with the least traces of sex: a beauty above desire, the counterpart of Leonardo's beauty between the sexes · The Renaissance*

*sexless beauty*; *sexless*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A beauty without the marks of either sex, or raised above them.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The statues of the gods, Pater writes, "had the least traces of sex" (WIN §42).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §23; WIN §§18, 40, 42.

## Meaning

*Sexless* is a plain word, without sex, used in Pater's day of plants, of neuter insects such as worker bees, and in reproach of persons. Pater uses it as praise. His sexless beauty is not the absence of a body but the body seen before or beyond the division that desire works in: the youthful god, in whom the marks of sex are present but not emphasised.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the forty-second paragraph, after Pater has said that Winckelmann nurtured his temperament "by friendships which kept him always in direct contact with the spirit of youth" (WIN §42; see Moral sexlessness). Then: "The beauty of the Greek statues was a sexless beauty: the statues of the gods had the least traces of sex" (WIN §42). The next sentence makes the description a judgement: there is in it "a moral sexlessness", "a kind of ineffectual wholeness of nature", with a beauty and significance of its own (WIN §42; see Moral sexlessness; Wholeness).

The rest of the essay supplies the reasons. Greek sculpture deals almost exclusively with youth, where the moulding of the body is "still as if suspended between growth and completion" (WIN §40; see Moral sexlessness), and the Berlin *adorante*, the praying youth in whom all its effects are united, is "characterless" so far as character means subjection to accident (WIN §40; see Accident). Sexlessness is the same thing seen from the side of desire. The youth of Greek sculpture has not yet entered the life in which the sexes divide, as he has not yet entered the life of accident; his purity of life is "the highest expression of the indifference which lies beyond all that is relative or partial" (WIN §40; see Relative). His beauty is not neutral, however. Winckelmann's letter to Berg has already said that the supreme beauty of Greek art "is rather male than female" (WIN §18; see

Beauty of art), and the essay's sexless beauty is that of the youth, whose sex is unemphasised rather than absent.

The phrase has its counterpart in the Leonardo essay, which describes a red-chalk drawing at the Louvre, "a face of doubtful sex", with "something voluptuous and full in the eyelids and the lips" (LEO §23; see Doubtful sex). The two faces can be read as opposite answers to one question (see Doubtful sex): the Greek is a beauty from which desire has been abstracted, the Leonardesque one into which it has passed.

The essay knows where the Greek answer leads. The abstraction of the divine forms, the secret of their repose, is also a premonition of medieval art's "fleshless, consumptive refinements" (WIN §45; see Abstraction), and that impassivity "has already a touch of the corpse in it" (WIN §45; see Impassivity). The sexless beauty is the highest beauty of the body and the first step toward the refusal of the body. Pater praises it in the forty-second paragraph and shows the price in the forty-fifth; the phrase can be read as holding both at once.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which "sexless" and "sexlessness" occur, with the paragraph on Leonardo's face of doubtful sex and those on the male beauty and the youth of Greek sculpture, in the order of the book.

**LEO §23** A drawing at the Louvre shows a face of doubtful sex, with something voluptuous and full in the eyelids and the lips.

**WIN §18** Winckelmann writes that the supreme beauty of Greek art is rather male than female.

**WIN §40** Greek sculpture deals almost exclusively with youth, whose bodily organs are still as if suspended between growth and completion.

**WIN §42** The beauty of the Greek statues was a sexless beauty; there is in it a moral sexlessness, a kind of ineffectual wholeness of nature.

## Later readings

Pater does not mention it, but Algernon Charles Swinburne had written a sequence of four sonnets on the sleeping Hermaphrodite of the Louvre, "Hermaphroditus", dated March 1863 and published in *Poems and Ballads* (1866).[138] Swinburne's figure can be read as the Leonardesque answer: a beauty of both sexes, troubled by desire it cannot satisfy. Pater's essay first appeared the next year, and its statues are of the other kind.

## See also

Abstraction; Accident; Beauty of art; Doubtful sex; Impassivity; Moral sexlessness; Relative; Wholeness.

[138] Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Hermaphroditus", in *Poems and Ballads* (London, 1866).

## Strange flowers

*strange flowers*; *strange flower*

Attested: *strange flower* (PIC §15); *strange flowers* (C73 §6). While all melts under our feet, says the Conclusion of 1873, we may well catch at "any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange flowers, and curious odours" (C73 §6; see Lifted horizon). The revised text has "grasp at" and "strange colours" (CON §5). In 1873 the middle term is a thing, the flower, itself a source of both dye and scent; the revision put a quality there, and the list can be read as moving a step from the garden toward the painter's palette. "Strange" is one of Pater's words of praise (see Strangeness), and the book's flowers are sometimes of that kind: to Leonardo there could be nothing poisonous "in the exotic flowers of sentiment which grew there" (LEO §15; see Exotic), and the anemone that grew from the sacred earth of Jerusalem mingled with the clay of the Campo Santo was "unlike any flower men had seen before": "Just such a strange flower was that mythology of the Italian Renaissance" (PIC §15; see Anemone). The strange flower can be read as the emblem of a beauty sought outside the common garden, held for a moment before it fades.

### See also

Anemone; Exotic; Lifted horizon; Strangeness.

## Strangeness

*The element of the unexpected that all true art must have, and that must be sweet as well · The Renaissance*

*strangeness*; *strange*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of being strange: unfamiliar, unexpected, other than the ordinary.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "A certain strangeness, something of the blossoming of the aloe, is indeed an element in all true works of art" (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §1, with WIN §51.

### Meaning

"Strange" comes through the Old French *estrange* from the Latin *extraneus*, from outside, foreign. The strange is first the foreign, the stranger at the gate, and then whatever is unfamiliar or hard to account for. Strangeness can repel or fascinate. Baudelaire, writing on the Exposition

universelle of 1855, held that "the beautiful is always strange" (*le beau est toujours bizarre*).[139]

## Use in the book

The noun's chief passage is the opening paragraph of the Michelangelo essay. Critics have spoken as if Michelangelo's genius were only "a wonderful strength, verging, as in the things of the imagination great strength always does, on what is singular or strange" (MIC §1; see Strength). Pater accepts the strangeness and makes it general, "an element in all true works of art", and then qualifies it: it "must be sweet also—a lovely strangeness" (MIC §1; see Blossoming of the aloe).

The paragraph makes three claims about strangeness. It comes from strength: "great strength always" verges on it. It is necessary: "that they shall excite or surprise us is indispensable". And it is not enough: it must be "sweet also". The last claim is the essay's own, and the whole of the Michelangelo essay can be read as its demonstration, the search for the sweetness that makes Michelangelo's strangeness lovely (see Pleasure with surprise; Sweetness and strength).

The adjective "strange" is one of the commonest in the book, and it is often a word of praise. The beauty of the Mona Lisa is "the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions" (LEO §31), and in Vasari's story of the painted shield the boy Leonardo works from lizards, glow-worms and "other strange small creatures which haunt an Italian vineyard" (LEO §12); the "strange new awe" of the modern cosmos (PIC §10), the light on Botticelli's Madonnas, cheerless as when snow lies on the ground and children look up at "the strange whiteness of the ceiling" (BOT §7), the tomb of the young cardinal, "the strangest and most beautiful thing in that strange and beautiful place" (MIC §19). In that last phrase strangeness and beauty stand together, the one never far from the other.

The noun returns once, at the end of the Winckelmann essay, where philosophy serves culture "by suggesting questions which help one to detect the passion, and strangeness, and dramatic contrasts of life" (WIN §51). There strangeness is a quality of life itself, which a cultivated mind learns to see, and the sentence can be read as extending the Michelangelo essay's claim from art to experience.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "strangeness" occurs, in the order of the book; the adjective "strange", which occurs in fifty-one paragraphs, and its other forms are not listed.

**MIC §1** A certain strangeness is an element in all true works of art, and it must be sweet also, a lovely strangeness.

[139] Charles Baudelaire, "Exposition universelle, 1855: Beaux-arts", section I.

**WIN §51** Philosophy helps one to detect the passion, and strangeness, and dramatic contrasts of life.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater gave the doctrine its formula three years after the book first appeared, in an essay on romanticism printed in 1876 and reprinted as the Postscript to *Appreciations* (1889): "It is the addition of strangeness to beauty, that constitutes the romantic character in art", and the addition of curiosity to the desire of beauty, he went on, constitutes the romantic temper.[140] The Michelangelo essay holds the same elements in a different order. Strangeness there is not added to beauty; it is in all true art, and the question is whether it is also lovely.

## See also

Blossoming of the aloe; Pleasure with surprise; Strength; Sweetness and strength.

# Strength

*The power of the middle age, the partner of sweetness · The Renaissance strength*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Strength is force, power and firmness; in art, the energy and weight of conception, as against grace or charm.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness" at the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth (FRE §1). The Renaissance "has not only the sweetness which it derives from the classical world, but also that curious strength of which there are great resources in the true middle age", and Amis and Amile illustrates "the early strength of the Renaissance" (FRE §19). The essay on Michelangelo makes "sweetness and strength" the true type of his art (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §1 explains *ex forti dulcedo*, "Sweetness out of strength", as an adaptation of Samson's riddle.

**A place to read.** FRE §19, with MIC §§1 and 16.

## Meaning

"Strength" is the Old English *strengthu*, from *strang*, strong. Pater uses it in a pair. Strength is the one term of a contrast whose other is sweetness, and the pair runs through the book as a way of describing the two sources of the Renaissance, the middle age and the classical world, and the two

[140] Walter Pater, "Postscript", *Appreciations* (1889), first printed as "Romanticism" in *Macmillan's Magazine*, November 1876.

qualities of its greatest art (see Sweetness). The pair has a biblical ancestor in Samson's riddle, which Pater gives in English and in Latin (MIC §§1, 16; see Ex forti dulcedo).

## Use in the book

The first essay assigns strength to the middle age. In pointed architecture, romantic love and the poetry of Provence, "the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness" (FRE §1; see Sweetness). "Rude" is not dismissive: the strength is raw material, and the late twelfth century refines it. Pater names the quality of the tale before he tells the healing of Amis, "it is in what follows that the curious strength of the piece shows itself" (FRE §11), and again after it: "There, as I said, is the strength of the old French story. For the Renaissance has not only the sweetness which it derives from the classical world, but also that curious strength of which there are great resources in the true middle age. And as I have illustrated the early strength of the Renaissance by the story of Amis and Amile, a story which comes from the North, in which a certain racy Teutonic flavour is perceptible, so I shall illustrate that other element, its early sweetness, a languid excess of sweetness even, by another story" (FRE §19; see Racy). Strength, on this account, is northern and medieval, and its image can be read in the father who slays his children to keep faith (FRE §§15–16; see Comradeship).

The essay on Michelangelo turns the pair into a theory of art. "Critics of Michelangelo have sometimes spoken as if the only characteristic of his genius were a wonderful strength, verging, as in the things of the imagination great strength always does, on what is singular or strange"; but the strangeness must be sweet also, and "to the true admirers of Michelangelo this is the true type of the Michelangelesque—sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1; see Energy of conception). In Victor Hugo, "as in Michelangelo, people have for the most part been attracted or repelled by the strength, while few have understood his sweetness" (MIC §2). His life shows "the strength, often turning to bitterness" (MIC §8), yet "just as in the products of his art we find resources of sweetness within their exceeding strength, so in his own story also" there are gentler pages (MIC §9). His followers "are in love with his strength only" (MIC §17), and "That strange interfusion of sweetness and strength is not to be found in those who claimed to be his followers" (MIC §21).

The book can be read as preferring neither term. Strength alone verges on the strange and turns to bitterness or theatricality; sweetness alone becomes the "languid excess" of Aucassin or the "premature agedness" of the Pleiad, Ronsard's school of poets (BEL §17; see Sweetness). The Renaissance at its height is the "interfusion" of the two, and the first essay shows them still apart, in two stories from the North and the South. The word is used in its plain sense elsewhere: Leonardo's "physical strength was

great" (LEO §14); there is "a fund of mere Gothic strength, or heaviness" below old French art (BEL §2); and the proper instinct of self-culture seeks in the forms of genius "its own strength" (WIN §51).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "strength" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §5** Wordsworth's sense of man's life as part of nature, drawing strength and colour from local influences.

**FRE §1** In pointed architecture, romantic love and Provençal poetry the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness.

**FRE §11** The curious strength of the story of Amis and Amile shows itself in what follows.

**FRE §19** The Renaissance has the sweetness of the classical world and the curious strength of the true middle age; Amis and Amile illustrates its early strength.

**MIC §1** Michelangelo's genius is not strength only; the true type of the Michelangelesque is sweetness and strength.

**MIC §2** In Hugo, as in Michelangelo, people are attracted or repelled by the strength; few understand the sweetness.

**MIC §3** Adam in the Creation has hardly strength enough to lift his finger.

**MIC §8** In Michelangelo's life the strength often turns to bitterness; even his tenderness is embittered by its strength.

**MIC §9** Within the exceeding strength of his works are resources of sweetness.

**MIC §13** A temperate space in his life saves its excessive strength from imperfection.

**MIC §17** His professed disciples love his strength only.

**MIC §21** The interfusion of sweetness and strength is found in those who worked before him, not in his followers.

**LEO §14** Leonardo's physical strength was great.

**BEL §2** Below old French art and poetry lies a fund of mere Gothic strength, or heaviness.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's friendships are more susceptible than others of equal strength of an intellectual culture.

**WIN §51** The instinct of self-culture seeks in the forms of genius its own strength.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §1 gives *ex forti dulcedo* in English, "Sweetness out of strength", and says that it "supplies the essay's governing paradox"; the note at MIC §8 hears a later line of Michelangelo's answer it (see Sweetness).

## See also

Comradeship; Energy of conception; Ex forti dulcedo; Racy; Sweetness.

### Suavity

*suavity*

Attested: *suavity* (MIC §12; GIO §8). Sweetness of manner or of effect, from the Latin *suavis*, sweet, a cousin of the English "sweet" itself. In the Michelangelo essay the word describes the friendship with Vittoria Colonna: "It was just because Vittoria raised no great passion that the space in his life where she reigns has such peculiar suavity" (MIC §12; see Meditative sweetness). The suavity is the gentleness of a feeling that does not possess its object. In the Giorgione essay it belongs to the art of living: the principle that matter and form should be one holds good "of the furniture of our houses, and of dress, for instance, of life itself, of gesture and speech, and the details of daily intercourse; these also, for the wise, being susceptible of a suavity and charm, caught from the way in which they are done, which gives them a worth in themselves" (GIO §8). The two uses can be read together. Michelangelo's suavity is found in a charmed space of his life; Giorgione's is the quality the wise give to the whole of life, by doing everything with art. Both are the sweetness of form, not of passion.

## See also

Meditative sweetness.

### Subtle and curious grace

*The grace born of curiosity in union with the desire of beauty: finely woven, searching, and wrought with care · The Renaissance*

*subtle and curious grace*; *subtle*, *subtler*, *subtlest*, *subtlety*; *curious*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A grace that is fine-spun and carefully wrought, and that carries the inquisitiveness of the mind that made it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Curiosity and the desire of beauty are "the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius; curiosity often in conflict with the desire of beauty, but generating, in union with it, a type of subtle and curious grace" (LEO §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §16, with LEO §22.

## Meaning

Grace, the Latin *gratia*, is favour, and so the charm that seems given rather than earned, the ease that hides its effort (see Abstract grace). Pater's two adjectives pull against that ease. "Subtle", the Latin *subtilis*, finely woven, is the quality of a thread or a mind drawn thin (see Meditative subtlety). "Curious" keeps both of its Latin senses: *curiosus* is careful, taking pains, and so elaborately wrought, and it is also inquisitive, eager to know (see Curiosity). A subtle and curious grace is therefore a grace of effort: fine where ordinary grace is easy, searching where ordinary grace is content, and wrought with the care that ordinary grace conceals.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends a paragraph of a single sentence, that names the two forces of his genius and their relation (LEO §16; see Elementary forces). The forces are in conflict "often", and the essay will show the cost of conflict: curiosity alone is the German's case, who "with all that curious science ... would have thought nothing more was needed" (LEO §21), and it tends to take Leonardo too far below the outside of things (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty). In union they generate something, and what they generate is not a work but "a type": a kind of grace that recurs through the work and can be recognised.

The phrase joins the two forces in its two adjectives, and the essay's uses of "curious" and "subtle" can be read as the description of that grace in its parts. "Curious" is first the word of care and craft: Leonardo wastes days "in curious tricks of design" (LEO §10), paints flowers "with such curious felicity" that writers credit him with favourites (LEO §18), and is "so curious in observation, curious in invention" (LEO §19; see Sound its stops). It is also the word of strangeness: his sketches of chance people are "full of a curious beauty, that remote beauty" (LEO §11; see Remote beauty), his harp is shaped "in some curious likeness to a horse's skull" (LEO §14), and to those around him he seemed a magician "possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge" (LEO §13). "Subtle" belongs to the finest operations of nature and of art: the art of "tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats" (LEO §10), "the subtler forces of nature" and the "subtlety of operation" that makes matter spiritual (LEO §23; see Spiritual), the train of sentiment "subtle and vague as a piece of music" (LEO §25), and the "subtle expression" that, by the legend, mimes and flute-players kept on La Gioconda's face (LEO §30; see Portraiture).

The essay shows the grace before it analyses it, in the drawings. "This curious beauty is seen above all in his drawings, and in these chiefly in the abstract grace of the bounding lines" (LEO §22; see Abstract grace), and the examples it lists are of the curious kind: the contour of a young man's hair, the poise of a slave's arm above his head (see Poise), the curves of a child's head "following the little skull within, thin and fine as some sea-shell worn

by the wind" (LEO §22). Each is grace found by inquiry. The draughtsman who follows the skull under the skin is curious in the anatomist's way, and the line that results is subtle in the weaver's way, "thin and fine". The grace is the trace of the search.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Leonardo essay in which "subtle", "subtler", "subtlest", "subtlety" or "curious" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §10** Leonardo learned to track expression to its subtlest retreats, and wasted days in curious tricks of design.

**LEO §11** His sketches of chance people are full of a curious beauty.

**LEO §13** To his contemporaries he seemed a magician possessed of curious secrets.

**LEO §14** His harp of silver was shaped in some curious likeness to a horse's skull.

**LEO §16** Curiosity and the desire of beauty generate a type of subtle and curious grace.

**LEO §18** He paints flowers with curious felicity.

**LEO §19** To sound a character's stops suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention.

**LEO §21** The German would have thought that curious science was enough.

**LEO §22** This curious beauty is seen above all in the abstract grace of his drawings.

**LEO §23** His faces make one aware of the subtler forces of nature and the subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual.

**LEO §25** The ostensible subject starts a train of sentiment subtle and vague as a piece of music.

**LEO §30** By the legend, mimes and flute-players protracted the subtle expression on La Gioconda's face.

## Elsewhere in Pater

The two forces return in the essay first printed as "Romanticism" (1876) and reprinted as the Postscript to *Appreciations* (1889), where the addition of curiosity to the desire of beauty constitutes the romantic temper (see Strangeness). The grace of the Leonardo essay can be read as that temper's first portrait.

## See also

Abstract grace; Curiosity; Desire of beauty; Elementary forces; Meditative subtlety; Poise; Portraiture; Remote beauty; Sound its stops; Spiritual; Strangeness.

*The grace of the classical world, and of the medieval Renaissance · The Renaissance*
*sweetness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sweetness is pleasantness to the taste, and by extension a gentle, delightful quality in art, sound, temper or manners.

**In *The Renaissance*.** At the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth "the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness; and the taste for sweetness generated there becomes the seed of the classical revival" (FRE §1). Aucassin and Nicolette illustrates the Renaissance's "early sweetness, a languid excess of sweetness even" (FRE §19). Michelangelo's sweetness is "found at last" in old age: "Out of the strong came forth sweetness, ex forti dulcedo" (MIC §16; see Ex forti dulcedo).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §1 reads *ex forti dulcedo* as the Michelangelo essay's "governing paradox".

**A place to read.** FRE §§1 and 19, with MIC §16.

## Meaning

"Sweetness", the Old English *swētnes*, is first a taste, then any quality that pleases the senses or the heart. In Pater's century the word had gained a critical edge. Matthew Arnold, in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), took "sweetness and light" from Swift's fable of the bee in *The Battle of the Books* as the two marks of culture, beauty and intelligence.[141] Pater's sweetness is nearer to beauty alone, and he pairs it not with light but with strength (see Strength).

## Use in the book

The word gives the first essay its history. "Here and there, under rare and happy conditions, in pointed architecture, in the doctrines of romantic love, in the poetry of Provence, the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness; and the taste for sweetness generated there becomes the seed of the classical revival in it, prompting it constantly to seek after the springs of perfect sweetness in the Hellenic world" (FRE §1; see Pointed architecture; Romantic love; Revival of classical antiquity; Hellenic world). The sentence makes sweetness the cause of the classical revival, not its result: the middle age acquired the taste first and then sought its source in Greece. The spirit

[141] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), chapter 1 (titled "Sweetness and Light" in later editions); Jonathan Swift, *The Battle of the Books* (1704), the fable of the spider and the bee.

that goes out from the Paris of Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher, has "its languid sweetness" among its marks (FRE §4).

The essay then divides the qualities between its two stories: the Renaissance has the sweetness of the classical world as well as the curious strength of the true middle age (FRE §19; see Strength), and Pater will illustrate "its early sweetness, a languid excess of sweetness even" by a story from the South (FRE §19). "Languid excess" is a judgement, and the reading of Aucassin and Nicolette bears it out: the tale has "a languid Eastern deliciousness" (FRE §24; see Overwrought delicacy), and its hero, sick with love, is carried "into the midst of his enemies" (FRE §31; see Malady of love).

In the Michelangelo essay sweetness becomes the hidden centre of strength. "This strangeness must be sweet also—a lovely strangeness", and "the true type of the Michelangelesque" is "sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise" (MIC §1). Few, Pater says of Victor Hugo as of Michelangelo, have understood the sweetness (MIC §2); Michelangelo's has its secret in "this penetrative suggestion of life" (MIC §5); his poems have "a calm and meditative sweetness" (MIC §12). In old age the sweetness "was found at last", and Pater gives it Samson's riddle, "Out of the strong came forth sweetness" (MIC §16; see Ex forti dulcedo); the sweetness of great art, on this reading, is not added to its strength but secreted by it.

At the other end of the scale stands the late French Renaissance, whose products have "that subtle and delicate sweetness which belongs to a refined and comely decadence" (PRE §6; see Decadence), and the school of Pierre de Ronsard, the Pleiad, with "the tranquil, temperate sweetness appropriate" to "a certain premature agedness" (BEL §17). The book's judgement can be read in these extremes: sweetness alone marks the Renaissance at its languid beginning and its decadent end, and its height is sweetness joined to strength (MIC §21; see Strength).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sweetness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The late French Renaissance has the subtle and delicate sweetness of a refined and comely decadence.

**FRE §1** The rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness; the taste for sweetness becomes the seed of the classical revival.

**FRE §4** The spirit going out from Abelard's Paris has its languid sweetness.

**FRE §19** The Renaissance has the sweetness of the classical world; *Aucassin and Nicolette* shows its early sweetness, a languid excess of sweetness even.

**PIC §5** Pico's life was translated by Thomas More for some touch of sweetness in it.

**ROB §1** The lives of the Italian sculptors of the early fifteenth century, who expressed so much power and sweetness, are little known.

**MIC §1** The true type of the Michelangelesque is sweetness and strength.

**MIC §2** In Hugo, as in Michelangelo, few understand the sweetness; Michelangelo's depends on no mere accessories.

**MIC §5** The secret of his sweetness is his penetrative suggestion of life.

**MIC §7** The early Italian sculptors impressed his work with deep sweetness.

**MIC §9** His works have resources of sweetness within their exceeding strength.

**MIC §12** The prevailing tone of his poems is a calm and meditative sweetness.

**MIC §16** In old age his sweetness was found at last: out of the strong came forth sweetness.

**MIC §17** His professed disciples seem not to feel his grave and temperate sweetness.

**MIC §21** The interfusion of sweetness and strength is not found in his followers.

**LEO §23** A drawing of a child has much sweetness in its dress and hair.

**BEL §15** The Pleiad wish to drain the last drops of sweetness from a note or accent.

**BEL §17** Ronsard's school has the tranquil, temperate sweetness of premature agedness.

**BEL §28** The sweetness of Du Bellay's winnower's song is not to be got at by crushing.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §1, on *ex forti dulcedo*, says that "Pater adapts the riddle of Samson, who finds honey in the carcass of a lion", and that the phrase "makes sweetness an effect of strength". The note at MIC §2 says that Pater turns to Victor Hugo "to distinguish sweetness added by an incident from the sweetness he finds within Michelangelo's figures", and the note at MIC §8 that a line of Michelangelo's on sweetness tasted as bitter answers "the sweetness drawn from strength at the beginning of the essay".

## See also

Decadence; Ex forti dulcedo; Hellenic world; Malady of love; Overwrought delicacy; Pointed architecture; Revival of classical antiquity; Romantic love; Strength.

# Sweetness and strength

*The interfusion of two qualities that is the true character of Michelangelo, found again in Blake and Victor Hugo · The Renaissance*

*sweetness and strength*; *interfusion of sweetness and strength*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sweetness is gentleness, charm, the quality that pleases; strength is force, energy, the quality that commands. Their interfusion is their union, each pervading the other.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "That strange interfusion of sweetness and strength is not to be found in those who claimed to be his followers" (MIC §21).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §§1, 21.

## Meaning

Sweetness and strength are the book's pair for the two sources and the two qualities of the Renaissance, the classical and the medieval, the gentle and the forceful (see Sweetness; Strength). The pair is old. Samson's riddle finds sweetness in the strong (see Ex forti dulcedo). Pater's phrase sets sweetness against strength, as two qualities that seem opposed and that great art unites.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens and closes the Michelangelo essay. At the start, "sweetness and strength" is the first term in the definition of the true Michelangelesque (MIC §1; see Michelangelesque). At the end, it is the quality the essay has been seeking, now defined and carried beyond Michelangelo: "It is so with the components of the true character of Michelangelo. That strange interfusion of sweetness and strength is not to be found in those who claimed to be his followers; but it is found in many of those who worked before him, and in many others down to our own time, in William Blake, for instance, and Victor Hugo, who, though not of his school, and unaware, are his true sons, and help us to understand him, as he in turn interprets and justifies them" (MIC §21).

"Interfusion" is the exact word. The two qualities are not set side by side, a sweet passage and a strong one, but poured into each other, so that each is in the other. That is why the essay could not find Michelangelo's sweetness

in “any mere accessories” (MIC §2; see Austere dignity), the butterfly on Hugo’s barricade: an accessory adds sweetness to strength from outside. Michelangelo’s is inside the strength, in “this penetrative suggestion of life” (MIC §5; see Suggestion of life).

The sentence then redraws the line of descent. The followers, who claimed his name, lack the interfusion; the predecessors, the Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century, had it (see Power and sweetness; Tradition of sentiment); and two later men, “not of his school, and unaware”, have it again. Blake, and Hugo, whom the second paragraph had already set beside Michelangelo for the strength people see in him (MIC §2), are “his true sons”. Kinship, on this account, is a matter of qualities, not of schools. The relation runs both ways: they “help us to understand him, as he in turn interprets and justifies them”. The old master is a standard by which the modern is placed (see Typical standards), and the modern a commentary by which the old master is understood.

The phrase belongs to the book’s larger pattern. The first essay speaks of the moment when “the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness” (FRE §1), and of an early Renaissance with “a languid excess of sweetness even” (FRE §19); the della Robbia essay finds in the Tuscan sculptors “power and sweetness” together (ROB §1; see Power and sweetness). The Michelangelo essay gives the pair its fullest form, and on this reading the book traces the interfusion from the Tuscan sculptors to its height in Michelangelo and its loss in his followers (see Theatricality).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “sweetness and strength” occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §1** The true type of the Michelangelesque is sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise.

**MIC §21** The interfusion of sweetness and strength is found not in Michelangelo’s followers but in his predecessors, and in Blake and Victor Hugo.

## See also

Austere dignity; Ex forti dulcedo; Michelangelesque; Power and sweetness; Strength; Suggestion of life; Sweetness; Theatricality; Tradition of sentiment; Typical standards.

# Tenuity

*tenuity*; *attenuated*; *attenuation*

Attested: *tenuity* (BEL §17); *attenuated* (BEL §1); *attenuation* (WIN §33). Tenuity is thinness, slenderness, from the Latin *tenuis*, thin, fine; in

English it can mean both delicacy and poverty. Pater uses it of the Pleiad's charm, "a certain tenuity and caducity, as for those who can bear nothing vehement or strong" (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise; Caducity). The pairing is pointed: tenuity is thinness of substance, caducity readiness to fall, and both are qualities of age. The essay's first paragraph had found the same thinness in Italian ornament, whose "somewhat attenuated grace" the new French phase of taste blended "with the general outlines of northern design" (BEL §1; see Gothic manner). The Winckelmann essay gives the word to the romantic arts, into which "with the utmost attenuation of detail, may be translated every delicacy of thought and feeling" (WIN §33). The three uses can be read as Pater's measure of refinement: a fineness that is a gain in the romantic arts and, in the Pleiad, a sign of exhaustion.

## See also

Caducity; Gothic manner; Renaissance in France; Une fadeur exquise.

## Texture

*texture*

Attested: *texture* (FRE §5; GIO §6; WIN §40; CON §3; C73 §3). Texture is the weave of a cloth, from the Latin *textura*, from *texere*, to weave, and so the feel of a surface to the touch and eye. The book uses it first of weaving and then of sense. Dante "seems to have inwoven into the texture of his work" whatever had impressed him (FRE §5); in a homely scene of actual landscape a momentary light, "this sudden inweaving of gold thread through the texture of the haystack, and the poplars, and the grass", gives the scene a character drawn from the deep places of the imagination (GIO §6; see Gold thread); on a Greek statue the drapery is withdrawn from attention, "its texture, as well as its colour, is lost" (WIN §40; see Drapery). In the Conclusion texture is one of the three things an object becomes when reflexion plays on it: "each object is loosed into a group of impressions —colour, odour, texture—in the mind of the observer" (CON §3; see Reflexion). The three are sight, smell and touch, and texture stands for the sense nearest to solidity, the one that seems to tell us most surely that something is there. In John Locke's account of perception "texture" had named the arrangement of a body's insensible parts, which causes the colours and smells we perceive.[142] Pater moves the word from the cause to the effect. The texture is no longer in the thing but in the mind of the observer, and the weave that held the object together has come undone (see Weaving and unweaving).

[142] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690), Book II, chapter 8, §§10, 23.

## See also

Drapery; Gold thread; Reflexion; Self-reflexion; Solidity; Weaving and unweaving.

### Tyranny of the senses

*the tyranny of the senses*; *tyranny*

Attested: *the tyranny of the senses* (WIN §43); *tyranny* (FRE §29). Pater sets the phrase in quotation marks and does not name its source. "It has been sometimes said that art is a means of escape from 'the tyranny of the senses.' It may be so for the spectator: he may find that the spectacle of supreme works of art takes from the life of the senses something of its turbid fever" (WIN §43). Pater does not mention it, but the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer had made aesthetic contemplation an escape, not from the senses, but from the will: a sabbath from the penal labour of willing.[143] Pater grants the escape to the spectator only. It is possible for him only because the artist "has gradually sunk his intellectual and spiritual ideas in sensuous form" (WIN §43; see Sensuous form). The artist goes the other way: he steeps his thought "into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). What frees the spectator from the senses is made by a man who has given himself to them. The only other tyranny in the book is Love's: Dante records how the tyranny of that "Lord of terrible aspect" became actually physical, blinding his senses (FRE §29; see Lord of terrible aspect). There the tyrant rules through the senses; in the Winckelmann essay the senses are the tyrant, and art the means of a partial release.

## See also

Lord of terrible aspect; Sensuous form; Spiritualise; Turbid medium.

### Une fadeur exquise

*The exquisite faintness of the Pleiad's charm, the sweetness of a school grown old before its time · The Renaissance*

*une fadeur exquise*; *an exquisite faintness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An exquisite faintness: a charm so subdued that it is close to insipid, and fine for that reason.

[143] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (Leipzig, 1819), vol. I, Book 3, §38.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Pleiad's charm comes "with an exquisite faintness, une fadeur exquise, a certain tenuity and caducity, as for those who can bear nothing vehement or strong" (BEL §17).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §17 renders the phrase "An exquisite faintness", and says: "The tension is deliberate. Fadeur can mean blandness or insipidity. Pater finds refinement in the faintness of the effect."

**A place to read.** BEL §17.

## Meaning

French *fadeur* is the quality of what is *fade*: flat, insipid, without savour, as an unsalted dish is; applied to style it is a fault, the tameness of the conventional. *Exquise*, exquisite, is a word of praise. The phrase joins them, and Pater's English, "an exquisite faintness", keeps the paradox while softening it: faintness is not quite insipidity, and it can be fine.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the seventeenth paragraph, where Pater accounts for the temper of the Pleiad. He begins with a fact of Ronsard's life: "Ronsard became deaf at sixteen; and it was this circumstance which finally determined him to be a man of letters instead of a diplomatist, significantly, one might fancy, of a certain premature agedness, and of the tranquil, temperate sweetness appropriate to that, in the school of poetry which he founded" (BEL §17; see Sweetness). The deafness is made a sign, "one might fancy", and the school is given the qualities of age before its time.

The next sentence describes the charm of such a school, and it is one of the essay's most careful. "Its charm is that of a thing not vigorous or original, but full of the grace which comes of long study and reiterated refinements, and many steps repeated, and many angles worn down, with an exquisite faintness, une fadeur exquise, a certain tenuity and caducity, as for those who can bear nothing vehement or strong; for princes weary of love, like Francis the First, or of pleasure, like Henry the Third, or of action, like Henry the Fourth" (BEL §17). The sentence denies two things, vigour and originality, and grants one, grace; it then says what the grace is made of, repetition and wear, and what it feels like, a faintness. The audience completes it. The kings who read this poetry are weary, each of a different thing, and the poetry is fitted to their weariness. Its merits are "grace and finish, perfect in minute detail" (BEL §17; see Finish of expression), and its readers "are a little jaded, and have a constant desire for a subdued and delicate excitement, to warm their creeping fancy a little" (BEL §17; see Eye of the fancy).

The French phrase can be read as Pater's way of saying in a word what the sentence says at length. *Fadeur* is the risk of such a poetry, the flatness of what has been refined too often, and *exquise* the reward. The essay does not choose between them. It describes a charm that is real and small, and it finds

the same charm in the whole French Renaissance, "the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself, its last fleeting splendour and temperate Saint Martin's summer" (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer). The faintness of the Pleiad is the faintness of an autumn.

The Preface had already set the end of the French Renaissance in this key. Its products "have to the full that subtle and delicate sweetness which belongs to a refined and comely decadence" (PRE §6; see Decadence), and the Du Bellay essay can be read as that sentence developed into a portrait. The book admires the charm and marks its limits. The poetry it values most in the essay is the *Regrets*, which has an individual temper that the school's general manner lacks (BEL §21; see Poésie intime), and the winnower's song, which has "in the highest degree" the qualities of the whole school (BEL §28; see Pure effect).

The book's only other "faintness" belongs to Leonardo's women in his drawings, "faint always with some inexplicable faintness", like people "subject to exceptional conditions" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias). There faintness is a strangeness and a power; in the Pleiad it is a weariness. The word can be read as Pater's mark for what lies near the end of a vitality, in a face or in a school.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "faintness" or *fadeur* occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's women seem faint always with some inexplicable faintness.

**BEL §17** The Pleiad's charm has an exquisite faintness, une fadeur exquise, for those who can bear nothing vehement or strong.

## See also

Caducity; Daughters of Herodias; Decadence; Eye of the fancy; Finish of expression; Poésie intime; Pure effect; Saint Martin's summer; Sweetness; Tenuity.

# Unexpressed pulsation

*unexpressed pulsation*; *unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life*

Attested: *unexpressed pulsation* (WIN §9). A pulsation is a beat, as of the heart, from the Latin *pulsare*, to strike; "unexpressed" means that it is felt but not stated. Pater uses the phrase for what Winckelmann divined in Greek poetry before he had seen Greek sculpture. "Hitherto he had handled the words only of Greek poetry, stirred indeed and roused by them, yet divining beyond the words some unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life" (WIN §9). The next sentence gives the turn: suddenly he is "in contact with

that life", still fervent in the relics of sculpture (WIN §9; see Plastic art). Words hint at the pulse; statues give it. The order can be read as reversing the usual ranking of the arts, in which poetry is higher because it says more, and the same paragraph notes that philosophy may give reasons why "not poetry but sculpture" should be "the most sincere and exact expression of the Greek ideal" (WIN §9; see Plastic art). The phrase can be read as a description of the reader Pater asks for throughout the book, one who feels in the words of a poem or the surface of a picture a life they do not state (see Divination). The Conclusion asks for as many "pulsations" as possible in the given time (CON §6; see Pulsation); the pulse that Winckelmann divined in a book is the one the Conclusion asks us to feel in our own lives.

## See also

Divination; Divinatory power; Humane literature; Plastic art; Pulsation.

# Unseen beauty

*The Platonists' goal, reached by grades from a beautiful body · The Renaissance*

*unseen beauty*; *unseen*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Unseen beauty is beauty beyond the senses, the beauty of the soul and of the ideal form, to which the Platonic lover rises from the beauty he sees.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico explains "the grades or steps by which the soul passes from the love of a physical object to the love of unseen beauty" (PIC §14); Michelangelo "is always pressing forward from the outward beauty—il bel del fuor che agli occhi piace, to apprehend the unseen beauty" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §14 says that the ascent "recalls the teaching of Diotima in Plato's Symposium 210a–212a", and that "Pico adapts this ascent in his commentary on Benivieni".

**A place to read.** PIC §14, with MIC §14.

## Meaning

The phrase gives the Platonic ladder its top rung. In Plato's *Symposium* the priestess Diotima teaches Socrates that the lover rises from one beautiful body to all bodies, then to souls, laws and knowledge, until he sees beauty itself, pure and unmixed with anything mortal.[144] The first beauty is seen with the eyes; the last is seen with the mind alone. Renaissance Platonists,

[144] Plato, *Symposium* 210a–212a; beauty unmixed with mortal things is at 211e.

Ficino in his commentary on the *Symposium* and Pico in his on Beniveni's poem, made the ascent the doctrine of love.

## Use in the book

Pater tells the ascent twice in the Pico essay, coldly and warmly. Pico's commentary on Beniveni "attempts to define the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty" (PIC §11; see Platonic commentary), and in the same paragraph a change has passed over him, as if the chill of a disembodied beauty were already upon him (see Disembodied beauty). Three paragraphs later the same doctrine burns: when Pico explains the ascent "and unfolds the analogies between this process and other movements upward of human thought, there is a glow and vehemence in his words which remind one of the manner in which his own brief existence flamed itself away" (PIC §14; see Positive knowledge; Analogue). The goal is unseen; the telling is all fire. The essay can be read as valuing the ascent for the passion it releases more than for the place it reaches.

The Michelangelo essay gives the ascent to a poet. Against Dante's "devout materialism" (MIC §14; see Devout materialism), Michelangelo, in the sentence quoted above, presses on from the outward beauty to the universal form (MIC §14; see Forma universale), and his verse leaves the impression of "the houseless and complaining spirit" (MIC §14; see Houseless spirit). The unseen beauty is seen through the flesh, and the flesh is frail.

The word "unseen" keeps this sense elsewhere. Michelangelo could not be satisfied by Greek sculpture, "a system which sacrificed so much of what was inward and unseen" (ROB §9; see Inwardness); architecture comes when man is "still little preoccupied with those harmonies, storms, victories, of the unseen and intellectual world" (WIN §32). The modern scholar might regard the religions as expressions of the mind's "sentiment concerning the unseen world" (PIC §3; see Religious sense). The book can be read as respecting the unseen without living in it. Pater's own beauties are seen; but his Platonists and his Michelangelo look through them, and he follows the look with sympathy.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "unseen" occurs in the sense of what lies beyond the senses, in the order of the book; the word's plain use at GIO §4 is not listed.

**PIC §3** A modern scholar might regard religions as expressions of the mind's sentiment concerning the unseen world.

**PIC §11** Pico's commentary attempts to define the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty.

**PIC §14** There is a glow and vehemence in Pico's words when he explains the grades by which the soul passes to the love of unseen beauty.

**ROB §9** Greek sculpture sacrificed so much of what was inward and unseen that it could not satisfy Michelangelo.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo is always pressing forward from the outward beauty to apprehend the unseen beauty.

**WIN §32** Architecture belongs to a time when man is little preoccupied with the unseen and intellectual world.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §14 says that the movement "from attraction to a beautiful body toward the contemplation of beauty recalls the teaching of Diotima in Plato's Symposium 210a–212a", and that "Pico adapts this ascent in his commentary on Benivieni". The notes at MIC §14 translate the Italian: "The outward beauty that pleases the eyes" and "May it rise to the universal form".

## See also

Analogue; Devout materialism; Disembodied beauty; Forma universale; Houseless spirit; Inwardness; Platonic commentary; Positive knowledge; Religious sense.

# Vair

*vair*

Attested: *vair* (FRE §§31, 32). Old French, from the Latin *varius*, variegated: the fur of a squirrel, grey above and white below, worked in patterns for the robes of the rich, and also a colour of eyes, grey-blue and changing. Pater uses it in both senses. Aucassin has "eyes of vair" (FRE §31; see Dansellon); his company in hell, scholars, actors, horsemen, men of fashion and courteous ladies, go "all gay with music, in their gold, and silver, and beautiful furs—'the vair and the grey'" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The note at FRE §31 explains that "'Vair' first meant the gray or blue-gray and white fur of a squirrel and could also describe variegated eyes". The note at FRE §32 adds that "grey" names "another prized fur or fur trimming", and that "The point of Aucassin's catalogue is its social and sensual detail: he knows exactly whose company he wants". The same word serves the lover's eyes and the furs of his company in hell, and the tale's sensuousness can be read in the doubling.

## See also

Antinomianism; Chevalier; Dansellon.

## Vénusté

*vénusté*

Attested: *vénusté* (BEL §11). *Vénusté* is grace or loveliness, from the Latin *venustas*, charm, the quality of what Venus gives; the note at BEL §11 renders Du Bellay's phrase *parfait en toute élégance et vénusté de paroles* as "Perfect in every elegance and grace of expression", and says that the word "denotes grace or loveliness and derives from Latin venustas". Pater gives it at the end of the paragraph on Du Bellay's plea for French: "And it is his patriotism not to despair of it; he sees it already perfect in all elegance and beauty of words—parfait en toute élégance et vénusté de paroles" (BEL §11; see Mother-tongue). The French is the *Deffense*'s (I.9), but there it is said, in the feminine, *parfaite*, of the "round mouth" that the Muse gave the Greeks, in Horace's phrase: Du Bellay grants that the old French spoke in bare words, without the care of the Greeks, whose speech was perfect in all elegance and grace of words.[145] Pater gives to French the perfection that Du Bellay gave to Greek. His English renders *vénusté* as "beauty", and the Latin root keeps the goddess in the word: the grace of words, in the old rhetoric, was their *venustas*, a beauty with charm in it. The phrase can be read as the point of the whole paragraph as Pater tells it: his Du Bellay does not despair of the starveling stock of French, and sees in it a beauty already present.

### See also

Ennoble; Mother-tongue; Starveling stock.

## Wan

*wan*

Attested: *wan* (BOT §§7, 9). Pale, colourless, sickly. The Old English *wann* meant dark or dusky, the colour of a bruise or of night, and the word has moved over the centuries from dark to pale: what both senses share is the absence of healthy colour. Pater uses it twice in the Botticelli essay, once of the Madonnas and once of Venus. Of the Madonnas, who may at first seem "mean or abject": "the colour is wan" (BOT §7; see Abject). Of Venus: Botticelli never paints her "without some shadow of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers" (BOT §9; see Goddess of pleasure). In the Birth of Venus itself the falling roses are "embrowned a little, as Botticelli's flowers always are" (BOT §8; see Emblematical). The wan colour is the visible sign of the sentiment Pater finds in every figure, and the essay's argument turns it from a defect into a quality (see Imaginative colouring). The pallor that seemed

[145] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 9: *auxquels la Muse avait donné la bouche ronde (comme dit quelqu'un), c'est-à-dire parfaite en toute élégance et vénusté de paroles*; Horace, *Ars poetica* 323–24: *Grais ingenium, Grais dedit ore rotundo / Musa loqui*.

poverty of colour can be read as the colour of exile (see Wistfulness of exiles).

## See also

Abject; Cadaverous; Colour; Emblematical; Goddess of pleasure; Imaginative colouring; Wistfulness of exiles.

## Wantonness

*wantonness*; *wanton*, *wantons*

Attested: *wantonness* (FRE §24); *wanton* (BEL §13); *wantons* (BEL §16). The Middle English *wantowen* is "untrained", from *wan-*, lacking, and *towen*, brought up: wantonness is play without discipline, and so caprice, luxury or lasciviousness. Aucassin and Nicolette has an air of "overwrought delicacy, almost of wantonness", which Pater finds in the poetry of the Troubadours (FRE §24; see Overwrought delicacy). "Almost" can be read as keeping the word in its milder sense, a playful excess of refinement rather than vice. The Du Bellay essay uses it so, twice: in the art of the Pleiad "those wanton lines have a spirit guiding their caprices" (BEL §13), and the architecture of the time "wantons in its graceful arabesques with the images of old age and death" (BEL §16). Wantonness, in Pater's usage, can be read as the free play of ornament.

## See also

Overwrought delicacy; Troubadour.

## Worship of the body

*The medieval rebellion that anticipates the Renaissance · The Renaissance worship of the body*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Worship is reverence paid to what is held divine; the worship of the body pays it to human beauty and the life of the senses.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The phrase is one of the motives of the Renaissance found in the middle age (PRE §6). In the spirit of Abelard's Paris it follows "its care for physical beauty" (FRE §4); in the account of the medieval Renaissance's antinomianism, in their search after pleasure, their care for beauty and "their worship of the body", people "were impelled beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal", and their love "became sometimes a strange idolatry, a strange rival religion" (FRE §32).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §32.

## Meaning

"Worship" is the Old English *weorthscipe*, worth-ship, the state of being worthy, honour; by the end of the Old English period it was also the word for the honour paid to God. To speak of a worship of the body is to use a religious word for a devotion that the religion of the age opposed. The phrase is strong, and Pater keeps it.

## Use in the book

The Preface sets the phrase between "the care for physical beauty" and "the breaking down of those limits which the religious system of the middle age imposed on the heart and the imagination" (PRE §6; see Physical beauty). The order suggests a progression, from attention to beauty, to devotion to it, to the breaking of limits. In the spirit that goes out from the Paris of Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher and teacher, the worship of the body follows "its care for physical beauty" (FRE §4; see Physical beauty).

The last use gives the phrase its full weight, in the paragraph on the antinomianism of the medieval Renaissance (FRE §32; see Antinomianism): "In their search after the pleasures of the senses and the imagination, in their care for beauty, in their worship of the body, people were impelled beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal; and their love became sometimes a strange idolatry, a strange rival religion" (FRE §32; see Idolatry). The word "worship" is now exact: the body had become an object of devotion that rivalled the church's, and the next sentence names the rival, Venus hidden in the Venusberg (FRE §32; see Venusberg).

The phrase can be read as preparing the Winckelmann essay, where the rivalry is absent. "To the Greek this immersion in the sensuous was, religiously, at least, indifferent", and Winckelmann, dealing with the sensuous element in Greek art "in the pagan manner", fingers its marbles "with no sense of shame or loss" (WIN §43; see Unsinged hands). What was rebellion in the middle age had been, for the Greek, no rebellion at all.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The worship of the body is one of the motives of the Renaissance traced far into the middle age.

**FRE §4** The spirit going out from Abelard's Paris has its care for physical beauty and its worship of the body.

**FRE §32** In their search after pleasure, their care for beauty and their worship of the body, people were impelled beyond the Christian ideal, and their love became a strange rival religion.

## See also

Antinomianism; Idolatry; Liberty of the heart; Medieval Renaissance; Physical beauty; Pleasure; Renaissance; Unsinged hands; Venusberg.

# Love, friendship and the passions

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος

*"Having once practised philosophy with love": Pater's Platonic figure for Winckelmann's power of intuition · The Renaissance*
*φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; lover and philosopher at once*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Greek, "having once practised philosophy with love", from *philosophein*, to philosophise, and *erōs*, love.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann's mind is like that of one, "lover and philosopher at once in some phase of pre-existence" (WIN §19).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §19 renders the Greek "having once practiced philosophy with love" and compares Plato's *Phaedrus*, "where memory of the forms and love can restore wings to the soul".

**A place to read.** WIN §§7, 14, 19.

## Meaning

The words adapt a phrase of Plato's *Phaedrus*. In Socrates' myth the soul, having lost its wings, falls into a body and must wait ten thousand years before it returns to the place it came from, except the soul of one who has philosophised without guile, or loved a boy with philosophy (*ἢ τοῦ φιλοσοφήσαντος ἀδόλως ἢ παιδεραστήσαντος μετὰ φιλοσοφίας*); such souls, if they choose that life three times in succession, are winged again in the three-thousandth year.[146] Pater's Greek is not Plato's. He keeps the participle *philosophēsas*, adds *pote*, "once", and turns Plato's second phrase round: where Plato has "having loved a boy with philosophy", Pater has "having philosophised with love", the general noun *erōs* standing for the love of a boy. Plato's two lives, the philosopher's and the philosophic lover's, become one: philosophy practised with love. The accents of the two short words are irregular. *πότε* is the accent of the interrogative "when?", and the indefinite "once", which the sense requires, is written *ποτέ*; an elided preposition is normally written *μετ'*.

[146] Plato, *Phaedrus* 248e–249a; the divine madness of love, 244a–245c and 249d–e.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes near the end of the nineteenth paragraph, which turns from Winckelmann's friendships to his mind. The friendships are far from the quietism of art, and their passion stimulates the eye "to the finest delicacies of colour and form" (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form). Then his literary life gives those about him an impression "of excitement, intuition, inspiration" (WIN §19; see Intuition). The world of Greek art seems "to call out in Winckelmann new senses fitted to deal with it" (WIN §19; see New organ), and the paragraph reaches its longest sentence. "He remodels his writings with constant renewal of insight; he catches the thread of a whole sequence of laws in some hollowing of the hand, or dividing of the hair; he seems to realise that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge hidden for a time in the mind itself; as if the mind of one, lover and philosopher at once in some phase of pre-existence—φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος—fallen into a new cycle, were beginning its intellectual career over again, yet with a certain power of anticipating its results" (WIN §19).

The sentence explains intuition as memory (see Reminiscence) and memory as a lover's. Winckelmann knows the laws of Greek art before he has learned them because, on this fancy, he learned them once already, in a life in which love and philosophy were one. "Fallen into a new cycle" keeps the machinery of Plato's myth, its thousand-year periods of incarnation. "A certain power of anticipating its results" is the gift the myth explains: the second career knows where it is going.

The phrase joins the two halves of the paragraph. Its first half is about love, the friendships whose passion only "stimulates the eye"; its second about philosophy, the insight that reads a sequence of laws in the hollowing of a hand. The Greek makes them one activity. The essay names the *Phaedrus* once, when it calls enthusiasm, "in the broad Platonic sense of the Phaedrus", the secret of Winckelmann's divinatory power (WIN §14; see Enthusiasm), and it has named the *Lysis*, Plato's dialogue of friendship, as the side of Plato that was "wholly Greek" for Winckelmann (WIN §7; see Affinity). In the *Phaedrus* the madness of love is the best of the divine madnesses, and the lover who philosophises regains his wings soonest. The phrase can be read as Pater's way of saying that Winckelmann's knowledge of Greek art was a lover's knowledge, without saying more than the myth says.

The change from Plato's words can be read in the same way. Pater puts *erōs* where Plato has *paiderastein*, and the general word covers what the particular one would have named. The essay is frank elsewhere about Winckelmann's "romantic, fervent friendships with young men" (WIN §14; see Hellenism); here it lets a Greek phrase, recast from Plato's, carry the meaning for those who know the passage in Plato.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraphs of the essay in which Plato's dialogues of love and friendship are named, in the order of the book.

**WIN §7** The element of affinity which Plato presents to Winckelmann is that of the group of brilliant youths in the Lysis.

**WIN §14** Enthusiasm, in the broad Platonic sense of the Phaedrus, was the secret of Winckelmann's divinatory power.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann seems to realise the fancy of a forgotten knowledge, as if his mind had been lover and philosopher at once in some phase of pre-existence.

## Later readings

The American scholar Linda Dowling read the Oxford study of the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* in Pater's generation as giving the Victorian age a language in which love between men could be spoken of in ideal terms, and placed Pater's writing within it.[147]

## See also

ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις; Affinity; Anti-natal state; Beauty of living form; Enthusiasm; Hellenism; Intuition; New organ; Quietism; Reminiscence.

# Affection

*affection*; *affections*

Attested: *affection* (FRE §§7, 32; MIC §§8, 10, 13); *affections* (PIC §10; MIC §8; BEL §10). Affection is a feeling or disposition of the mind, from the Latin *affectio*, the state of being acted upon; in older English it is any passion or emotion, and only later chiefly fond attachment. Pater uses both senses. The narrower is the book's commonest: the "free play of human affection" in the story of Amis and Amile (FRE §7; see Comradeship), Aucassin as a creature "wholly of affection and the senses" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism), Vittoria Colonna as "a type of affection which even in disappointment may charm and sweeten" Michelangelo's spirit (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment). The older sense is Du Bellay's, in the test he fixes for all translation, whether Demosthenes and Homer in Latin, Cicero and Virgil in French "produce in you the same affections which you experience in reading those authors in the original" (BEL §10; see Law of translation). The French of the *Deffense* has *telles affections* (I.5).[148] The affections are the

[147] Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, 1994), chapter 3, "The Socratic Eros".

emotions a work produces, and Du Bellay makes them the measure: a translation fails if the reader is moved differently.

## See also

Antinomianism; Comradeship; Ideal sentiment; Law of translation; Le naïf.

## Amity

*amity*

Attested: *amity* (FRE §35). Friendship, from the French *amitié* (Old French *amistié*), and ultimately from the Latin *amicus*, friend; it is the word of the story's Old French title, Li Amitiez de Ami et Amile, which the note at FRE §7 renders "The Friendship of Ami and Amile". It comes at the miracle that ends the story. The two friends are buried in two churches, Amile in Saint Peter's and Amis in Saint Oseige's, "But lo! next morning, the body of Amile in his coffin was found lying in the church of Saint Oseige, beside the coffin of Amis his comrade. Behold then this wondrous amity, which by death could not be dissevered!" (FRE §35). The last sentence answers Pater's description of the friendship as "more than faithful unto death" (FRE §§7, 33; see Comradeship; Keep faith). The note at FRE §33 reads the miracle as heaven's answer to the friends' intimacy (see Comradeship).

## See also

Comradeship; Keep faith; Martyrology.

## Amor

*Love personified, Dante's lord and Michelangelo's disputant with Death · The Renaissance*

*Amor*; *Love*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Latin and Italian, "Love"; as a name, the god or lord of love.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo recalls Dante "in the personification of Amor" (MIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §15 says that "Amor is Love personified".

**A place to read.** MIC §15, with BEL §16.

[148] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 5.

## Meaning

Amor is the Latin for love and the Roman name for Cupid, the winged boy. The love poetry of Provence and Italy made him a lord: in Dante's *Vita Nuova* Amor appears to the poet as a lord of fearful aspect, *segnore di pauroso aspetto*, in the English of the poet and painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti the "Lord of terrible aspect" which Pater quotes (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love), feeds Beatrice the poet's burning heart, and speaks and acts as a person. Dante defended the figure in the same book, saying that he spoke of love as if it were a body and a substance by the licence granted to the Latin poets, which a poet in the vernacular may claim too if he can give the reason for his figure in prose.[149] Personified Love is thus a device of the high love-lyric, a way of making a feeling into an agent.

## Use in the book

The word occurs in the fifteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, in the list of the ways in which Michelangelo "is really like Dante": he recalls him in his repeated *gentile* and *cortesia* and "in the personification of Amor" (MIC §15; see Gentile). Two sentences on, the same paragraph gives the personification its drama: "Once and again he introduces Love and Death, who dispute concerning him" (MIC §15).

The two sentences can be read together. Michelangelo learned from Dante to make Love a person, and his own poems set that person against another, Death, with the poet as their prize. The essay goes on at once: "For, like Dante and all the nobler souls of Italy, he is much occupied with thoughts of the grave, and his true mistress is death" (MIC §15; see Death in its distinction). The sentence can be read as deciding the dispute: Amor is the lord of the early love-lyric, but Michelangelo's true mistress is death, and Love's claim is the weaker.

The Du Bellay essay shows the figure's later fortune. In the Pleiad's poetry "That 'Lord of terrible aspect,' Amor, has become Love the boy, or the babe" (BEL §16; see Lord of terrible aspect). Dante's terrible lord has shrunk to the Cupid of the decorative arts, and the French poets' loves are "only half real" (BEL §16; see Imaginative love). The word also appears, unpersonified, in the two lines of Michelangelo's that stand as the eleventh paragraph: *La vita del mia amor non è il cor mio*, rendered in the edition "My heart is not the life of my love" (MIC §11).

The word can be read as a measure of seriousness in the book's history of love. In Dante Love is a lord to be feared; in Michelangelo he disputes with Death and loses; in the Pleiad he is a child. The diminishing figure traces the passing of the medieval "ideal intensity of love" (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love) into the Renaissance's graceful play, and Michelangelo stands where the lord is still terrible and already giving way.

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[149] Dante, *Vita Nuova* III and XXV.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word Amor occurs, in the order of the book; the Italian *amor* in the verse of MIC §11 is listed with them.

**MIC §11** La vita del mia amor non è il cor mio: my heart is not the life of my love.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo recalls Dante in the personification of Amor, and introduces Love and Death disputing over him.

**BEL §16** The Lord of terrible aspect, Amor, has become Love the boy, or the babe.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §15 says that "Amor is Love personified" (see Gentile). The note at MIC §11 renders the verse "My heart is not the life of my love, / for the love with which I love you has no heart".

## See also

Cortesia; Death in its distinction; Gentile; Ideal intensity of love; Imaginative love; Lord of terrible aspect; Love-god.

# Ardour and indifference

*ardour and indifference*

Attested: *ardour and indifference* (WIN §10). Ardour is burning zeal, from the Latin *ardor*, a blaze; indifference is coolness, the absence of preference. Pater gives the pair to the Swiss pastor Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741–1801), whose *Physiognomische Fragmente* (*Physiognomic Fragments*, 1775–78) made physiognomy a fashionable science, reading Winckelmann's portrait: "You know," says Lavater, speaking of Winckelmann's countenance, "that I consider ardour and indifference by no means incompatible in the same character. If ever there was a striking instance of that union, it is in the countenance before us" (WIN §10). The sentence before has said that Winckelmann's enthusiasm "burns like lava" within severe limits (WIN §10; see Enthusiasm), and Lavater's paradox answers it: the fire is held in a cool face. The essay returns to the pair as a description of Greek art. Winckelmann's friendships are far from "the quietism, the bland indifference of art" (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form), and the riders of the Parthenon frieze are "the highest expression of the indifference which lies beyond all that is relative or partial" (WIN §40). Ardour and indifference can thus be read as the essay's formula for the Hellenic itself, passion kept below the surface of a calm form, and Lavater's reading of a face as the first statement of it.

## See also

Beauty of living form; Enthusiasm; Physiognomy.

# Attune

*To bring a strong nature into harmony with itself: what Michelangelo's poems show him trying to do · The Renaissance*

*attune*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To bring into tune; to make one thing accord with another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo's poems "make us spectators of this struggle; the struggle of a strong nature to adorn and attune itself" (MIC §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §9.

## Meaning

To attune is to put in tune, a musician's word: a string is attuned when it is brought to the right pitch, an instrument when its strings agree. Figuratively, a person is attuned to a place or a feeling when he is in harmony with it. Pater's use is reflexive, a nature attuning itself, and the musical sense is near the surface.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the ninth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, whose first two sentences answer the bitterness of the eighth: "But his genius is in harmony with itself; and just as in the products of his art we find resources of sweetness within their exceeding strength, so in his own story also, bitter as the ordinary sense of it may be, there are select pages shut in among the rest—pages one might easily turn over too lightly, but which yet sweeten the whole volume. The interest of Michelangelo's poems is that they make us spectators of this struggle; the struggle of a strong nature to adorn and attune itself; the struggle of a desolating passion, which yearns to be resigned and sweet and pensive, as Dante's was" (MIC §9).

The musical image runs through both paragraphs. The eighth had said that "A discordant note sounds throughout" Michelangelo's life "which almost spoils the music" (MIC §8; see Discordant note), and that his loves "sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music" (MIC §8). The ninth answers that his genius "is in harmony with itself", and that the poems record the effort to attune. A strong nature is like an instrument whose strings are pulled too tight; attuning is the slow work of bringing them to a pitch where they sound together. "Adorn and attune" can be taken to pair the two kinds of grace, the outward and the inward.

The word belongs to a group the essay uses for the same labour: to "tranquillise and sweeten life by idealising its vehement sentiments" (MIC §14; see Idealise), "to tranquillise his vehement emotions by withdrawing them into the region of ideal sentiment" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment). Attune is the most exact of them, because it names the result as a harmony, not a subduing. The passion is not silenced but brought into tune, "resigned and sweet and pensive, as Dante's was".

One may take the word as Pater's account of what poetry is for in a life like Michelangelo's. The poems are not confessions of feeling, nor works "done only to support a literary reputation" (MIC §9; see Occasional poetry); they are the instrument on which the attuning was done, and to read them is to be a spectator of it. The image of a book whose few sweet pages "sweeten the whole volume" makes the reader's task delicate: the pages are easily turned "too lightly", and the music is heard only by one who attends.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**MIC §9** Michelangelo's poems show the struggle of a strong nature to adorn and attune itself.

## See also

Discordant note; Ex forti dulcedo; Ideal sentiment; Idealise; Occasional poetry; Strength.

# Bonhomie

*bonhomie*

Attested: *bonhomie* (BEL §18). Bonhomie is good nature, easy and unaffected friendliness, from the French *bonhomme*, a good fellow; the word came into English in the eighteenth century and kept its French form. Pater uses it at the end of his account of the Pleiad's country, *ce pays du Vendomois*, where the poets "have the love of the aged for warmth, and understand the poetry of winter" (BEL §18; see Domesticity). "So the fireside often appears, with the pleasures of the frosty season, about the vast emblazoned chimneys of the time, and with a bonhomie as of little children, or old people" (BEL §18). The comparison is double. Children and the old can be read as sharing a simple goodness, the ease of those who are not yet or no longer engaged in the world's strife, and the essay has fancied in the Pleiad "a certain premature agedness", with a sweetness "appropriate to that" (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise). The bonhomie of the fireside suggests the same temper seen kindly: what is jaded at court is warm at home.

## See also

Domesticity; Une fadeur exquise.

### Brilliance

*brilliance*; *brilliancy*; *brilliant*

Attested: *brilliance* (C73 §6); *brilliancy* (GIO §14; CON §5); *brilliant* (FRE §1; LEO §§3, 15, 29; WIN §§7, 36). The words come through the French *brillant*, from the Italian *brillare*, to sparkle; a "brilliant" is still a diamond cut to show its fire. Three times Pater uses the adjective of lives and achievements that dazzle and do not last: the medieval Renaissance was "a brilliant, but in part abortive effort" (FRE §1), Leonardo's Milan "a life of brilliant sins and exquisite amusements" (LEO §15), and Leonardo came away from "his brilliant life at court" having saved nothing (LEO §29). In the essays the noun comes once, and shadowed: "something fabulous and illusive has always mingled itself in the brilliancy of Giorgione's fame" (GIO §14). In 1873 we are to discriminate in those about us, "and in the brilliance of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways" (C73 §6); the revision has "the very brilliancy" (CON §5; see Tragic dividing of forces). The word of the cut diamond stands in the same paragraph as "this hard gem-like flame" (C73 §6; see Hard, gem-like flame), and the gift can be read as shining as the gem does; what its shining portends is told under Tragic dividing of forces.

## See also

Hard, gem-like flame; Tragic dividing of forces.

### Carnal

*The love of the flesh, latent beneath the Platonic calm of Michelangelo's sonnets · The Renaissance*

*carnal*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Of the flesh: bodily, sensual, as opposed to spiritual.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Beneath the Platonic calm of the sonnets there is latent a deep delight in carnal form and colour" (MIC §8).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §10 says that Pater "interposes his own reference to Plato's prenatal state" into the wording of the line where "carnal affection" is set against it.

**A place to read.** MIC §§8, 10.

## Meaning

The Latin *carnalis*, from *caro*, *carnis*, flesh, came into English through the language of the Church, where carnal stood against spiritual: carnal knowledge, carnal desires, the "carnal mind" of Romans 8:7 in the King James Version. The word carries that moral history even when it is used neutrally, of flesh and colour. Pater uses it twice, both times against the Platonic.

## Use in the book

The first use is in the eighth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which reads the poems for what their calm conceals: "Beneath the Platonic calm of the sonnets there is latent a deep delight in carnal form and colour" (MIC §8; see Platonic calm), and in the sonnets, and "still more in the madrigals, he often falls into the language of less tranquil affections" (MIC §8; see Madrigal; Penitence). The next sentence draws the inference with a hedge: the man who spoke of the supremacy of the unveiled human form "had not been always, we may think, a mere Platonic lover" (MIC §8; see Unveiled human form; Platonic lover).

The sentence joins the poet to the sculptor. "Carnal form and colour" is the sculptor's and painter's matter, the body seen and loved; the sonnets speak the Platonic language of ascent, but beneath it the delight in the body remains. "Latent" is the key word: the delight is hidden, not denied, and Pater's reading finds it as one finds a hidden figure in a carving.

The second use is a question. When Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna first approached each other, Pater divines from allusions in the sonnets, Michelangelo debated whether the new love was "carnal affection", or the burning ray of the soul's former state, which Pater glosses as Plato's anti-natal state (MIC §10; see Anti-natal state; Dolce amaro). The question is the essay's in small: is love of the body, or is it the soul's memory of a former life? The essay's answer is that Vittoria "raised no great passion" (MIC §12), and that she "realises for him a type of affection which even in disappointment may charm and sweeten his spirit" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment).

The word marks, on one reading, the tension the Michelangelo essay never resolves. Michelangelo's art is carnal, his poems Platonic; the essay reads each through the other, and finds the carnal latent in the Platonic and, in the Medici tombs and the Pietàs, the spiritual latent in the carved flesh.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "carnal" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §8** Beneath the Platonic calm of the sonnets there is latent a deep delight in carnal form and colour.

**MIC §10** Michelangelo debated, Pater divines, whether the last passion was carnal affection or the burning ray of the soul's former state.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §10 renders *del suo prestino stato il raggio ardente* as "The burning ray of its former state", and says: "Read il raggio ardente with the preceding phrase. Pater interposes his own reference to Plato's prenatal state into the wording."

## See also

Anti-natal state; Dolce amaro; Ideal sentiment; Madrigal; Penitence; Platonic calm; Platonic lover; Unveiled human form.

# Complexion of humanity

*Human nature in its true mixture, painted · The Renaissance*
*the true complexion of humanity*; *complexion*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Complexion first meant the mixture of humours that made up a body and its temperament, and later the colour of the face that showed it; the complexion of humanity is human nature in its true mixture.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli conveys "into his work somewhat more than painting usually attains of the true complexion of humanity" (BOT §9).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §9 says that Simonetta Vespucci (died 1476) "is often associated with Botticelli's female types in later accounts", and that "Pater marks the link as tradition".

**A place to read.** BOT §§6, 9.

## Meaning

The Latin *complexio*, from *complecti*, to embrace, is a combining or connection. Medieval medicine used it for the mixture in each body of the four humours, blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile, whose proportion fixed a person's temperament: one was of a sanguine or a melancholy complexion. Because the mixture showed in the face, the word slid to the colour of the skin, its modern sense. The older sense lies close beneath the newer in Pater's prose. Winckelmann betrays "his temperament even in appearance, by his olive complexion" (WIN §19): the colour is the sign of the mixture.

## Use in the book

The phrase is stated twice, and the second time Pater says so. In the paragraph on the middle world it comes as the cause of Botticelli's realism: his sympathy conveys "somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity" and so makes him a realist (BOT §6; see Sympathy; Realist). Three paragraphs later it returns as the essay's thesis: "I have said that the peculiar character of Botticelli is the result of a blending in him of a sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition, its attractiveness, its investiture at rarer moments in a character of loveliness and energy, with his consciousness of the shadow upon it of the great things from which it shrinks, and that this conveys into his work somewhat more than painting usually attains of the true complexion of humanity" (BOT §9).

The humoral sense explains the words around the phrase. "Blending" is a mixture; Angelico's saints and the damned of the Florentine painter Andrea Orcagna (active about 1343–1368) are "untempered" (BOT §6; see Untempered), unmixed, and to temper was to mix in due proportion. Botticelli's men and women are "in their mixed and uncertain condition" (BOT §6). The "true complexion" can be read as the true mixture, neither pure good nor pure evil, and what is true of it is that it is mixed. A painter who shows only saints or only sinners shows a false complexion, however beautiful.

The modern sense works as well. Complexion is what a painter paints, the colour of flesh, and Botticelli's flesh is "grey" (BOT §9; see Goddess of pleasure). The true complexion of humanity, in his pictures, is the colour of a humanity under a shadow. Pater's phrase can be read as joining the moralist's judgement and the painter's pigment in one word; on that reading Botticelli's colour, which may seem cold or cadaverous, is a moral truth about mixed natures (see Imaginative colouring).

"I have said" occurs nowhere else in the book, and here it is deliberate. The repetition marks the phrase as the point the whole essay has been making: Botticelli's figures, sacred and profane, are not exemplars but men and women, attractive and shrinking at once. The edition's note on Simonetta, later in the paragraph, adds a caution Pater himself observes. The tradition that the same face is Simonetta's is only tradition, and the "same figure" that recurs as Judith, Justice and Truth (BOT §9) is a type of the painter's mind, the complexion of his humanity, more than a portrait.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "complexion" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §6** Botticelli's sympathy conveys into his work somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity.

**BOT §9** The blending in him of sympathy and the consciousness of shadow conveys the true complexion of humanity.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann betrays his temperament by his olive complexion.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §9 says that "Simonetta Vespucci is often associated with Botticelli's female types in later accounts. Pater marks the link as tradition. The painting alone cannot establish that figures in distinct mythological, biblical, and allegorical scenes portray the same sitter."

## See also

Goddess of pleasure; Imaginative colouring; Middle world; Realist; Sympathy; Temperament; Untempered.

# Comradeship

*The great friendship of Amis and Amile · The Renaissance*
*comradeship*; *comrade*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A comrade is a companion who shares one's life and lot; comradeship is the bond between such companions.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The first of the two French stories turns on it: in Li Amitiez de Ami et Amile "that free play of human affection" makes itself felt "in the incidents of a great friendship, a friendship pure and generous, pushed to a sort of passionate exaltation, and more than faithful unto death" (FRE §7). "Such comradeship ... is still especially a classical motive" (FRE §7). Amile slays his children to heal his comrade (FRE §§13–18), and the story ends "with this monkish miracle of earthly comradeship" (FRE §33).

**In this edition.** The notes at FRE §7 explain the title, "The Friendship of Ami and Amile", and the story's many versions, and read Palamon's cry in the Knight's Tale.

**A place to read.** FRE §§11–18, the healing of Amis, in Pater's English.

## Meaning

"Comrade" comes through French *camarade* from the Spanish *camarada*, a roomful, those who share a chamber, and so a soldier's messmate. The word joins intimacy to the sharing of hardship.

## Use in the book

The essay introduces comradeship as the first sign of a medieval Renaissance in prose. Early in the thirteenth century French prose romance begins, and in one of its stories, "Li Amitiez de Ami et Amile, that free play of human affection, of the claims of which Abelard's story is an assertion,

makes itself felt in the incidents of a great friendship, a friendship pure and generous, pushed to a sort of passionate exaltation, and more than faithful unto death" (FRE §7; see Free play). The love of Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher, for his pupil Heloïse and the friendship of Amis and Amile are one claim, the claim of affection to its own course. Such comradeship, Pater adds, is "still especially a classical motive", and his instance is Chaucer's Knight's Tale (FRE §7; see Classical motive). Palamon's cry at the first sight of Emelya carries, for Pater, the foreseen "spoiling … of the fair friendship" (FRE §9; see Bleynte).

The story makes the bond total. The friends were baptised together at Rome, where the Pope gave each of them a cup (FRE §§10, 14; see Baptism). They are alike in body, a likeness that runs through the story "like an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls" (FRE §10; see Inward similitude). Amis takes Amile's place in a mortal combat (FRE §11), and is struck with leprosy (see Leprosy). The household of Amile takes him in, and the night scene is told in Pater's English: the angel Raphael tells Amis that he will be healed if Amile slays his two children and washes him in their blood (FRE §13). Amile conjures his comrade "by the faith which there is between me and thee, and by our comradeship, and by the baptism we received together at Rome" to say whether it was man or angel (FRE §14), and then resolves to keep faith with "him who was faithful to me even unto death" (FRE §15; see Keep faith). He slays the children, washes his comrade in their blood, and prays, "cleanse now my comrade, for whose love I have shed the blood of my children" (FRE §16). Amis is healed; the children are found at play, with "as it were a thread of crimson" where the sword cut them (FRE §18).

"There, as I said, is the strength of the old French story" (FRE §19; see Strength). Pater does not soften the sacrifice. The strength can be read as lying in a friendship that outweighs even fatherhood, and is rewarded, not condemned, by heaven. The end of the essay brings the friends back as saints: they die together in battle, and when they are buried in two churches, Amile's coffin is found next morning beside his comrade's (FRE §§34–35; see Amity). Pater calls it "this monkish miracle of earthly comradeship, more than faithful unto death" (FRE §33; see Monkish miracle).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "comradeship" or "comrade" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §7** The friendship of Amis and Amile, pure, generous and more than faithful unto death; such comradeship is especially a classical motive.

**FRE §11** Amis and Amile are true to their comradeship through all trials; Amis takes Amile's place in a tournament for life or death.

**FRE §12** Amis, a leper, comes to Amile's house; Amile knows his comrade by the cup given at their baptism.

**FRE §13** The angel Raphael calls Amis the comrade of the heavenly citizens and bids that Amile slay his children to heal him.

**FRE §14** Amile conjures Amis by their comradeship and their baptism to say whether man or angel spoke.

**FRE §16** Amile slays his children and washes his comrade in their blood.

**FRE §33** The story ends with a monkish miracle of earthly comradeship, more than faithful unto death.

**FRE §35** Amile's coffin is found beside that of Amis his comrade.

## Pater's sources

Pater read the story in a thirteenth-century French prose version, Li Amitiez de Ami et Amile, which he found in "one of the pretty volumes of the Bibliothèque Elzevirienne" (FRE §7): the *Nouvelles françoises en prose du XIIIe siècle* edited by Louis Moland and Charles d'Héricault (Paris, 1856). That prose is itself a translation of the Latin life of the two saints (see Traditional friendship).[150] Pater's last words on it, that it "seems, as we have it, to have been written by a monk" (FRE §33), can be read as pointing to the Latin saints' life behind the French prose.

## In this edition

The note on the title at FRE §7 gives it in English, "The Friendship of Ami and Amile" (see Traditional friendship). The note on the Knight's Tale at the same place says that "Pater hears in the cry a fear for the companionship that has sustained the two prisoners, as well as the shock of desire". The note at FRE §33 adds that "The tale's final miracle makes the friends' intimacy a reason for divine intervention".

## See also

Amity; Baptism; Bleynte; Classical motive; Free play; Inward similitude; Keep faith; Leprosy; Liberty of the heart; Monkish miracle; Strength; Traditional friendship.

# Cortesia

*Courtesy as the noble lover's virtue, a word Michelangelo repeated after Dante · The Renaissance*

[150] *Nouvelles françoises en prose du XIIIe siècle*, ed. L. Moland and C. d'Héricault (Paris: Jannet, Bibliothèque elzévirienne, 1856), pp. 33–82, "Li Amitiez de Ami et Amile", a French version of the Latin *Vita Amici et Amelii*; the Old French chanson de geste *Ami et Amile* is of about 1200.

*cortesia*; *courtesy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Italian, "courtesy": the gracious and generous conduct proper to a noble heart.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo recalls Dante "in the repetition of the words *gentile* and *cortesia*" (MIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §15 says that "*Cortesia* means courtesy, with connotations of generosity and gracious conduct".

**A place to read.** MIC §15.

## Meaning

*Cortesia* is the manner of the court, *corte*, and in the vocabulary of Provençal and Italian love-poetry it named the whole of the lover's virtue: generosity, graciousness, a giving without calculation. Dante, in the *Convivio*, says that courtesy and *onestade*, seemliness, the Latin *honestas*, "are all one", and that the word was taken from the courts because virtues and fair manners were once practised there.[151] The word thus joins a social grace to a moral one, and the love-poets made it the mark of the heart fit for love.

## Use in the book

The word occurs once, in the sentence on Michelangelo's likeness to Dante: Michelangelo recalls him "in the repetition of the words *gentile* and *cortesia*" (MIC §15; see Gentile; Amor). *Cortesia* is the second of the two words.

"Repetition" is the observation. Michelangelo does not only use the words; he returns to them, as one returns to the vocabulary of a master. The two words come as a pair, and they belong together: *gentile* names the noble heart, *cortesia* its conduct. In Dante's school the lover's nobility was not of birth but of nature, and courtesy was its outward sign. Michelangelo, whose family claimed "some colour of imperial blood" (MIC §6) and who "believed always that he had imperial blood in his veins" (MIC §8), wrote in the vocabulary of a nobility of the heart.

The English word appears once in the book, in the Giorgione essay, where it names the society Giorgione entered: "A natural child of the family of the Barbarelli by a peasant-girl of Vedelago, he finds his way early into the circle of notable persons—people of courtesy" (GIO §17). The phrase can be read as the same idea at work in a life: the natural son of the Barbarelli by a peasant-girl is admitted to the circle of courtesy by his gifts, as the love-poets' lover was admitted to love by his gentle heart.

[151] Dante, *Convivio* II.x.7–8.

Read with *gentile*, the word ties Michelangelo to the middle age (see Gentile; Medievalism): in his poems the old courtly words survive, used by a man of the sixteenth century who loved them because Dante had.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which *cortesia* or "courtesy" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo recalls Dante in the repetition of the words gentile and cortesia.

**GIO §17** Giorgione finds his way early into the circle of notable persons, people of courtesy.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §15 says that "Cortesia means courtesy, with connotations of generosity and gracious conduct" (see Gentile).

## See also

Amor; Gentile; Medievalism.

# Discordant note

*discordant note*

Attested: *discordant note* (MIC §8). A note out of harmony with the rest; a jarring element. The phrase comes in the opening sentences of the eighth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "In the story of Michelangelo's life the strength, often turning to bitterness, is not far to seek. A discordant note sounds throughout it which almost spoils the music" (MIC §8). The examples follow: Michelangelo "treats the Pope as the King of France himself would not dare to treat him"; Raphael says he goes about Rome "like an executioner"; once "he seems to have shut himself up with the intention of starving himself to death" (MIC §8). The image is musical, and the essay keeps it: his loves "sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music" (MIC §8), and the next paragraph answers that "his genius is in harmony with itself" and that his poems record "the struggle of a strong nature to adorn and attune itself" (MIC §9; see Attune). "Almost" is the important word: the discord does not spoil the music, and the sweetness the essay seeks is found within it (see Ex forti dulcedo).

## See also

Attune; Comely form; Ex forti dulcedo; Strength.

## Dolce amaro

*dolce amaro*; *dolce*, *amaro*

Attested: *un dolce amaro* (MIC §10); *amaro*, *dolce* (MIC §8). Italian, "a bitter sweetness", literally "a sweet bitter". The oxymoron of sweet and bitter in love is as old as the Greek poet Sappho of Lesbos, about 600 BC, who called Eros *glykypikron*, "sweet-bitter",[152] and the Petrarchan lyric made it a commonplace. Pater quotes it from Michelangelo's sonnets in the passage on his first approach to Vittoria Colonna: "From allusions in the sonnets, we may divine that when they first approached each other he had debated much with himself whether this last passion would be the most unsoftening, the most desolating of all—*un dolce amaro, un sì e no mi muovi*" (MIC §10), which the edition renders "A bitter sweetness, a yes and a no stir me". The words had appeared reversed at the end of the eighth paragraph, where Michelangelo's wayward loves "sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music, so that the comely order of his days was quite put out: *par che amaro ogni mio dolce io senta*" (MIC §8), which the edition renders "It seems I taste every sweetness of mine as bitter". The two lines make the essay's paradox of sweetness and strength a matter of feeling (see Ex forti dulcedo): in the line of the eighth paragraph the sweetness turns bitter; in that of the tenth the bitterness is itself sweet. The note at MIC §8 says that "Pater makes the line answer the sweetness drawn from strength at the beginning of the essay".

### See also

Anti-natal state; Carnal; Comely form; Ex forti dulcedo; Ideal sentiment.

## Doppelgänger

*The double, the uncanny form of friendship's likeness · The Renaissance Doppelgänger*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The German *Doppelgänger*, "double-goer", is a person's double, a second self who walks abroad.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The likeness of Amis and Amile gives their story "that curious interest of the Doppelgänger, which begins among the stars with the Dioscuri" (FRE §10).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §10 gives "a double", and explains the eeriness.

**A place to read.** FRE §10.

[152] Sappho, fragment 130 (Voigt).

## Meaning

The German word joins *doppel*, double, to *Gänger*, one who goes. It was made by the German novelist Jean Paul (Johann Paul Friedrich Richter, 1763–1825) in *Siebenkäs* (1796), in the form *Doppeltgänger*, which a footnote explains as people who see themselves.[153] German Romantic fiction took up the double as a figure of the uncanny, often of death or of a divided self, and the word came into English in the nineteenth century with that colour.

## Use in the book

Pater uses the German word once, and can be read as turning it from fear to friendship. "The friendship of Amis and Amile is deepened by the romantic circumstance of an entire personal resemblance between the two heroes, through which they pass for each other again and again, and thereby into many strange adventures; that curious interest of the Doppelgänger, which begins among the stars with the Dioscuri, being entwined in and out through all the incidents of the story" (FRE §10; see Inward similitude). "Curious interest" keeps something of the double's strangeness, and "romantic circumstance" may carry the taste of the romances, and of the Romantic writers after them, for such likenesses; but in the story the double is a blessing. Amis takes Amile's place in a tournament for life or death (FRE §11). After the healing, when the two go to church with Amis in Amile's best robes, Amile's wife cannot tell which of them is her husband (FRE §17; see Vesture). The likeness runs through the story "like an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls" (FRE §10; see Inward similitude).

The Dioscuri, the twins Castor and Pollux, give the motif a classical origin "among the stars" (FRE §10; see Dioscuri). By setting the German Romantic word beside the Greek twins, Pater can be read as placing the medieval story in the line from antiquity to his own century that the essay traces, and as giving it what he calls "especially a classical motive" (FRE §7; see Classical motive).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**FRE §10** The likeness of Amis and Amile gives the story the curious interest of the Doppelgänger, which begins with the Dioscuri.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §10 gives the English "a double", explains that Pater "means the eeriness of encountering a living double", and identifies the Dioscuri (see Dioscuri).

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[153] Jean Paul, *Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornenstücke oder Ehestand, Tod und Hochzeit des Armenadvokaten F. St. Siebenkäs im Reichsmarktflecken Kuhschnappel* (Berlin, 1796–97), vol. I, chapter 2, where the friends Siebenkäs and Leibgeber are each other's doubles.

## See also

Classical motive; Comradeship; Dioscuri; Inward similitude; Vesture.

# Earthly passion

*Love of this world in the poetry of Provence · The Renaissance*
*earthly passion*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Earthly passion is human love, of the body and of this world, as against heavenly or spiritual love.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the profane poetry of Provence "earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety—the liberty of the heart—makes itself felt" (FRE §2). The phrase returns once, of Ludovico Sforza, who "blended mere earthly passion with a sort of religious sentimentalism" (LEO §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §2, the last two sentences.

## Meaning

"Earthly" sets the passion in this world, the earth as against heaven; "passion", from the Latin *pati*, to suffer, was first what one undergoes, then strong feeling, and above all love. The pairing had a long religious history, where earthly love stood below the love of God. In Provence, Pater can be read as keeping the contrast but not the ranking.

## Use in the book

In FRE §2 the phrase defines what the medieval Renaissance in poetry was. Not the church's art, though even that was done "in a great measure for pleasure's sake", but "its profane poetry, the poetry of Provence", is what the French writers have in view: "In that poetry, earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety—the liberty of the heart—makes itself felt" (FRE §2; see Profane poetry; Liberty of the heart). The three qualities are given as praise. Intimacy is the closeness of two persons, freedom the escape from imposed limits, variety the many forms that love can take, as against a single ideal. The next sentence ties it to thought, through Abelard, "the great scholar and the great lover" (FRE §2).

The second use is darker. Ludovico Sforza, regent and later duke of Milan and Leonardo's patron, who, Pater says, murdered his nephew by slow poison, "blended mere earthly passion with a sort of religious sentimentalism" (LEO §14; see Susceptibility). "Mere" lowers the phrase, and the sentence can be read as faulting the blend, not the passion: earthly passion confused with religion, where in Provence it was felt as itself. Between the two places the pages on Aucassin show the same passion

carried to its height, “the ideal intensity of love” (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §2** In Provençal poetry earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety, makes itself felt.

**LEO §14** Ludovico Sforza blended mere earthly passion with a sort of religious sentimentalism.

## See also

Ideal intensity of love; Liberty of the heart; Profane poetry; Susceptibility.

# Ecstasy

*A standing outside oneself: the mystic’s last step, Leonardo’s years of invention, and the Conclusion’s name for a life kept at its height · The Renaissance*

*ecstasy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A state in which one is carried out of oneself, by love, joy, inspiration or religious rapture.

**In *The Renaissance*.** “To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life” (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §§5–6, with LEO §29.

## Meaning

The Greek *ekstasis* is a putting out of place, from *existanai*, to displace: the mind or the self removed from where it stands. The Gospels use it for amazement, as when those who saw the child raised were amazed “with a great ecstasy”, *ekstasei megalē* (Mark 5:42), and Acts for the trance in which Peter, praying on the housetop at Joppa, saw the sheet let down from heaven (Acts 10:10). For Plotinus, the third-century philosopher from whom Neoplatonism descends, it was the last step of the soul’s ascent, the union with the One (see Vision and ecstasy).

English took both the trance and the madness. When Polonius thinks Hamlet mad for Ophelia, he calls it “the very ecstasy of love, / Whose violent property fordoes itself”, and Hamlet, denying madness to his mother, answers “Ecstasy? / My pulse as yours doth temperately keep

time".[154] The bright sense, a transport of joy, is as old as the dark: Portia, as Bassanio chooses the right casket, cries "O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy",[155] and Keats tells the nightingale that it is "pouring forth thy soul abroad / In such an ecstasy!"[156] In Pater's English it could still mean frenzy, but his ecstasies are all of the bright kind.

## Use in the book

The word comes in four paragraphs of the essays and the Conclusion, and it moves through them from the mystic to the artist to every reader. In the Pico essay it marks the limit of the mystical element in Platonism: Plotinus, "that new Plato", in whom that element had been worked out "to the utmost limit of vision and ecstasy" (PIC §7; see Vision and ecstasy). There it is something reached at the end of a road, by the mystic, whose name the Platonists derive from shutting the eyes (PIC §7; see Shutting the eyes).

In the Leonardo essay it becomes the state of a man at work. Leonardo came back to Florence a poor man, and "Perhaps necessity kept his spirit excited: the next four years are one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention" (LEO §29). The ecstasy is "prolonged": it lasts four years, it is fed, Pater guesses, by need, and in it he painted the pictures of the Louvre. The word now names absorption, the self carried out of itself into its work.

The Conclusion asks for that state as a way of life: to burn always with the hard, gem-like flame, "to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The verb "maintain" asks for what the word seems to forbid, a standing outside oneself held steady, and Leonardo's prolonged rapture can be read as the book's one example of it. In the next paragraph the ecstasy and sorrow of love is named among the great passions that "may give us this quickened sense of life" (CON §6). Here ecstasy is paired with sorrow, and the pair can be read as the two extremes of love, beside Polonius's "very ecstasy of love", which "fordoes itself".

The path can be read as a secularising of the Platonist's word. Plotinus's ecstasy leaves the world of sense for the One; Leonardo's is found in the making of pictures; the Conclusion's is found in the moment itself, in "the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake" (CON §6; see Poetic passion). The mystic stood outside himself to reach what is beyond all moments; the Conclusion asks the reader to stand outside habit to reach the moment.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ecstasy" occurs, in the order of the book.

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[154] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (Folger Shakespeare Library text), 2.1.114–115 (Polonius) and 3.4.160–161 (Hamlet).

[155] William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (Folger Shakespeare Library text), 3.2.114.

[156] John Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale" (1819), lines 57–58.

**PIC §7** In Plotinus the mystical element in Platonism had been worked out to the utmost limit of vision and ecstasy.

**LEO §29** After Leonardo's return to Florence, the next four years are one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention.

**CON §5** To maintain this ecstasy, burning with a hard, gem-like flame, is success in life.

**CON §6** Great passions may give a quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love.

**C73 §6** In 1873, too, to maintain this ecstasy is success in life.

**C73 §7** In 1873 the ecstasy and sorrow of love is the first of the high passions that give this quickened sense of life.

## In this edition

The 1873 text has the same sentence on maintaining the ecstasy, without the comma in "hard gem-like flame" (C73 §6), and names the ecstasy and sorrow of love first among the "High passions" that "give one this quickened sense of life"; in the revised text they are "Great passions" that "may give us" it (CON §6; C73 §7; see Political or religious enthusiasm).

## See also

Hard, gem-like flame; Invention; Poetic passion; Political or religious enthusiasm; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Shutting the eyes; Vision and ecstasy.

# Ennui

*The weariness that follows effort or attainment: Leonardo's air, Du Bellay's sorrow, the danger of every perfect life · The Renaissance*

*ennui*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French for weariness of spirit: the tedium of a life that has lost its savour.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This agitation, this perpetual delay, give him an air of weariness and ennui" (LEO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §20, with WIN §44.

## Meaning

The French *ennui* comes from the Old French *enui*, from the Latin phrase *in odio esse*, to be hateful; English "annoy" has the same source. In the French literature of the nineteenth century the word became the name of a malady of the age, a weariness without cause: Chateaubriand's René

suffers from it,[157] and Baudelaire, in the poem that opens *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857), made Ennui the worst of the vices.[158] Pater uses the French word for what English "boredom" does not reach, a weariness of the spirit rather than a want of occupation.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is in the twentieth paragraph of the Leonardo essay, which describes his years at Milan as a struggle between curiosity and the desire of beauty (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty). "How much must he leave unfinished, how much recommence!" The struggle shows in the work and in the man: "This agitation, this perpetual delay, give him an air of weariness and ennui. To others he seems to be aiming at an impossible effect, to do something that art, that painting, can never do" (LEO §20). Leonardo's ennui is an "air", the look he has to others, and its cause is the opposite of idleness. It is the weariness of an effort that cannot reach its end.

The weariness runs on through the essay. In the next paragraph Leonardo's is the genius which, "as Goethe said, had 'thought itself weary'" (LEO §21), and the note at LEO §21 renders the German *müde sich gedacht* "Thought himself weary". La Gioconda's eyelids "are a little weary" (LEO §31; see Ends of the world). The essay can be read as setting Leonardo's weariness at both ends of his art: in the delay before the work, and in the face of its masterpiece. The remedy, on one reading, is the moment of *bien-être*, "the happy moment" of well-being in which the delay ends and the idea "is stricken into colour and imagery" (LEO §21; see Bien-être).

The Du Bellay essay gives ennui as a modern sentiment. Du Bellay's sonnets convey "the ennui of a dreamer who must plunge into the world's affairs" (BEL §21; see Home-sickness). Pater finds the modern malady in a poet of the sixteenth century: the same paragraph says that the name of his *Regrets* "has a touch of Rousseau about it, and reminds one of a whole generation of self-pitying poets in modern times" (BEL §21; see Pity). In the Winckelmann essay the word is used twice. The "crabbed Protestantism" of Winckelmann's German upbringing "had been the ennui of his youth" (WIN §12): ennui there is the tedium of an imposed creed. And the essay's account of Greek life turns on it. The Hellenic ideal, in which "man is at unity with himself", was not enough, for "if he was to be saved from the ennui which ever attaches itself to realisation, even the realisation of the perfect life, it was necessary that a conflict should come, that some sharper note should grieve the existing harmony" (WIN §44).

The uses give ennui two sources. In Leonardo it comes from delay, from an effort that cannot be finished; in Winckelmann's Greece it comes from attainment, from a perfection that has nothing more to do. On this reading the book's cure for both is the same: not rest but the intense moment. The

[157] François-René de Chateaubriand, *René* (1802).

[158] Charles Baudelaire, "Au lecteur", *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857).

Conclusion ventures that "in a sense" our failure is to form habits, "for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world" (CON §5), and asks instead for a life of quickened moments (see Hard, gem-like flame). Ennui is what that life is meant to escape.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ennui" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §20** Leonardo's agitation and perpetual delay give him an air of weariness and ennui.

**BEL §21** Du Bellay's sonnets convey the ennui of a dreamer who must plunge into the world's affairs.

**WIN §12** Crabbed Protestantism had been the ennui of Winckelmann's youth.

**WIN §~~44~~** To be saved from the ennui that attaches to realisation, even of the perfect life, a conflict had to come.

## See also

Bien-être; Desire of beauty; Disgust; Ends of the world; Hard, gem-like flame; Home-sickness; Pity.

# Enthusiasm of humanity

*The love of mankind as a passion: J. R. Seeley's phrase, which the Conclusion of 1873 sets last among the high passions · The Renaissance*
*the 'enthusiasm of humanity'*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A devotion to mankind strong enough to rule a life.

**In *The Renaissance*.** High passions give "this quickened sense of life", among them "political or religious enthusiasm, or the 'enthusiasm of humanity'" (C73 §7).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §7 says that the first edition names political or religious enthusiasm and the "enthusiasm of humanity" among passions that sharpen experience, and that the final version leaves the examples more open.

**A place to read.** C73 §7.

## Meaning

The quotation marks point to a book. *Ecce Homo: A Survey of the Life and Work of Jesus Christ*, published anonymously by Macmillan at the end of 1865, was the work of J. R. Seeley, and its fourteenth chapter is called

"The Enthusiasm of Humanity".[159] Seeley meant by it the passion for mankind that Christ kindled in his followers, a "love of man as man", which he made the root of Christian morality, kindled and kept alive by personal devotion to Christ himself. The book was read and fought over for years; the statesman W. E. Gladstone wrote at length in its defence in *Good Words*.[160] Pater quotes the phrase without naming its author.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes a list. In 1873 Pater ranks the ways of spending the interval of life, "some in high passions, the wisest in art and song", and names the high passions: the ecstasy and sorrow of love, political or religious enthusiasm, the enthusiasm of humanity (C73 §7; see Listlessness; Political or religious enthusiasm). All of them must pass the same test of passion (C73 §7; see Political or religious enthusiasm). For Seeley the enthusiasm of humanity was the source of conduct; in the Conclusion it is valued for what it gives the one who feels it. The quotation marks can be read as holding the phrase at that distance: Pater takes over the passion and leaves its morality behind.

The paragraph before names Comte among the facile orthodoxies (C73 §6; see Facile orthodoxy), and Comte had made Humanity the object of a religion of his own.[161] Set beside it, the phrase can be read as a third way between the Christian and the positivist faith in man: neither a creed nor a cult, only a passion among the others.

The revised text has instead "the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise" (CON §6; see Enthusiasm). The quotation goes, and with it the echo of a book that many readers had taken as a challenge to the faith. "Disinterested" can be read as keeping something of the love of man as man, but the phrase is no longer marked as borrowed.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the revised sentence, in the order of the book.

**CON §6** In the revised text the great passions that may give this quickened sense of life include the various forms of enthusiastic activity.

**C73 §7** In 1873 the high passions include political or religious enthusiasm, or the enthusiasm of humanity.

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[159] [J. R. Seeley], *Ecce Homo: A Survey of the Life and Work of Jesus Christ* (London, 1866 [1865]), chapter XIV, "The Enthusiasm of Humanity".

[160] W. E. Gladstone, "Ecce Homo", *Good Words* 9 (1868), pp. 33 ff.; reprinted as *"Ecce Homo"* (London: Strahan, 1868).

[161] Auguste Comte, *Système de politique positive, ou Traité de sociologie instituant la Religion de l'Humanité*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1851–1854).

## Later readings

The phrase did not keep its fame. The novelist and critic Margaret Oliphant and her son F. R. Oliphant, looking back in 1892, thought that few at least of the younger readers would recognise the "Enthusiasm of Humanity" even as a name.[162]

## See also

Enthusiasm; Facile orthodoxy; Listlessness; Political or religious enthusiasm; Quickened, multiplied consciousness.

### Exile

*exile*; *exiles*; *d'exil*

Attested: *exile* (PIC §2; BEL §22); *exiles* (BOT §5); *d'exil* (BEL §6). Exile is banishment from one's country, from the Latin *exilium*; the person who lives in it, also an exile, takes the name from *exul*. Pater's exiles are of three kinds. The first are gods: the second paragraph of the Pico essay quotes the German poet Heinrich Heine's *Gods in Exile*, which tells how the gods of the older world lived on in hiding after the triumph of Christianity (PIC §2; see Decayed gods). The second are figures of art: Botticelli's persons have "a sense of displacement or loss about them—the wistfulness of exiles" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles). The third is the poet. In Rome, Pater says, Du Bellay's thoughts went back less to the real France than to an ideal country, "which the fancy of the exile, and the pilgrim, and of the schoolboy far from home, and of those kept at home unwillingly, everywhere builds up before or behind them" (BEL §22; see La douceur Angevine). The list makes exile one of a family of absences, and the schoolboy and those "kept at home unwillingly" show that it is a state of mind as much as a place. The essay's poem of April gives the word its gentlest use: April brings back from exile, *d'exil*, the swallows, messengers of spring (BEL §6; see Doulce haleine). There the exile returns.

## See also

Decayed gods; Doulce haleine; Home-sickness; La douceur Angevine; Wistfulness of exiles.

### Gentile

*The noble heart of the love-poets, the word Michelangelo learned from Dante · The Renaissance*

*gentile*; *gentil*

[162] Mrs. Oliphant and F. R. Oliphant, *The Victorian Age of English Literature*, 2 vols. (London, 1892), II, 45–46.

## At a Glance

**The word.** Italian, "noble, gentle": in the love-lyric, the inward nobility of the heart fit for love.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo recalls Dante "in the repetition of the words *gentile* and *cortesia*" (MIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §15 says that "*gentile* suggests an inward nobility or refinement".

**A place to read.** MIC §15.

## Meaning

The Latin *gentilis* meant belonging to a *gens*, a clan; medieval Latin and the Romance languages made it "well-born, noble" (see Li gentix). The Italian poets of the thirteenth century, the school that Dante, through the mouth of the poet Bonagiunta, called the "sweet new style", gave it a new sense: nobility not of blood but of heart. The Bolognese poet Guido Guinizelli's canzone begins "Al cor gentil rempaira sempre amore", "Love always returns to the noble heart", and Dante's most famous sonnet in the *Vita Nuova* begins "Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare / la donna mia", "So noble and so honest seems my lady".[163] *Gentile* became the word of a whole doctrine: love can live only in the gentle heart, and the gentle heart is known by its love.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the third sentence of the fifteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which lists the ways in which Michelangelo, though moulded by the Platonists, "is really like Dante, and comes very near to the original image, beyond those later and feebler followers in the wake of Petrarch" (MIC §15): "He recalls him in the repetition of the words *gentile* and *cortesia*, in the personification of Amor, in the tendency to dwell minutely on the physical effects of the presence of a beloved object on the pulses and the heart" (MIC §15; see Cortesia; Amor; Pulsation).

The list is a lesson in how influence shows. It is less in ideas, most of which Michelangelo took from Plato, than in words, figures and attention, though the paragraph names one idea too: he learns from Dante "rather than from Plato" that the surfeiting of desire is less happy than "poverty with abundance of hope" (MIC §15; see Surfeiting of desire). The rest is the vocabulary of the gentle heart, the personified lord of love, the physiology of the lover's response. These are the marks of a style learned by long reading, and they place Michelangelo "beyond" the Petrarchists, nearer to the source. The essay has already said that he spent a year in Bologna "rewarding his hospitality by readings from the Italian poets whom he loved" (MIC §7).

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[163] Guido Guinizelli, canzone "Al cor gentil rempaira sempre amore"; Dante, *Vita Nuova* XXVI; on the "sweet new style", *Purgatorio* XXIV.57.

The French form of the word appears in the Du Bellay essay, in "Avril", a poem addressed to the month of April by Rémy Belleau, one of the six poets who joined Ronsard in the Pleiad: "*C'est toy, courtois et gentil*", "It is you, courteous and gentle" (BEL §6). The pair "courtois et gentil" is the French twin of Michelangelo's *gentile* and *cortesia*, and it can be read as showing the words' fate: in the sixteenth-century French lyric they have become graceful epithets for a month of spring, as Amor has become "Love the boy" (BEL §16; see Amor).

The word is perhaps the book's clearest instance of a medieval idea surviving inside the Renaissance. The Michelangelo essay calls him "the last of the Florentines" (MIC §17); the gentle heart of Guinizelli and Dante is one of the things he inherited, and the repetition of the word is the sign that he knew it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which *gentile* or *gentil* occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo recalls Dante in the repetition of the words gentile and cortesia.

**BEL §6** In Rémy Belleau's Avril, April is courtois et gentil.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §15 says that "In courtly and early Italian lyric vocabulary, gentile suggests an inward nobility or refinement. Cortesia means courtesy, with connotations of generosity and gracious conduct. Amor is Love personified."

## See also

Amor; Cortesia; Li gentix; Pulsation; Surfeiting of desire.

# Home-sickness

*Du Bellay's sorrow in Rome, and the regret of all creatures for the familiar earth · The Renaissance*

*home-sickness*; *nostalgia*; *inverted home-sickness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The longing of one who is far from home for the place he has left.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Du Bellay's Roman poems convey "a longing for rest, nostalgia, home-sickness" (BEL §21).

**In this edition.** The Introduction says, of the experiences that connect the book's chapters, that "A lyric can make homesickness audible."

**A place to read.** BEL §§12, 21–22.

## Meaning

"Home-sickness" is the English form of the German *Heimweh*, the ache for home; the learned word "nostalgia", from the Greek *nostos*, return home, and *algos*, pain, was made for the same condition by the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer in a medical dissertation of 1688, which treated it as a disease.[164] Pater uses both words, side by side, and ends on the English one. He makes the plain word a name for one of the deepest of sorrows without letting it lose its plainness: home-sickness is "pre-eminently childish, but so suggestive".

## Use in the book

Home-sickness is the experience the Du Bellay essay turns on. In the life it is the condition of the poet's best work. Du Bellay went with his kinsman the Cardinal to Rome and "remained there nearly five years, burdened with the weight of affairs, and languishing with home-sickness. Yet it was under these circumstances that his genius yielded its best fruits" (BEL §12). The "Yet" is the essay's argument. Rome, "so full of pleasurable sensation for men of an imaginative temperament such as his" (BEL §12), did not hold him; his thoughts went back "painfully, longingly, to the country of the Loire, with its wide expanse of waving corn, its homely pointed roofs of grey slate, and its far-off scent of the sea" (BEL §12; see Homely art). The sorrow gave the poetry its subject and its truth.

In the criticism it is what gives the poetry its value. The twenty-first paragraph looks in Du Bellay for "the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality" (BEL §21; see Æsthetic value), and finds it, after Sainte-Beuve, in the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets*: "The trouble of his life is analysed, and the sentiment of it conveyed directly to our minds; not a great sorrow or passion, but only the sense of loss in passing days, the ennui of a dreamer who must plunge into the world's affairs, the opposition between actual life and the ideal" (BEL §21). The list ends on home-sickness, and the sentence widens it at once: "that pre-eminently childish, but so suggestive sorrow, as significant of the final regret of all human creatures for the familiar earth and limited sky" (BEL §21). A man who longs for his village is, in little, every creature that must leave the earth.

The next paragraph shows what the longing makes. From the stately aspects of Rome, Du Bellay's thoughts went back to France, but "not so much to the real France, we may be sure, with its dark streets and roofs of rough-hewn slate, as to that other country" which the fancy of the exile builds (BEL §22; see La douceur Angevine; Exile). Home-sickness idealises. The country it longs for has "slenderer towers, and more winding rivers, and trees like flowers" (BEL §22), and the poetry it makes can be read as a portrait of that imagined home, not of the real one.

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[164] Johannes Hofer, *Dissertatio medica de nostalgia, oder Heimwehe* (Basel, 1688).

The Winckelmann essay gives the word twice more, and both uses turn it. As Winckelmann left Rome in 1768, after twelve years there, "a strange, inverted home-sickness, a strange reluctance to leave it at all, came over him" (WIN §21). The German who had found his true country in the south longs for it on the way north; Du Bellay's sorrow is reversed, and the essay can be read as answering the one with the other. Rome is Du Bellay's exile and Winckelmann's home. Four paragraphs later the word reaches the "final regret" that the Du Bellay essay had named. Of the pagan sentiment Pater writes: "It is with a rush of home-sickness that the thought of death presents itself" (WIN §25; see Heathen sorrow); the man of that religion "would remain at home for ever on the earth if he could" (WIN §25). Home is now the earth itself, and death the exile. The three uses together give the book's history of the feeling: a poet's longing for Anjou, a scholar's for Rome, and every creature's for the familiar earth and limited sky.

Madame de Staël's phrase in the Winckelmann essay, "that weariness of the north (cette fatigue du nord)" (WIN §3; see Cette fatigue du nord), names the opposite longing, the northerner's for the south, and Winckelmann's "weariness of the north" revives with double force before his death (WIN §21). Between home-sickness and the weariness of the north the book can be read as holding the two directions of desire: for the place one has left, and for the place one has never had.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "home-sickness" or "nostalgia" occurs, with WIN §3, where the "weariness of the north" is named, in the order of the book.

**BEL §12** In Rome Du Bellay languished with home-sickness, and his genius yielded its best fruits.

**BEL §21** The *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets* convey nostalgia, home-sickness, the final regret of all human creatures for the familiar earth.

**WIN §3** Madame de Staël names the weariness of the north that drew the northern peoples south.

**WIN §21** As he left Rome a strange, inverted home-sickness came over Winckelmann.

**WIN §25** In the pagan sentiment the thought of death comes with a rush of home-sickness.

## In this edition

The Outline sums up the essay in the same terms: "Du Bellay's experience of Rome yields a poetry of distance in which the small particularities of home become newly distinct." The notes at BEL §12 give the village of Liré, "affectionately named in Regrets 31", where "the village and its familiar slate are set against Rome and its marble" (see La douceur

Angevine), and date Du Bellay's service in the Cardinal's household in Rome "from 1553 to 1557", where Pater has him leave for Rome in 1552. The note at WIN §3 says that "Pater later gives that homesickness a geographic reversal when Winckelmann wants to return to Rome."

## See also

Æsthetic value; Cette fatigue du nord; Ennui; Exile; Heathen sorrow; Homely art; Intimité; La douceur Angevine; Pleasurable sensation.

# Ideal intensity of love

*Love carried to its height, the motive of Aucassin and Nicolette · The Renaissance*
*ideal intensity of love*; *ideal intensity of passion*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The phrase names love in its highest and most concentrated form, an ideal in being carried beyond ordinary measure.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Aucassin and Nicolette, among the lighter matter, Pater gathers "these expressions of the ideal intensity of love, the motive which really unites together the fragments of the little composition" (FRE §29). Dante is its type, and "Aucassin represents this ideal intensity of passion" (FRE §29).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §29 explains Dante's "Lord of terrible aspect".

**A place to read.** FRE §§29–31.

## Meaning

"Ideal" here is what belongs to the idea or the perfect type, and so what goes beyond the actual; "intensity" is concentration of force. Together they describe the love of the Provençal poets and of Dante, love made into a cult with its own lord, its own sufferings and its own perfection.

## Use in the book

The phrase marks a turn in the reading of the tale. Most of Aucassin and Nicolette is "lighter matter, always tinged with humour and often passing into burlesque" (FRE §29; see Burlesque), "But scattered up and down" it "there are morsels of a different quality, touches of some intenser sentiment, coming it would seem from the profound and energetic spirit of the Provençal poetry itself". Pater gathers them up: "these morsels of deeper colour, these expressions of the ideal intensity of love, the motive which really unites together the fragments of the little composition" (FRE §29). The tale's unity is in its feeling, not its plot.

Dante gives the standard: in him the tyranny of the Lord of terrible aspect became "actually physical", and "In this, Dante is but the central expression and type of experiences known well enough to the initiated, in that passionate age" (FRE §29; see Lord of terrible aspect). The ideal intensity of love is felt in the body. Aucassin bears it so: he "faints with love, as Dante fainted", has "the malady of his love", and in battle is carried among his enemies like one who sleeps walking (FRE §31; see Malady of love); he is "the very image of the Provençal love-god" (FRE §31; see Love-god).

The phrase can be read as the counterpart of the comradeship of the first story. Amis and Amile showed the strength of the medieval Renaissance; Aucassin shows its sweetness carried to excess (FRE §19; see Malady of love).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the two that follow it.

**FRE §29** The expressions of the ideal intensity of love unite the fragments of Aucassin and Nicolette; Dante is its type; Aucassin represents it.

**FRE §30** The song's lines on Aucassin, the handsome, the fair-haired, the noble, the loving.

**FRE §31** Aucassin faints with love as Dante fainted, has the malady of his love, and is the image of the Provençal love-god.

## Pater's sources

Dante tells the vision in the third chapter of the *Vita Nuova*: in a fire-coloured cloud he saw the figure of a lord *di pauroso aspetto*, of fearful aspect to those who looked on him. Pater's "Lord of terrible aspect" is the wording of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's translation of the *Vita Nuova*, in *The Early Italian Poets* (1861), "a lord of terrible aspect to such as should gaze upon him".[165]

## In this edition

The note at FRE §29 says that in the *Vita nuova* "Love appears as a lord with power over the poet", and that Pater invokes him "to show how the literature of ideal love describes its effects in the body". The note at FRE §30 translates Aucassin's epithets (see Li gentix).

## See also

Antinomianism; Burlesque; Comradeship; Li gentix; Lord of terrible aspect; Love-god; Malady of love.

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[165] Dante, *Vita Nuova* 3.3; D. G. Rossetti, *The Early Italian Poets* (London, 1861), the *Vita Nuova*, first vision, p. 226.

*The region into which strong feeling is withdrawn and so tranquillised: Michelangelo's years with Vittoria Colonna · The Renaissance*
*ideal sentiment*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sentiment is feeling, especially refined feeling; ideal sentiment is feeling raised above its occasions into an imagined, perfect form.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In it the lifelong effort to tranquillise his vehement emotions by withdrawing them into the region of ideal sentiment, becomes successful" (MIC §13).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §10 says that Pater's "account of the emotional character of the relationship" with Vittoria Colonna "is his own reconstruction".

**A place to read.** MIC §13, with MIC §12.

## Meaning

"Sentiment" in Pater is a central word (see Sentiment): feeling as it colours a mind or a work, more lasting than an emotion. "Ideal" lifts it into the realm of what is imagined and perfect. The phrase names a feeling held at a distance from its object, as one loves an ideal rather than a person, and so made calm.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the thirteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which defines the period of the friendship with Vittoria Colonna: "This charmed and temperate space in Michelangelo's life, without which its excessive strength would have been so imperfect, which saves him from the judgment of Dante on those who 'wilfully lived in sadness,' is then a well-defined period there, reaching from the year 1542 to the year 1547, the year of Vittoria's death. In it the lifelong effort to tranquillise his vehement emotions by withdrawing them into the region of ideal sentiment, becomes successful; and the significance of Vittoria is, that she realises for him a type of affection which even in disappointment may charm and sweeten his spirit" (MIC §13; see Wilfully lived in sadness; Realise).

"Region" makes ideal sentiment a place, and "withdrawing" a movement into it. Michelangelo does not suppress his vehement emotions; he moves them into a country where they can live without destroying him. The paragraph before has described that country: "that dreamy atmosphere in which men have things as they will, because the hold of all outward things upon them is faint and uncertain" (MIC §12). Vittoria "raised no great passion", and that is why the space where she reigns "has such peculiar

suavity" (MIC §12; see Suavity). Ideal sentiment requires that the object not press too hard.

The phrase gives the friendship its precise value. Vittoria is not the beloved of a great love-story but "a type of affection", a form of feeling that "even in disappointment" sweetens; the essay pointedly corrects those who read the poems as "a lover's complaint over the obduracy of Vittoria Colonna" (MIC §10). The ideal sentiment can be read as a condition in which even disappointment "may charm and sweeten", because the feeling does not depend on possession.

The phrase can be read as naming one of Pater's own ideals. The Conclusion asks for "a quickened, multiplied consciousness" (CON §6) and the burning of "this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5); the Michelangelo essay shows a quieter good, the strong man's feeling withdrawn into a region where it can be pensive and sweet. The "charmed and temperate space" is a refuge, and the essay values it as the place where Michelangelo's strength found its sweetness (see Ex forti dulcedo).

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §13** In the years with Vittoria Colonna the effort to withdraw his vehement emotions into the region of ideal sentiment became successful.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §10 says that "The surviving poems, drawings and letters register an intellectual and devotional friendship. Pater's account of the emotional character of the relationship is his own reconstruction."

## See also

Attune; Ex forti dulcedo; Idealise; Imaginative love; Realise; Sentiment; Suavity; Wilfully lived in sadness.

# Imaginative love

*Love lived in the imagination, the pattern Dante's Vita Nuova set and later poets kept up feebly · The Renaissance*

*imaginative love*; *imaginative loves*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Love that lives chiefly in the imagination, nourished by images and memories more than by possession.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "There was Dante, whose little book of the *Vita Nuova* had early become a pattern of imaginative love, maintained somewhat feebly by the later followers of Petrarch" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.
**A place to read.** MIC §14, with BEL §16.

## Meaning

Dante's *Vita Nuova*, written in the 1290s, tells in prose and verse of his love for Beatrice from their first meeting as children to her death and beyond. Almost nothing happens: he sees her, she greets him or withholds her greeting, he dreams of her, she dies. The love is real and lived almost wholly in the imagination, and the little book became the pattern of a kind of love that feeds on images and grows by distance. Petrarch's love for Laura, in the next century, gave the pattern its most influential form.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second sentence of the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which names the two models Michelangelo might have followed in his effort to idealise his feelings (see Idealise): "There was Dante, whose little book of the *Vita Nuova* had early become a pattern of imaginative love, maintained somewhat feebly by the later followers of Petrarch; and, since Plato had become something more than a name in Italy by the publication of the Latin translation of his works by Marsilio Ficino, there was the Platonic tradition also" (MIC §14; see Traditional friendship). Ficino's Latin Plato was printed in Florence in 1484 (see Platonic academy).

The next sentence sets out the difference, and the essay says that the Platonic tradition "rather than Dante's" has moulded his verse (MIC §14; see Bodily form). Imaginative love in Dante's sense keeps its images: Beatrice, even in heaven, loses "no tinge of flesh-colour, or fold of raiment even" (MIC §14), and Dante's story is "a piece of figured work" (MIC §14; see Figured style). Michelangelo's love, Platonic, presses through its images to the universal form (see Forma universale), and his poems have almost no incidents.

The plural returns twice. In the Du Bellay essay the loves of the Pleiad "are only half real, a vain effort to prolong the imaginative loves of the middle age beyond their natural lifetime" (BEL §16). In the Leonardo essay the face of La Gioconda bears the marks of "the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves" (LEO §31). In both, imaginative love is a medieval thing, belonging to an age now past; in the Pleiad it survives as convention, "half real".

On this reading the phrase is one of the book's measures of the passing of the middle age. In Dante imaginative love is fresh and complete, "a pattern"; in Petrarch's followers it is "maintained somewhat feebly"; in the Pleiad it is "a vain effort to prolong"; in La Gioconda it is one of the layers of the past that have "etched and moulded" a face. Michelangelo, whose verse the Platonic tradition "rather than Dante's" has moulded, yet who "is really like Dante" in much (MIC §15; see Gentile), stands at the turn.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "imaginative love" or "imaginative loves" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §14** Dante's *Vita Nuova* had early become a pattern of imaginative love.

**LEO §31** The mysticism of the middle age, with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, has moulded La Gioconda's face.

**BEL §16** The Pleiad's loves are a vain effort to prolong the imaginative loves of the middle age.

## See also

Bodily form; Figured style; Forma universale; Gentile; Ideal intensity of love; Idealise; Platonic academy; Traditional friendship.

# Ineffable melancholy

*The sadness beyond words that runs through all Botticelli's work · The Renaissance*

*ineffable melancholy*; *melancholy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Ineffable melancholy is a sadness that cannot be put into words.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The wistfulness of Botticelli's figures "runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §2 says that the date of Botticelli's death "now accepted is 1510", and that Pater "suspects that the later date available to him is wrong".

**A place to read.** BOT §5, with BOT §2.

## Meaning

*Ineffabilis* is the Latin for what cannot be spoken, and theology gave it to God and to the mysteries. Melancholy is the Greek *melancholia*, black bile, the humour whose excess made a person sad, slow and brooding. A treatise in the Aristotelian *Problems* had asked why all who excelled in philosophy, poetry or the arts seemed to be melancholic,[166] and in Botticelli's Florence Ficino made melancholy the scholar's temperament, born under Saturn, in the first book of his *Three Books on Life* (1489).[167] The word Pater uses carried a theory of genius with it.

[166] Aristotle (attributed), *Problems* XXX.1.

[167] Marsilio Ficino, *De vita libri tres* (Florence, 1489), book I.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the long sentence in which Pater names the sentiment of all Botticelli's figures, comely and "in a certain sense like angels", "the wistfulness of exiles" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles): the melancholy "runs through" all his work. The words "runs through" make it a thread, not a subject: it passes through Madonnas and Venuses alike, and "varied" insists on the range it crosses.

"Ineffable" is a paradox in an essay that sets out to define a feeling. Pater's way with it is to describe the melancholy by its causes rather than its content: displacement, loss, the shadow of great things from which men shrink (BOT §6), a passion greater than any outlet. The sadness cannot be said, but its conditions can, and the essay is a map of the conditions.

Pater distinguishes the work's melancholy from the man's, though he lets the Madonnas belong to "that dark period" (BOT §7). Botticelli's late life is another matter, the "religious melancholy" of his Savonarolan years (BOT §2; see Religious melancholy), and Pater "almost wishes" a document might shorten it, relieving one "of his dejected old age" (BOT §2). That melancholy is biographical, Savonarolan and dejected. The ineffable melancholy of the pictures is aesthetic and attractive: it is part of their "peculiar quality of pleasure" (BOT §1; see Peculiar quality of pleasure). Pater wants the first without the second, a sadness that charms without a life that ended in gloom.

The word returns twice beyond the essay. Leonardo's La Gioconda has, in suggestiveness, a rival only in "the Melancholia of Dürer" (LEO §30), the engraving of 1514 that made melancholy a figure of baffled genius; and the Winckelmann essay exclaims that "Scarcely a wild or melancholy note of the medieval church but was anticipated by Greek polytheism!" (WIN §26; see Pagan sentiment). The three uses can be read as a lineage: Greek religion already had the melancholy note, the Middle Ages deepened it, and Botticelli and Leonardo gave it a form the eye could hold. The humoral theory can be read into the phrase: melancholy may be taken as the complexion of Botticelli's mind as well as a mood he paints (see Complexion of humanity).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "melancholy" or "Melancholia" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §2** Botticelli passed his last years almost out of men's sight in a sort of religious melancholy.

**BOT §5** The wistfulness of exiles runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy.

**LEO §30** In suggestiveness only the Melancholia of Dürer is comparable to La Gioconda.

**WIN §26** Scarcely a wild or melancholy note of the medieval church was not anticipated by Greek polytheism.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §2 says: "The date now accepted is 1510. Pater himself suspects that the later date available to him is wrong, though his reason is a conjecture about the painter's last years."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Pagan sentiment; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Religious melancholy; Temperament; Wistfulness of exiles.

### Intellectual excitement

*intellectual excitement*

Attested: *intellectual excitement* (CON §§4, 6; C73 §§5, 7); *excitement* (PRE §6; ROB §12; LEO §29; BEL §§8, 13, 17; WIN §§14, 19, 33). Excitement is a calling out or rousing, from the Latin *excitare*. The book uses the word for the stir of discovery, as in Du Bellay's manifesto, which cannot be read "without feeling the excitement, the animation, of change, of discovery" (BEL §8), and for Winckelmann's enthusiasm, which, "dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament", reinforces the purer emotions of the intellect "with an almost physical excitement" (WIN §14; see Physical life). In the Conclusion the phrase comes twice. In the fourth paragraph "some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us,—for that moment only" (CON §4; see Moment). In the sixth it is Rousseau's choice. Believing himself mortally ill (see Literary sense), he asked how he might make the most of the interval that remained, "and he was not biassed by anything in his previous life when he decided that it must be by intellectual excitement, which he found just then in the clear, fresh writings of Voltaire" (CON §6; see Literary sense). The clause "not biassed by anything in his previous life" can be read as Pater's point: the choice was made freshly, under the pressure of death, and not by habit (see Habit). In the *Confessions* the reading of Voltaire belongs to the fifth book and the illness to the sixth; Pater joins them into one decision.[168]

## See also

Habit; Insight; Literary sense; Moment; Physical life.

[168] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Confessions* (Geneva, 1782), Book V (the reading of Voltaire) and Book VI (the illness at Les Charmettes).

# Intimité

*The seal of what is most inward in a man, set on his work: expression at its highest degree · The Renaissance*

*intimité*; *intimacy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, "intimacy": the closeness of what is innermost, shared.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "What the French call *intimité*, by which is meant some subtler sense of originality—the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension" (ROB §13).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §13 says that the word "is the culmination of the essay's discussion of expression".

**A place to read.** ROB §13, with BEL §21.

## Meaning

French *intime* comes from the Latin *intimus*, innermost, the superlative answering to *interior*: the innermost. *Intimité* is the quality of the innermost, and in French usage it named both a close friendship and the private life of the home, the *vie intime*. In nineteenth-century French criticism it described a literature of private feeling, the poetry in which the writer confides his own moods. Pater takes the word from that criticism and applies it to sculpture.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the last paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which returns to the quality the essay began with. The fifteenth-century sculptors "bear the impress of a personal quality, a profound expressiveness, what the French call *intimité*, by which is meant some subtler sense of originality—the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension: it is what we call expression, carried to its highest intensity of degree" (ROB §13).

The sentence names one quality five times: impress, expressiveness, *intimité*, originality, seal (see Expressiveness; Originality). The repetition is a way of circling a thing that has no single English word. Two of the names are images of the same act: an impress and a seal are both the mark a stamp leaves in wax, and the image makes the work the wax and the man the seal. What the seal carries is "what is most inward and peculiar" in two things, moods and "manner of apprehension" (see Manner of apprehension; Mood). The last clause gives the definition its place in the essay: *intimité* is not a separate quality but "expression, carried to its highest intensity of

degree" (see Expression). The essay has been about expression from its first paragraph; it ends by naming expression's extreme.

The following sentences rank the arts by it, "rare in poetry, rarer still in art, rarest of all in the abstract art of sculpture", and make it, "essentially, perhaps", "the quality which alone makes work in the imaginative order really worth having at all" (ROB §13; see Imaginative order). The essay's claim is that the Tuscan sculptors achieved, in the art least suited to it, the quality that matters most.

The Du Bellay essay finds the word in its home ground, French poetry. Sainte-Beuve "thought he found" the writer's own impress in the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets*, and ranked them as *poésie intime*, poetry whose writer has for his aim "the portraiture of his own most intimate moods" (BEL §21; see Poésie intime), and Pater, after a reservation, agrees: "And in effect you do find intimacy, *intimité*, here" (BEL §21). What he finds is quiet: "not a great sorrow or passion, but only the sense of loss in passing days", ending in home-sickness (BEL §21; see Home-sickness). The same paragraph finds "this intimacy of sentiment" in the *Essays* of the sixteenth-century French essayist Michel de Montaigne and in "the carvings of the church of Brou" (BEL §21), sculpture again.

The two uses can be read together as Pater's definition of the personal in art. *Intimité* is not the display of great passion; it is the presence of a temperament in small things, a smile, a home-sickness, the way a sculptor tilts a head. It is found in Du Bellay's minor poems and in a school of carvers whose histories are lost, and in both it does what the della Robbia essay says it does: it brings the maker close to the one who looks or reads (see Expressiveness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which *intimité* occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §13** Intimité, some subtler sense of originality, is expression carried to its highest intensity of degree.

**BEL §21** Sainte-Beuve thought he found poésie intime in the Antiquités de Rome and the Regrets; you do find intimacy, intimité, there.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §13 glosses the word as "Intimacy or inwardness", and says that "In Pater's use the word suggests a work's capacity to convey something inward and individual about its maker. It is the culmination of the essay's discussion of expression." The note at BEL §21 says that Pater uses *poésie intime* "for poetry that lets a reader into the poet's moods and private experience".

## See also

Expression; Expressiveness; Home-sickness; Imaginative order; Inwardness; Manner of apprehension; Mood; Originality; Poésie intime.

# Introspection

*The mind looking into itself: the medieval habit Michelangelo inherited · The Renaissance*
*introspection*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The act of looking into one's own mind, observing one's own thoughts and feelings.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo's genius was "penetrated by" the middle age's "spirit of inwardness and introspection" (ROB §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §9.

## Meaning

The Latin *introspicere* is to look into, to look within. The English noun appeared in the 1670s for close inspection of any kind; the sense of searching one's own thoughts and feelings dates from the early nineteenth century. Pater uses it of the Christian middle age.

## Use in the book

The word occurs once, paired with "inwardness" in the sentence that describes the genius Michelangelo brought to sculpture: a genius "spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age, penetrated by its spirit of inwardness and introspection" (ROB §9; see Inwardness). The two words differ. Inwardness is a direction of life, toward the soul; introspection is an activity, the soul observing itself. The middle age, on this reading, did both: it lived inwardly and it examined that inward life, in confession, in the examination of conscience, in the mystics' records of the soul's states.

The attribution is Pater's historical judgement, and it explains why Michelangelo could not be content with Greek sculpture. An art that purged "what belonged only to" the individual (ROB §9; see Abstraction) had no place for the "special history of the special soul" (ROB §9; see Individual expression), and a mind trained to introspection finds that history the most interesting thing there is. The word can be read as placing the origin of modern subjectivity not in the Renaissance's recovery of Greece but in the habits of the Christian centuries before it.

The rest of the book, without the word, describes the same habit in its modern form. The Winckelmann essay speaks of the romantic arts as suited to "a consciousness brooding with delight over itself" (WIN §33), and of

Browning's "double and treble reflexions of the mind upon itself" (WIN §36); Greek thought, by contrast, had not yet learned "to boast its independence of the flesh" (WIN §28). The Conclusion carries introspection to its end, in the analysis that leaves each mind "keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world" (CON §3).

The word can be read as a hinge between the della Robbia essay and the Conclusion. In sculpture, the introspective mind gave Michelangelo his subject, the soul made visible; in modern thought, carried far enough, it isolates the soul altogether. The Tuscan sculptors, whose *intimité* carries the inward man to the viewer (see Intimité), show introspection made into a bond instead of a prison.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**ROB §9** Michelangelo's genius was penetrated by the medieval spirit of inwardness and introspection.

## See also

Abstraction; Individual expression; Intimité; Inwardness; Reverie; Spiritualise.

# Inward similitude

*Likeness of soul, of which bodily likeness is the sign · The Renaissance inward similitude*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Similitude is likeness; an inward similitude is a likeness of souls or natures.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The bodily resemblance of Amis and Amile, "that curious interest of the Doppelgänger", runs through their story "like an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls"; the two matching cups are "a second reflexion of that inward similitude" (FRE §10).

**In this edition.** The notes at FRE §10 gloss the Doppelgänger and the Dioscuri and set the cups against Othello's handkerchief; the note at FRE §12 sets them against the lepers' rattles.

**A place to read.** FRE §10.

## Meaning

The Latin *similitudo* is likeness, resemblance; in English "similitude" kept a learned flavour, and in the Bible and in theology it named a likeness or image, as when men are "made after the similitude of God" (James 3:9, in the King James Version). "Inward" sets the likeness in the soul. Pater's phrase makes the outward resemblance a sign of an inner one.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the centre of a paragraph about signs. The entire personal resemblance of the two heroes, "that curious interest of the Doppelgänger" (FRE §10; see Doppelgänger; Dioscuri), runs through the story "like an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls" (FRE §10). The bodily likeness stands as a token of the likeness of souls, and the story uses it, as the friends take each other's places.

A second token follows, "like a second reflexion of that inward similitude": the two matching cups given to the friends at their baptism (FRE §10; see Conceit; Baptism), which serve them almost like living things (FRE §10; see Handiwork). It is by the cup that Amile knows the leper at his gate. His servant, sent out with wine, comes back to say, "Sir, if I had not thy cup in my hand, I should believe that the cup which the sick man has was thine, for they are alike, the one to the other, in height and fashion" (FRE §12). Bodily likeness and the likeness of the cups are two reflexions of one inward likeness.

The phrase can be read as Pater's account of what friendship is in this story: not an attraction of opposites but a sameness, so complete that one friend can stand in the other's place in a combat and the other can give his children for his friend. Pater's choice of the grave biblical word can be read as giving that sameness something of the dignity of the likeness between man and God.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, and the paragraph in which the matching cup brings the friends together.

**FRE §10** The likeness of Amis and Amile is an outward token of the inward similitude of their souls; the two cups are a second reflexion of it.

**FRE §12** Amile knows the leper for his comrade by the cup like his own.

## In this edition

The notes at FRE §10 and FRE §12 gloss the Doppelgänger and the Dioscuri (see Doppelgänger; Dioscuri), and set the matched cups against Othello's handkerchief and against the lepers' rattles (see Rattle; Sense of fate).

## See also

Baptism; Comradeship; Conceit; Dioscuri; Doppelgänger; Handiwork; Rattle; Sense of fate.

*The medieval spirit that brought Michelangelo's soul to the surface of the stone · The Renaissance*

*inwardness*; *inward*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of being turned within, toward the mind's own life of thought and feeling.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo came "with a genius spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age, penetrated by its spirit of inwardness and introspection" (ROB §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §9, with WIN §§27–28.

## Meaning

"Inward" is the Old English *inweard*, toward the inside; the noun "inwardness", in English since the late fourteenth century, is the quality of what is turned within. Pater sets it against the "outward life" of the Greek.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the sentence in the ninth paragraph of the della Robbia essay that brings Michelangelo into the argument. After the Greek system of abstraction, which sacrificed expression (see Abstraction), "When Michelangelo came, therefore, with a genius spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age, penetrated by its spirit of inwardness and introspection, living not a mere outward life like the Greek, but a life full of intimate experiences, sorrows, consolations, a system which sacrificed so much of what was inward and unseen could not satisfy him" (ROB §9; see Introspection; Spiritualise). The next sentence states what he wanted instead, work that would "bring what was inward to the surface" (ROB §9; see Individual expression).

The sentence makes Michelangelo the heir of the middle age, not only of Greece. His inwardness is medieval in origin, a habit of the soul formed by centuries of Christian reverie, and it is what divides him from the sculptors he studied. The Greek lived "a mere outward life"; Michelangelo's was "full of intimate experiences, sorrows, consolations", words from the language of devotion. The contrast restates the book's history of the Renaissance as a meeting of two inheritances (see Medieval Renaissance).

The Winckelmann essay gives the other side. The art of the Christian middle age "is always struggling to express thoughts beyond itself" (WIN §27), and "As in the middle age from an exaggerated inwardness, so in the East from a vagueness, a want of definition, in thought, the matter presented to art is unmanageable" (WIN §27). Greek thought, by contrast,

"finds its happy limit; it has not yet become too inward" (WIN §28). Inwardness that was Michelangelo's gift is, in excess, the defect of medieval art: it brings more to the surface than the surface can hold. The romantic arts, painting, music and poetry, "project in an external form that which is most inward in passion or sentiment" (WIN §33), and sculpture deals with the human form, "itself one entire medium of spiritual expression, trembling, blushing, melting into dew, with inward excitement" (WIN §33).

At the end of the della Robbia essay the word marks the highest degree of expression: *intimité* is "the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods" (ROB §13; see Intimité). The Conclusion turns to "the inward world of thought and feeling", where "the whirlpool is still more rapid" (CON §3).

Taken this way, inwardness is one of the book's great pivots. The Greek ideal is outward and serene; the modern spirit is inward and troubled; the art Pater seeks is the one that brings the inward to the surface without breaking the surface. The Tuscan sculptors, "midway between" the Greek and Michelangelo (ROB §11), are his example.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "inwardness" or "inward" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §10** The resemblance of Amis and Amile is an inward similitude, reflected again in their twin cups.

**PIC §7** Pico's outward form seems an image of his inward harmony; the Platonists derive "mystic" from shutting the eyes, to see the more, inwardly.

**ROB §9** Michelangelo's genius was penetrated by the medieval spirit of inwardness and introspection; Greek sculpture sacrificed what was inward and unseen.

**ROB §13** Intimité is the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods.

**WIN §27** In the middle age an exaggerated inwardness made the matter presented to art unmanageable.

**WIN §28** Greek thought has not yet become too inward.

**WIN §33** The romantic arts project what is most inward in passion; the human form trembles with inward excitement.

**CON §3** In the inward world of thought and feeling the whirlpool is still more rapid.

**C73 §3** In 1873, the same sentence.

## See also

Abstraction; Individual expression; Intimité; Introspection; Inward harmony; Inward similitude; Medieval Renaissance; Mystic; Reverie; Spiritualise; Unseen beauty.

## Keep faith

*keep faith*; *faithful*, *faithfulness*

Attested: *keep faith* (FRE §§15, 16); *faithful* (FRE §§7, 15, 33); *faithfulness* (WIN §12). To keep one's pledged word to another; "faith" is the Latin *fides*, trust and loyalty as well as belief. Amile's resolve to slay his children turns on the phrase: "If this man was ready to die before the king for me, shall I not for him slay my children? Shall I not keep faith with him who was faithful to me even unto death?" (FRE §15). His prayer as he washes his friend can be read as joining the two senses of faith: "Lord Jesus Christ! who hast commanded men to keep faith on earth, and didst heal the leper by Thy word! cleanse now my comrade" (FRE §16; see Leprosy). Pater's own phrase for the friendship, "more than faithful unto death" (FRE §§7, 33), can be read as outbidding the charge to the church at Smyrna in the book of Revelation, "be thou faithful unto death" (Revelation 2:10, in the King James Version). In the Winckelmann essay faith is kept with art: it is "by desperate faithfulness" to the artistic interest that Winckelmann "was saved from a mediocrity" (WIN §12).

## See also

Amity; Comradeship; Leprosy.

## Liberty of the heart

*The freedom of affection that marks the medieval Renaissance · The Renaissance*

*liberty of the heart*; *liberty of heart*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Liberty of the heart is freedom of feeling: the right of love and affection to follow their own course, against the limits a moral or religious system sets them.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the poetry of Provence "earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety—the liberty of the heart—makes itself felt", and Abelard joins it to "the liberty of the intellect" (FRE §2). The medieval Renaissance is "that assertion of the liberty of the heart", and its antinomian side is "that sinister claim for liberty of heart and thought" (FRE §32). In the friendship of Amis and Amile "the liberty of the heart

makes itself felt", in a story that "seems, as we have it, to have been written by a monk" (FRE §33).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §§32–33, where the same liberty appears first as rebellion and then as harmony.

## Meaning

"Liberty" is the Latin *libertas*, the condition of a free man; "the heart" is the old seat of the affections. The phrase was old in devotional writing, where the *Imitation of Christ* promises "great liberty of heart", *magnam cordis libertatem*, to those who take the narrow way for God's sake and set aside all worldly care.[169] Pater's liberty can be read as running the other way, towards the world, and beside it he sets "the liberty of the intellect" (FRE §2). Love and friendship become a domain where freedom can be won or refused, as in the Preface's "the breaking down of those limits which the religious system of the middle age imposed on the heart and the imagination" (PRE §6).

## Use in the book

The phrase arrives as a gloss. In the profane poetry of Provence and its after-growth in Italy and France, earthly passion makes itself felt, and Pater names it, between dashes, "the liberty of the heart" (FRE §2; see Earthly passion; After-growth). It has a twin at once: the name of Abelard, "the great scholar and the great lover", connects "this liberty of heart" with the free play of the intelligence and with "the liberty of the intellect, as that age understood it" (FRE §2; see Free play; Liberty of the intellect).

The paragraph on antinomianism gives the liberty its dark side. The medieval Renaissance is "that assertion of the liberty of the heart", and one of its strongest characteristics is its antinomianism (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). As Pater marks distinctions within the middle age, "that rebellion, that sinister claim for liberty of heart and thought, comes to the surface" (FRE §32). "Sinister" is a strong word. On one reading it gives the claim as religious authority saw it, the same authority that found the Franciscans "justly suspect" a few sentences later; Aucassin's readiness to go to hell with his mistress shows why.

The next paragraph turns to the House Beautiful, where the saints too have their place (FRE §33; see House Beautiful). Pater ends the essay with Amis and Amile, the great traditional friendship "in which, as I said, the liberty of the heart makes itself felt" (FRE §33; see Traditional friendship). The liberty that was rebellion in Aucassin is, in the friendship of the two comrades, at one with the church: their story was told as a saints' life, and their names were not "finally excluded from the martyrology" until the end of the seventeenth century (FRE §33). The essay can be read as arguing that

[169] Thomas à Kempis, *De imitatione Christi* III.10.

the liberty of the heart is not in itself against faith; it becomes rebellion only where a narrow system refuses it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §2** In Provençal poetry earthly passion, the liberty of the heart, makes itself felt; Abelard joins it to the liberty of the intellect.

**FRE §32** The medieval Renaissance was an assertion of the liberty of the heart; its antinomian claim for liberty of heart and thought comes to the surface.

**FRE §33** The friendship of Amis and Amile, in which the liberty of the heart makes itself felt, seems to have been written by a monk.

## See also

After-growth; Antinomianism; Comradeship; Earthly passion; Free play; House Beautiful; Liberty of the intellect; Medieval Renaissance; Traditional friendship; Worship of the body.

# Listlessness

*listlessness*

Attested: *listlessness* (CON §6; C73 §7). To be listless is to be without *list*, an old word for desire or inclination, kin to the verb "to list", to please, as in the wind that "bloweth where it listeth" (John 3:8). Listlessness is the want of wanting. Pater sets it first in his account of how the interval of life is spent: "Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest, at least among 'the children of this world,' in art and song" (CON §6; see Interval). The three are a scale, and listlessness is the bottom of it, the state in which the interval passes and nothing is had of it. The words in quotation marks are from the parable of the unjust steward, "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8), and the edition's note says that the qualification was added to the first edition's plain claim that the wisest spend their interval in art and song (C73 §7). Listlessness is the condition the whole Conclusion has argued against. Habit is the failure of the fifth paragraph (CON §5; see Habit), the failure to discriminate is "to sleep before evening" (CON §5; see Short day of frost and sun), and listlessness can be read as the waking form of the same sleep. The book's other word for it is *ennui*, the weariness that the Leonardo and Du Bellay essays find in their subjects (LEO §20; BEL §21; see Ennui).

## See also

Ennui; Habit; Interval; Short day of frost and sun.

### Lord of terrible aspect

*Lord of terrible aspect*

Attested: *Lord of terrible aspect* (FRE §29; BEL §16). Love as Dante saw him in the first vision of the *Vita Nuova*, a lord of fearful aspect; Pater's words are Dante Gabriel Rossetti's English (see Ideal intensity of love). Dante "has recorded how the tyranny of that 'Lord of terrible aspect' became actually physical, blinding his senses, and suspending his bodily forces" (FRE §29). The phrase returns in the Du Bellay essay to measure a decline. For the poets of the Pleiad the old mythology "becomes with them a mere toy. That 'Lord of terrible aspect,' Amor, has become Love the boy, or the babe" (BEL §16; see Love-god). The two places can be read as framing the history of the love-lyric in the book: in Dante love rules the body, in the Pleiad it is a plaything, and the Pleiad's loves are "a vain effort to prolong the imaginative loves of the middle age beyond their natural lifetime" (BEL §16). The note at FRE §29 says that in the *Vita nuova* "Love appears as a lord with power over the poet".

## See also

Ideal intensity of love; Love-god; Malady of love.

### Love of the impossible

*love of the impossible*

Attested: *love of the impossible* (LEO §10). Pater uses the phrase for the projects of Leonardo's years of study: "He was smitten with a love of the impossible—the perforation of mountains, changing the course of rivers, raising great buildings, such as the church of San Giovanni, in the air" (LEO §10). The church is the Baptistery of Florence, and Vasari tells that Leonardo proposed to lift it and set steps beneath it without bringing it down.[170] "Smitten" is the verb of love, and the phrase makes the engineer a lover. The sentence ends by naming the old art that promised such feats, "natural magic" (LEO §10; see Natural magic), and the next judges them "rather dreams" (LEO §10; see Natural magic). The word returns ten paragraphs later in another form. To others Leonardo seems to be aiming "at an impossible effect" (LEO §20; see Ennui). The two impossibles can be set side by side, the engineer's and the painter's: one asks nature to move

[170] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Leonardo da Vinci.

mountains, the other asks paint to do what paint cannot, and the essay's Leonardo is drawn to both.

## See also

Ennui; Natural magic.

## Love-child

*love-child*

Attested: *love-child* (LEO §4). "Love-child", a gentle English name for a child born outside marriage, is the word Pater chooses for Leonardo's birth: "The dishonour of illegitimacy hangs over his birth. Piero Antonio, his father, was of a noble Florentine house, of Vinci in the Val d'Arno, and Leonardo, brought up delicately among the true children of that house, was the love-child of his youth, with the keen, puissant nature such children often have" (LEO §4). The passage sets the hard word "illegitimacy" and the soft one side by side, and gives the child a temperament for his birth. The note at LEO §4 adds: Leonardo's father, "conventionally called Ser Piero, was a notary", and "The phrase about the nature of children born outside marriage registers a nineteenth-century assumption in Pater's account". The assumption is older than that century. Edmund in *King Lear* claims that such children, got "in the lusty stealth of nature", have "more composition and fierce quality" than the lawful.[171] The essay returns to the birth once, when it supposes that up to his thirty-first year "some charm of voice and aspect, strong enough to balance the disadvantage of his birth, had played about him" (LEO §14; see Fascination).

## See also

Fascination.

## Love-god

*love-god*

Attested: *love-god* (FRE §31). Love personified as a god, the Greek Eros and the Latin Amor or Cupid, and in the lyric of Provence a lord whom the lover serves. Led out to battle in "dainty, tight-laced armour", Aucassin "is the very image of the Provençal love-god, no longer a child, but grown to pensive youth, as Pierre Vidal met him, riding on a white horse, fair as the morning, his vestment embroidered with flowers" (FRE §31; see Malady of love; Troubadour); Pierre Vidal is the troubadour Peire Vidal, of about 1200. "No longer a child" sets him against the boy Cupid of classical and later art. The Du Bellay essay makes the reverse movement: in the poets of

[171] William Shakespeare, *King Lear* I.ii.11–12.

the Pleiad Dante's lord has become "Love the boy, or the babe" (BEL §16; see Lord of terrible aspect). Between the two places the book can be read as following the love-god from his youth in Provence, through his terror in Dante, to his diminishment in the late French Renaissance. In the next paragraph the love of that age "became sometimes a strange idolatry, a strange rival religion" (FRE §32; see Idolatry).

## See also

Idolatry; Lord of terrible aspect; Malady of love; Troubadour.

# Malady of love

*Love as a sickness of body and will · The Renaissance*
*malady of love*; *the malady of his love*; *maladies*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The malady of love is love felt as a sickness, with the symptoms of a disease: sleeplessness, fainting, wasting and the loss of will.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Aucassin "has the malady of his love, and neglects all knightly duties"; led out to battle, "that great malady of his love came upon him. The bridle fell from his hands; and like one who sleeps walking, he was carried on into the midst of his enemies" (FRE §31). La Gioconda's beauty is one "into which the soul with all its maladies has passed" (LEO §31).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §31.

## Meaning

"Malady", from the Old French *maladie*, from *malade*, sick, Late Latin *male habitus*, in poor condition, is illness, especially a lingering one. The idea that love is a disease is old, in the symptoms of Sappho's ode (fragment 31) and in Ovid's *Remedia amoris*, and medieval medicine treated it as one, under the name *amor hereos*, lovesickness, a disease of the brain and the passions. Constantine the African's *Viaticum* (late eleventh century) has a chapter on it, and Arnald of Villanova's *Tractatus de amore heroico*, his earliest known work, written before 1290, sets out its causes, signs and cures.[172] The poets of Provence made the sickness a mark of nobility: the true lover suffers. Pater cites neither physician, and Aucassin's malady can be read as the poetic form of the same idea.

[172] Constantine the African, *Viaticum* I.20, ed. and trans. Mary F. Wack, *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages: The Viaticum and Its Commentaries* (Philadelphia, 1990), pp. 179–193; Arnald of Villanova, *Tractatus de amore heroico*.

## Use in the book

Pater sets the phrase in his portrait of Aucassin, which follows the account of Dante's "Lord of terrible aspect" (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love; Lord of terrible aspect). Aucassin is "slim, tall, debonair, dansellon, as the singers call him, with his curled yellow hair, and eyes of vair, who faints with love, as Dante fainted, who rides all day through the forest in search of Nicolette, while the thorns tear his flesh, so that one might have traced him by the blood upon the grass, and who weeps at eventide because he has not found her, who has the malady of his love, and neglects all knightly duties" (FRE §31; see Dansellon; Vair). The sentence can be read as a list of symptoms: fainting, torn flesh, weeping at evening, the neglect of duty, given one after another like a case history.

The second use shows the malady at its height. Once he is induced to put himself at the head of his people, and a song shows him going out to battle in the image of the Provençal love-god (FRE §31; see Love-god). "But as he went, that great malady of his love came upon him. The bridle fell from his hands; and like one who sleeps walking, he was carried on into the midst of his enemies, and heard them talking together how they might most conveniently kill him" (FRE §31; see Convenient). The knight who should lead is carried; the scene is pathetic and comic at once, and can be read as the point where the ideal intensity of love and the tale's burlesque meet (see Burlesque).

Pater's judgement is in the frame. Aucassin and Nicolette illustrates "its early sweetness, a languid excess of sweetness even" (FRE §19; see Sweetness): the malady is the excess. Yet he calls Aucassin "the very image of the Provençal love-god" (FRE §31), and the next paragraph gives him what is "perhaps the most famous expression" of the antinomian spirit (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The malady unfits him for war, and the same love makes him a rebel against heaven; both can be read as the liberty of the heart carried to its extreme. The plural comes once more, in the Leonardo essay, where the face of La Gioconda is a beauty "into which the soul with all its maladies has passed" (LEO §31): the sickness of the soul has become, there, a kind of depth.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "malady" or "maladies" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §31** Aucassin has the malady of his love and neglects all knightly duties; in battle the malady comes upon him, the bridle falls from his hands, and he is carried among his enemies.

**LEO §31** La Gioconda's beauty is one into which the soul with all its maladies has passed.

## See also

Antinomianism; Burlesque; Convenient; Dansellon; Ideal intensity of love; Lord of terrible aspect; Love-god; Sweetness; Vair.

## Maternity

*maternity*

Attested: *maternity* (LEO §22). Pater uses the word in his account of a drawing at Florence, "the heads of a woman and a little child, set side by side, but each in its own separate frame", in which the lines of the older face reappear in the child's (LEO §22; see Pathetic). "A feeling for maternity is indeed always characteristic of Leonardo; and this feeling is further indicated here by the half-humorous pathos of the diminutive, rounded shoulders of the child" (LEO §22). "Always" can be tested against the essay. The Virgin sits "on the knees of Saint Anne" (LEO §25), so that two generations of mothers are set one upon the other, and in the paragraph on La Gioconda the sitter is "as Leda, ... the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary" (LEO §31): Pater's last image of Leonardo's ideal woman is a mother twice over. The theme was taken up forty years later in a very different spirit, when Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, read the Saint Anne as the trace of the two mothers of Leonardo's childhood.[173]

## See also

Daughters of Herodias; Pathetic.

## Passionate exaltation

*passionate exaltation*; *exaltation*

Attested: *passionate exaltation* (FRE §7); *exaltation* (BOT §7). Exaltation, the Latin *exaltatio*, a raising up, is elevation of feeling, rapture. The friendship of Amis and Amile is "a friendship pure and generous, pushed to a sort of passionate exaltation, and more than faithful unto death" (FRE §7; see Comradeship). "Pushed" and "a sort of" mark the excess and soften it: the friendship goes beyond ordinary measure, as Amile's sacrifice of his children will show (FRE §§15–16; see Keep faith). The word comes once more, in a religious sense. Once, in a Madonna of Botticelli's, the Child guides the Virgin's hand to write "the words of her exaltation", while the angels help her (BOT §7; see Magnificat). The two uses can be read as a contrast: the friends live their exaltation, while for Botticelli's Virgin "the high cold words have no meaning for her" (BOT §7).

[173] Sigmund Freud, *Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci* (1910), chapter 4.

## See also

Comradeship; Keep faith; Magnificat; Traditional friendship.

## Pathetic

*pathetic*; *pathos*

Attested: *pathetic* (ROB §3; LEO §22); *pathos* (LEO §22, twice). Moving, stirring feeling, from the Greek *pathētikos*, "able to feel" or "able to stir feeling", and *pathos*, suffering, experience, emotion. In Pater the word has its old strength and none of the modern sense of the feeble or contemptible. The Tuscan sculptors gave even their monumental effigies something of the depression of surface of low relief, "getting into them by this means a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3; see Depression of surface): the shallowness of the carving moves the viewer as the thinning of a body moves him. In the Leonardo essay a drawing of a child and its mother has "much pathos in the reappearance, in the fuller curves of the face of the child, of the sharper, more chastened lines of the worn and older face", there is "half-humorous pathos" in the child's rounded shoulders, and "a like pathetic power" in other drawings (LEO §22). In both essays pathos is a matter of line and surface, felt before it is understood. The note at ROB §3 says that "'Pathetic' means moving or expressive of pathos".

## See also

Depression of surface; Etherealise; Low relief; Monumental effigy.

## Pity

*The tender feeling for the dead that saved the Florentines from the morbid, and that Michelangelo's art achieves · The Renaissance*

*pity*; *self-pitying*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sorrow for another's suffering; compassion. In Italian *pietà* means both pity and piety.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Florentine masters "were saved by the nobility of their Italian culture, and still more by their tender pity for the thing itself" (MIC §19).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §§19–20.

## Meaning

"Pity" and "piety" are one word in origin, the Latin *pietas*, dutiful devotion to the gods, to country and to family. Old French had two forms of it, *pité* (later *pitié*) and the learned *piété*, and English borrowed both; for centuries either could mean compassion or devotion, and only in the seventeenth century did English settle "pity" on the one and "piety" on the other. Italian *pietà* kept both meanings, and the Pietà of Christian art, the Virgin mourning her dead son, is at once an image of compassion and an object of devotion (see Pietà).

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is in the nineteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, where Pater explains how the Florentines escaped the morbid art of death that grew elsewhere (see Danse Macabre): "From such a result the Florentine masters of the fifteenth century were saved by the nobility of their Italian culture, and still more by their tender pity for the thing itself" (MIC §19). "The thing itself" is death, or the dead body; their pity for it is what turned the preoccupation with death from the grotesque to the dignified. The paragraph ends with pity again. Following death "perhaps one stage further", the Florentines approached the thought of a new body, "they paused just in time, and abstained, with a sentiment of profound pity" (MIC §19; see New body). Pity here is a restraint as well as a feeling: it stops the mind before it goes beyond what can be seen.

The twentieth paragraph makes pity the first thing Michelangelo achieved: "Of all this sentiment Michelangelo is the achievement; and, first of all, of pity" (MIC §20; see Entombment). The Italian word follows, with the subject of his predilection, the pity of all mothers over all dead sons; and the paragraph's last sentence places pity in the sequence of feelings his work expresses, after the dumb inquiry and the revolt: "then the correcting, hallowing, consoling rush of pity" (MIC §20; see Hallow; Formlessness).

Pity in the essay is set against two other responses to death. One is horror, the northern grotesque of the dance of death; the other is the firm belief of Dante, for whom the dead are not lost (MIC §20; see Immortality). Pity is the response of one who neither recoils nor believes. It stays with the dead body, its "stiff limbs and colourless lips" (MIC §20; see Heathen sorrow), and its consolation is in the feeling itself. The word joins the Florentine tradition to Michelangelo's art and to the essay's account of his faith: the mind that has only "the consciousness of ignorance" (MIC §20) has pity left.

The essay uses the word once earlier, of Michelangelo's life: "Even his tenderness and pity are embittered by their strength" (MIC §8; see Discordant note). The pity of the Pietàs is the same feeling come to its sweetness, in old age. Elsewhere the adjective occurs once: the very name of Du Bellay's *Regrets* "reminds one of a whole generation of self-pitying poets

in modern times" (BEL §21), pity turned inward, a modern failing that the Florentine pity for the dead is free of.

It is possible to see in the word the moral centre of Pater's account of the Renaissance art of death. What saves the Florentines from the morbid is not doctrine but a feeling, and a feeling directed outward, at "the thing itself". Pater's own Conclusion, with its attention to "the face of one's friend" (CON §5) in a world where all melts, asks for the same tenderness.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pity" or a word formed from it occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §8** Even Michelangelo's tenderness and pity are embittered by their strength.

**MIC §19** The Florentines were saved from the morbid by their tender pity, and abstained, before the new body, with a sentiment of profound pity.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo is the achievement, first of all, of pity; the pity of all mothers over all dead sons is the subject of his predilection.

**BEL §21** The name of Du Bellay's *Regrets* recalls a generation of self-pitying poets.

## See also

Danse Macabre; Discordant note; Entombment; Formlessness; Hallow; Heathen sorrow; Immortality; New body; Pietà.

# Platonic calm

*The serene surface of Michelangelo's sonnets, beneath which a delight in the body lies hidden · The Renaissance*

*Platonic calm*; *calm*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The calm of the Platonic lover: a serenity that comes from fixing love on the soul and the ideal rather than the body.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Beneath "the Platonic calm of the sonnets" lies "a deep delight in carnal form and colour" (MIC §8; see Carnal).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §8.

## Meaning

Calm is stillness, of the sea first, from the Late Latin *cauma*, the heat of midday when everything rests, and then of the mind. "Platonic", from

Plato's name, came by Pater's time to describe love that does without the body (see Platonic lover). A Platonic calm is thus the serenity of a feeling raised above desire, the tone of a poetry that speaks of love as ascent.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence on the hidden life of the sonnets: beneath their Platonic calm "there is latent a deep delight in carnal form and colour" (MIC §8; see Carnal). "Beneath" and "latent" make the calm a surface. It is real, and it covers something else. The next sentence names it: in the sonnets, and "still more in the madrigals, he often falls into the language of less tranquil affections" (MIC §8; see Madrigal; Penitence).

The calm is "Platonic" in a precise sense. The sonnets use the language of the Platonists, the ascent from outward beauty to the universal form (MIC §14; see Forma universale), and that language is calm by nature: it treats desire as a step toward something higher, and so quiets it. Pater's sentence asks the reader not to take the language at its word. The Platonic calm is the poems' manner, their way of speaking; the delight in "carnal form and colour" is their matter, the experience the manner tames.

The essay's later account of the sonnets puts the calm in a better light. Their "prevailing tone is a calm and meditative sweetness" (MIC §12; see Meditative sweetness), and the calm there is not a cover but an achievement, the result of "the lifelong effort to tranquillise his vehement emotions" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment). The two passages can be read together as the two sides of the same calm: from beneath, a surface laid over passion; from within, a peace won from it.

"Calm" elsewhere in the book describes surfaces that hold force. the Medusa Pater took for Leonardo's has features "like a great calm stone against which the wave of serpents breaks" (LEO §12); the river in his backgrounds passes "into the treacherous calm of the Madonna of the Lake" (LEO §18); in the Pitti Concert, which Pater took for Giorgione's, the finest details are lost "in that calm unearthly glow" (GIO §15). The calm stone, the treacherous water: in Pater calm is rarely simple, and the Platonic calm of the sonnets is of the same kind, a stillness with something beneath it.

In small, the phrase shows Pater's critical method. He reads the sonnets as he reads a picture, for what lies under the surface: the delight latent in the calm. The calm is the sonnets' disciplined surface; the latent delight is their life.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "calm" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §8** Beneath the calm of the sonnets lies a delight in carnal form and colour.

**MIC §12** The prevailing tone of the sonnets is a calm and meditative sweetness.

**LEO §12** The Medusa's features are like a great calm stone against which the wave of serpents breaks.

**LEO §18** The river passes into the treacherous calm of the Madonna of the Lake.

**GIO §15** The details of the Concert are lost in a calm unearthly glow.

## See also

Carnal; Forma universale; Ideal sentiment; Madrigal; Meditative sweetness; Penitence; Platonic lover.

# Platonic lover

*The lover whose love does without the body, which Pater doubts that Michelangelo always was · The Renaissance*

*Platonic lover*

## At a Glance

**The word.** One who loves Platonically: whose love is for the soul or the ideal, without bodily desire.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "He who spoke so decisively of the supremacy in the imaginative world of the unveiled human form had not been always, we may think, a mere Platonic lover" (MIC §8).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines Neoplatonism as "A family of late ancient and later philosophies shaped by interpretations of Plato", on which "Renaissance thinkers including Marsilio Ficino drew".

**A place to read.** MIC §8, with MIC §14.

## Meaning

The phrase "Platonic love" goes back to Marsilio Ficino, who in his letters and in his commentary on the *Symposium* spoke of a Socratic or Platonic love, the love of the soul's beauty that leads it upward toward the divine.[174] Plato's own lovers, in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, begin with a beautiful body; the Platonic love of the Renaissance kept the ascent and set the body at its lowest step. In English the phrase came in the seventeenth century, and by Pater's time "a Platonic lover" meant, in ordinary speech, one whose love stops short of the body, sometimes with a smile at the claim.

[174] Marsilio Ficino, *De amore* (commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, 1469), Speech VII, on Socratic love; letter to Alamanno Donati (1476), where *amor Platonicus* occurs.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the eighth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, at the end of its reading of the hidden life of the sonnets (see Carnal; Platonic calm). Pater has found beneath their calm "a deep delight in carnal form and colour", and he draws the inference with care: he "who spoke so decisively of the supremacy in the imaginative world of the unveiled human form had not been always, we may think, a mere Platonic lover" (MIC §8; see Unveiled human form).

Two words carry the sentence. "We may think" is the hedge: Pater offers a reading of the poems, not a fact of biography. "Mere" is the judgement: to be a Platonic lover and nothing else would be to be less than Michelangelo, who spoke "so decisively" of the unveiled human form. The sentence uses the ordinary sense of the phrase, love without the body, against the Platonic doctrine the sonnets profess, and finds the man larger than the doctrine.

The fourteenth paragraph sets Michelangelo's Platonic love beside Dante's, and finds them unlike in their objects as in their doctrines. "In many ways no sentiment could have been less like Dante's love for Beatrice than Michelangelo's for Vittoria Colonna. Dante's comes in early youth: Beatrice is a child, with the wistful, ambiguous vision of a child, with a character still unaccentuated by the influence of outward circumstances, almost expressionless. Vittoria, on the other hand, is a woman already weary, in advanced age, of grave intellectual qualities" (MIC §14). Dante's love begins in childhood and keeps the beloved's body even in heaven (see Resurrection of the body); Michelangelo's comes in old age, for a woman "already weary", and is Platonic in the full sense, a friendship of minds. The essay is clear that Vittoria "raised no great passion" (MIC §12; see Meditative sweetness).

Read together, the two passages give Pater's whole view of Michelangelo's loves. The Platonic lover of the Colonna years was not the lover of his youth. His loves, the essay says, "partook of the strength of his nature, and sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music" (MIC §8; see Dolce amaro); in old age that passion found a calm, and the Platonic language of the sonnets became true of him. The phrase "a mere Platonic lover" may be taken as the essay's refusal to read the old man's peace back into the young man's life.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §8** He who spoke of the supremacy of the unveiled human form had not been always, we may think, a mere Platonic lover.

## In this edition

The Glossary entry on Neoplatonism reads: "A family of late ancient and later philosophies shaped by interpretations of Plato. Renaissance

thinkers including Marsilio Ficino drew on this tradition." The note at MIC §9 adds that the manuscript readings make it possible "to see the significance of masculine addressees, including Tommaso de' Cavalieri, in the poetry" (see Occasional poetry).

## See also

Carnal; Dolce amaro; Meditative sweetness; Occasional poetry; Platonic calm; Resurrection of the body; Unveiled human form.

# Poetic passion

*The passion of the poet, the first of the three that the Conclusion ranks above all others for the wisdom of the interval · The Renaissance*
*the poetic passion*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The passion proper to the poet: feeling raised to the pitch at which it makes, or answers to, poetry.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Of such wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most" (CON §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** CON §6.

## Meaning

*Passion* is the Latin *passio*, suffering, from *pati*, to undergo: a passion is something that happens to the soul, as the Passion of Christ was what he suffered. In the moralists of the seventeenth century the passions were the movements of the soul that reason must govern, and in the Romantic poets passion became the source of poetry itself, of which William Wordsworth wrote that "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings".[175] Pater's phrase belongs to the second tradition. The poetic passion is not the passion that poetry describes but the passion of which poetry is made.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last paragraph of the Conclusion, at the head of a series of three. Pater has said that we have an interval and then our place knows us no more, and that our one chance lies in expanding that interval with as many pulsations as possible (CON §6; see Interval; Pulsation). "Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life", Pater writes, and he names the ecstasy and sorrow of love and the various forms of enthusiastic activity (CON §6; see Ecstasy). The condition follows: only be sure that it is passion, that it yields "this fruit of a quickened, multiplied

[175] William Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, second edition (London, 1800).

consciousness" (CON §6; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness). And then the ranking: of such wisdom "the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most" (CON §6; see Art for its own sake).

The word "passion" runs through the paragraph four times, and the poetic passion is its last and highest form. The series is chosen with care. Love and enthusiasm give a quickened sense of life but are bound to their objects, a person or a cause, and the forms of enthusiastic activity may be "disinterested or otherwise". The poetic passion is the passion that has no object but the quickening itself, and so has most of the wisdom of the interval: it is the passion that can be had for the sake of the consciousness it gives. The three terms in apposition can be read as three names for one state seen from three sides, the poet's, the lover of beauty's and the critic's (see Desire of beauty).

The book prepares the phrase. Many of its figures are poets or are treated as poets, and the passion of each is the matter of his essay: the "passionate age" of Dante and the Provençal poets in the Two Early French Stories (FRE §29), Michelangelo's poetry of love, Du Bellay's homesickness, and Winckelmann, in whom the Greek type came to Goethe "not as in a book or a theory, but more importunately, because in a passionate life, in a personality" (WIN §50; see Importunate). The essays are studies of the poetic passion in persons; the Conclusion recommends it to the reader. And the Preface had already named the critic's interest as the "virtue" of each work, the power by which it moves us (PRE §3; see Virtue). The poetic passion is the capacity to be so moved.

The 1873 text had "Of this wisdom" for "Of such wisdom", and "the love of art for art's sake" (C73 §7), and the poetic passion stood first in the same series. Pater did not change the phrase when he revised the Conclusion, as he changed the formula that follows it, and it can be read as the part of the ranking he never doubted.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "the poetic passion" occurs, with its 1873 text, in the order of the book.

**CON §6** The poetic passion, with the desire of beauty and the love of art for its own sake, has most of the wisdom of the interval.

**C73 §7** In 1873: "Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake has most".

## Elsewhere in Pater

The essay "Wordsworth" (1874), written in the years of the Conclusion, gives the poetic passion a moral setting. "That the end of life is not action but contemplation", Pater writes there, is "the principle of all the higher

morality", and Wordsworth and the poets like him are "the masters, the experts, in this art of impassioned contemplation".[176]

## See also

Art for its own sake; Desire of beauty; Ecstasy; Importunate; Interval; Pulsation; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Virtue; Vision and ecstasy.

# Political or religious enthusiasm

*Zeal for a cause or a faith, which the Conclusion of 1873 values for the quickened sense of life it gives: the revision left it unnamed · The Renaissance political or religious enthusiasm*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Ardour for a party, a nation or a faith, strong enough to carry a person out of himself.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "High passions give one this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, political or religious enthusiasm, or the 'enthusiasm of humanity'" (C73 §7).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §7 says that the first edition names political or religious enthusiasm among the passions that sharpen experience, and that the final version leaves the examples more open by speaking of varied forms of enthusiastic activity.

**A place to read.** C73 §7.

## Meaning

The word's Greek dignity and its English disgrace, the sectary's claim to private revelation, are told under Enthusiasm; the disgrace can be heard in Pater's adjective "religious". Locke added a chapter "Of Enthusiasm" to the fourth edition of his *Essay* (1700), against those who take "the conceits of a warmed or overweening brain" for revelation, and the third Earl of Shaftesbury, the English moral philosopher, in his *Letter concerning Enthusiasm* (1708), prescribed good humour as its cure.[177] Political enthusiasm was the same fire turned on a state, and the age of the French Revolution had seen what it could do.

## Use in the book

The essays meet both kinds of zeal, and their artists mostly stand apart from them. Leonardo, whose philosophy it had always been to "fly before

[176] Walter Pater, "On Wordsworth", *Fortnightly Review* (April 1874); as "Wordsworth" in *Appreciations* (London, 1889); Library Edition (London, 1910), p. 62.

[177] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Humane Understanding*, 4th ed. (London, 1700), Book IV, chapter 19, "Of Enthusiasm", §7; Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, *A Letter concerning Enthusiasm* (London, 1708).

the storm", carried "political indifferentism" further than anyone (LEO §34; see Political indifferentism); other artists had been careless of applause because they set "moral or political ends above the ends of art", but in him that carelessness "seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love" (LEO §24; see Solitary culture of beauty). Poetry may convey "moral or political aspiration", as in Victor Hugo, though the ideal types of poetry lie elsewhere (GIO §7; see Matter and form). Winckelmann's moral instinct, "like the religious or political", was merged in the artistic (WIN §12; see Religious sense). Michelangelo, "a reformer with Savonarola, and a republican superintending the fortification of Florence" (MIC §8), resembles Dante "in the warmth and intensity of his political utterances" (MIC §15). And Pater's own note gives to Charlotte Corday the maxim that one executes badly what one has not conceived oneself, words he finds "true in their measure of every genuine enthusiasm" (WIN §14; see Enthusiasm).

The Conclusion of 1873 takes the two kinds into its list of high passions, between love and the enthusiasm of humanity (C73 §7; see Enthusiasm of humanity), and then applies one test to all, whether it is passion and yields a quickened consciousness (C73 §7; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness). The cause is not weighed. A political or religious enthusiasm is good, on this account, by the life it quickens in the one who feels it, and the same test serves for love and for art. That indifference to the object of the passion can be read as the boldest thing in the paragraph. The revision keeps the test (CON §6) and softens the claim and the list: great passions "may give us" this quickened sense of life, among them "the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us" (CON §6; see Enthusiasm): politics and religion are no longer named, and "disinterested or otherwise" admits that some enthusiasms serve the self.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "political" occurs, with the paragraph of Charlotte Corday's words on genuine enthusiasm and the revised sentence, in the order of the book.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo resembles Dante above all in the warmth and intensity of his political utterances.

**LEO §24** Other artists have been careless of applause because they set moral or political ends above the ends of art.

**LEO §34** No one had ever carried political indifferentism further than Leonardo.

**GIO §7** Poetry may find a legitimate function in the conveyance of moral or political aspiration, as in Victor Hugo.

**WIN §12** In Winckelmann the moral instinct, like the religious or political, was merged in the artistic.

**WIN §14** Words that Pater's note gives to Charlotte Corday, on executing only what one has conceived oneself, are true in their measure of every genuine enthusiasm.

**CON §6** Among the great passions that may quicken the sense of life are the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise.

**C73 §7** In 1873 the high passions include political or religious enthusiasm.

## See also

Enthusiasm; Enthusiasm of humanity; Matter and form; Political indifferentism; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Religious sense; Solitary culture of beauty.

# Quickened, multiplied consciousness

*Consciousness made more alive and more manifold: the one fruit that the Conclusion allows experience to bear · The Renaissance*

*a quickened, multiplied consciousness*; *quickened sense of life*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To quicken is to make alive or to make faster; consciousness quickened and multiplied is awareness made more living and more various.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Only be sure it is passion—that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness" (CON §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** CON §6.

## Meaning

*Quick* in old English meant living, as in "the quick and the dead" of the Creed, and to quicken was to give life, as the child quickens in the womb when it is first felt to move. The later sense of speed grew from the first: what is alive moves. *Multiply* is the Latin *multiplicare*, to make many-folded. The phrase joins the two senses of intensity, a consciousness more alive in each moment and more manifold in its objects, and the comma between the adjectives keeps them equal.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the last paragraph of the Conclusion, as the test of every passion. Great passions, Pater says, may give us "this quickened sense of life", the ecstasy and sorrow of love and the various forms of enthusiastic

activity (CON §6; see Ecstasy). "Only be sure it is passion—that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness" (CON §6). The sentence is a warning as much as an encouragement. Not everything that calls itself passion is passion, and the mark of the true one is what it does to consciousness. A passion that dulls, narrows or repeats fails the test however strong it is.

The phrase answers the fourth paragraph. There experience itself, and not its fruit, is the end (CON §4; see Fruit of experience); here experience is allowed a fruit after all, but one that is experience over again, raised to a higher power. The quickened consciousness is not a reward kept after the moment has passed but the moment itself made more intense, and the sentence can be read as Pater's way of forestalling those who might hear in the fourth paragraph a contempt for all the goods that life leaves behind. The one good worth having is the one that cannot be left behind, because it is the having.

The two adjectives name the two demands the Conclusion makes. The quickening is the demand of its fourth paragraph, to be present always "at the focus" (CON §4; see Focus), and of its fifth, to burn with the hard, gem-like flame (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The multiplying is the demand of the fifth as well: to be "for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions" (CON §5; see Courting impressions), and to grasp at any exquisite passion, any contribution to knowledge, any stirring of the senses, any work of the artist's hands or face of a friend (CON §5; see Lifted horizon). The phrase gathers both into one, and the paragraph's last sentence names the thing that gives most of both: art, which proposes to give "the highest quality" (CON §6; see Art for its own sake).

The rest of the book has its own quickenings. Winckelmann "multiplied his intellectual force by detaching from it all flaccid interests" (WIN §6; see Self-culture), a multiplying by subtraction, and the essays are full of persons whose consciousness is raised by an object, Leonardo by the smile of women, Michelangelo by love, Winckelmann by the marbles. The Conclusion makes of these histories a general rule, and the pleasures that the essays have described, of colour, of sensation, of the quintessence of a life, are given here their common measure (see Colour; Pleasure; Quintessence of life).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "a quickened, multiplied consciousness" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of Winckelmann's multiplied force, in the order of the book.

**WIN §6** Winckelmann multiplied his intellectual force by detaching from it all flaccid interests.

**CON §6** Great passions may give a quickened sense of life; be sure that passion yields this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness.

**C73 §7** In 1873: "Only, be sure it is passion, that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness".

## Later readings

Wilde's Dorian Gray (see Moment) can be read as taking the multiplied consciousness without the quickened one: his sensations are many but they dull him.[178]

## See also

Art for its own sake; Colour; Courting impressions; Ecstasy; Focus; Fruit of experience; Hard, gem-like flame; Lifted horizon; Moment; Pleasure; Quintessence of life; Self-culture; Vision and ecstasy.

# Quietism

*quietism*

Attested: *quietism* (WIN §19). Quietism was a seventeenth-century doctrine of prayer in which the soul, wholly passive before God, gives up all effort and even all desire, including the desire for its own salvation. It was taught by the Spanish priest Miguel de Molinos, whose *Spiritual Guide* (1675) was condemned by Pope Innocent XI in 1687, and in France by the mystic Madame Guyon and, in a gentler form, by François Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, whose *Maxims of the Saints* (1697) was condemned in 1699.[179] Pater moves the word from prayer to art. Winckelmann's friendships, he writes, were far from reaching "the quietism, the bland indifference of art", yet more susceptible than any others of equal strength "of a purely intellectual culture" (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form). Art's quietism can be read as the calm of a beauty that, in Winckelmann's phrase in the paragraph before, "gives no pain" (WIN §18; see Beauty of art). The friendships did not reach it; one began with "an antique, chivalrous letter in French" and ended "noisily in a burst of angry fire" (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form). The word can be read as a measure of the distance between the two beauties of the essay: the beauty of art, quiet as a soul that wants nothing, and the beauty of living form, which wants and is hurt. Elsewhere the essay finds the same calm in the statues, "the indifference which lies beyond all that is relative or partial" (WIN §40; see Relative).

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[178] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (London, 1891), chapter XI.

[179] Innocent XI, bull *Coelestis Pastor* (20 November 1687); Innocent XII, brief *Cum alias ad apostolatus* (12 March 1699).

## See also

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Ardour and indifference; Beauty of art; Beauty of living form; Relative.

## Religious melancholy

*religious melancholy*

Attested: *religious melancholy* (BOT §2). Despondency rooted in religious fear or scruple. The phrase had a classic English source: The Oxford scholar Robert Burton gave the last section of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) to "Religious Melancholy", from despair of salvation to superstitious zeal.[180] Pater uses it of Botticelli's old age: "Only two things happened to him, two things which he shared with other artists:—he was invited to Rome to paint in the Sistine Chapel, and he fell in later life under the influence of Savonarola, passing apparently almost out of men's sight in a sort of religious melancholy, which lasted till his death in 1515, according to the received date" (BOT §2). Vasari had told of the painter's devotion to Savonarola and of his poverty and inactivity afterwards.[181] "Apparently" and "a sort of" keep Pater's distance from the story, and he wishes it shorter: "one almost wishes that some document might come to light, which, fixing the date of his death earlier, might relieve one, in thinking of him, of his dejected old age" (BOT §2). The edition's note says that "The date now accepted is 1510". This melancholy is the man's; the work's is another (see Ineffable melancholy).

## See also

Ineffable melancholy; Secondary painter.

## Reverie

*reverie*, *reveries*

Attested: *reverie* (BOT §5; ROB §9; GIO §12; WIN §§9, 38); *reveries* (LEO §31). A dreaming state of mind, from the French *rêverie*, a musing or wandering of thought. Pater uses the word chiefly of religious feeling. In the Botticelli essay religious reverie "recorded its impressions of the various forms of beatified existence" (BOT §5; see Religious reverie); in the della Robbia essay Michelangelo comes "with a genius spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age" (ROB §9; see Inwardness; Spiritualise); the earlier Venetian painters seem never to have forgotten that painting is decorative, "whatever higher matter of thought, or poetry, or religious reverie might

[180] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford, 1621), partition 3, section 4.

[181] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters*, "Life of Sandro Botticelli" (2nd edn, 1568).

play its part therein" (GIO §12). In the Winckelmann essay the word turns against itself: men have tried to reach the life of the senses "by mystic passion, and monastic reverie" (WIN §9), and medieval religious art has familiarised us "with faces fixed immovably into blank types of placid reverie" (WIN §38). La Gioconda's beauty is the deposit of "strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions" (LEO §31). Reverie in Pater is the medium of inwardness: it spiritualised Michelangelo, and it emptied the faces of lesser medieval art.

## See also

Introspection; Inwardness; Religious reverie; Spiritualise.

# Romantic love

*The medieval cult of love, and the Romantic spirit that recalled it · The Renaissance*

*romantic love*; *romantic*, *Romantic*, *romantically*; *Romanticists*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Romantic love is love idealised and made a way of life, as in the medieval romances and the lyric of Provence: devoted, exalted, often unattainable.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The French writers say that Saint Francis took "all those notions of chivalry and romantic love which so deeply penetrated his thoughts, from a French source"; and "in the doctrines of romantic love", as in pointed architecture and Provençal poetry, "the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness" (FRE §1). "Romantic" returns for the Romantic school in France (FRE §32), and for Goethe's union of "the Romantic spirit" with Hellenism (WIN §48).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at WIN §48 says that Pater uses the marriage of Faust and Helena "to imagine a modern art born from both Romantic restlessness and Greek form".

**A place to read.** FRE §1, with WIN §48.

## Meaning

"Romantic" comes from "romance", the Old French *romanz*, a tale told in the Romance vernacular rather than in Latin; the tales were of knights and ladies, and "romantic" came to mean what belongs to that world of adventure and ideal love. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it named a movement in art and letters that looked back to the middle ages. Pater's word carries both senses, the medieval and the modern.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes twice in the first paragraph. The French writers credit France with "all those notions of chivalry and romantic love" that "so deeply penetrated" the thoughts of Saint Francis (FRE §1; see Chivalry); and Pater's own account of the medieval Renaissance places "the doctrines of romantic love" between pointed architecture and the poetry of Provence, among the conditions in which "the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness" (FRE §1; see Sweetness). "Doctrines" is exact. The love of the Provençal poets had a doctrine, rules of service, a lord, a cult, an elect, and the first essay reads it so: "the elect and peculiar people of the kingdom of sentiment" (FRE §20; see Kingdom of sentiment), "that 'Lord of terrible aspect'" (FRE §29; see Lord of terrible aspect), "a strange idolatry, a strange rival religion" (FRE §32; see Idolatry).

The word then changes centuries. The antinomian element in the middle age is what the writers of the Romantic school in France recognised (FRE §32; see Romantic school), and the Romanticists, going back to the works of the middle age, took up the Pleiad too (BEL §13; see Romantic school). The Winckelmann essay sets the romantic against the classical. Winckelmann's longing is "not a vague, romantic longing" (WIN §10), though his "romantic, fervent friendships with young men" prove that temperament entered his Hellenism (WIN §14); painting, music and poetry are "the special arts of the romantic and modern ages" (WIN §33); and "a sort of preparation for the romantic temper is noticeable even within the limits of the Greek ideal itself" (WIN §45; see Hellenic ideal). The end is a marriage: in Goethe "the Romantic spirit, in its adventure, its variety, its profound subjectivity of soul," is united with Hellenism, the marriage of Faust and Helena (WIN §48; see Hellenism; Marriage of Faust and Helena).

The book can be read as tracing one line from the doctrines of romantic love to that marriage. The medieval Renaissance began with romantic love turning strength to sweetness and seeking the springs of sweetness in Greece; the Winckelmann essay ends with the Romantic spirit and Hellenism joined in Goethe. "Romantic", in the first paragraph and the last essay, names the same element, the inward, adventurous and subjective side of the Renaissance, which in Pater's account needs the classical to give it form.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "romantic", "Romantic", "romantically" or "Romanticists" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §1** Saint Francis's notions of chivalry and romantic love are said to come from France; in the doctrines of romantic love the strength of the middle age turns to sweetness.

**FRE §10** The friendship of Amis and Amile is deepened by the romantic circumstance of their resemblance.

**FRE §32** The Romantic school in France recognised the antinomian element in the middle age.

**GIO §17** At Castelfranco the last crags of the Venetian Alps break down romantically to the plain.

**BEL §13** The Romanticists, going back to the middle age, accepted the Pleiad with the rest.

**WIN §10** Winckelmann's longing is not a vague, romantic longing.

**WIN §14** His romantic, fervent friendships with young men prove that temperament entered his Hellenism.

**WIN §33** Painting, music and poetry are the special arts of the romantic and modern ages.

**WIN §44** Theocritus too strikes often a note of romantic sadness.

**WIN §45** A preparation for the romantic temper is noticeable within the Greek ideal itself.

**WIN §48** Goethe unites the Romantic spirit with Hellenism, the marriage of Faust and Helena.

## Later readings

The name by which the medieval love-doctrine is now known came later than Pater's essay. The French philologist Gaston Paris called it *amour courtois*, "courtly love", in an article of 1883 on Chrétien de Troyes's *Lancelot*, and the term has governed the discussion since. Paris's name looks back to the rules set out at the end of the twelfth century by Andreas Capellanus in *De amore*.[182]

## See also

Chivalry; Hellenic ideal; Hellenism; Idolatry; Kingdom of sentiment; Lord of terrible aspect; Marriage of Faust and Helena; Romantic school; Sweetness.

# Surfeiting of desire

*The lover's state of too much possession, less happy than a poverty full of hope · The Renaissance*
*surfeiting of desire*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Surfeit is excess, especially of food or drink; a surfeiting of desire is desire glutted by having too much of what it wanted.

[182] Gaston Paris, "Études sur les romans de la Table Ronde: Lancelot du Lac, II. Le conte de la charrette", *Romania* 12 (1883), 459–534; Andreas Capellanus, *De amore* (about 1186–90).

**In *The Renaissance*.** "He learns from Dante rather than from Plato, that for lovers, the surfeiting of desire—*ove gran desir gran copia affrena*, is a state less happy than poverty with abundance of hope—*una miseria di speranza piena*" (MIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §15 renders *ove gran desir gran copia affrena* "Where great abundance reins in great desire", and *una miseria di speranza piena* "A poverty full of hope".

**A place to read.** MIC §15.

## Meaning

"Surfeit" comes from the Old French *sorfait*, excess, literally something overdone. In English it named excess first, then overindulgence at table and the sickness that follows it, and so any excess that brings disgust; Orsino's "Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting, / The appetite may sicken, and so die" in *Twelfth Night* gives the word its famous place in the language of love.[183] A surfeiting of desire is the state in which desire, satisfied too fully, sickens.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second sentence of the fifteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, the first of the points in which Michelangelo, though moulded by the Platonists, "is really like Dante" (MIC §15; see Gentile): "He learns from Dante rather than from Plato, that for lovers, the surfeiting of desire—*ove gran desir gran copia affrena*, is a state less happy than poverty with abundance of hope—*una miseria di speranza piena*" (MIC §15).

The two Italian phrases come from the close of the madrigal "Per molti, donna, anzi per mille amanti", the poem whose lady is Florence (MIC §15; see Personification), and they set the terms.[184] The first describes a state "where great abundance reins in great desire": desire held back, checked by having too much. The second is its opposite, "a poverty full of hope". The lover who lacks is richer than the lover who has, because he still hopes.

"From Dante rather than from Plato" is the sentence's claim about sources. The idea is not the Platonic ascent, in which desire is led upward to a higher object, but the courtly lover's discipline, in which desire is kept alive by distance. Dante's love for Beatrice, which had found its end in her greeting and, when the greeting was denied, placed its happiness in words that praise her, is the pattern (see Imaginative love).[185] Michelangelo, on Pater's account, learned from it that the best state of love is unfulfilled.

The idea fits the essay's account of his last love. It was "just because Vittoria raised no great passion" that the space in his life where she reigns

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[183] William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night* I.i.2–3.

[184] Michelangelo, madrigal "Per molti, donna, anzi per mille amanti" (Girardi 249), lines 11–13.

[185] Dante, *Vita Nuova* XVIII.

has "such peculiar suavity" (MIC §12; see Suavity; Meditative sweetness); she realised for him "a type of affection which even in disappointment may charm and sweeten his spirit" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment). The poverty full of hope is that affection seen from inside.

The Conclusion offers a parallel, asking for life lived at its highest pitch, for the quickened sense of each moment rather than possession (CON §§4–5). On this reading the surfeited desire has stopped moving; the hopeful poverty keeps it alive. Pater's sympathy, in both places, is with the state of longing over the state of having.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo learns from Dante that the surfeiting of desire is less happy than poverty with abundance of hope.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §15 renders *ove gran desir gran copia affrena* "Where great abundance reins in great desire", adding "Compare the following phrase, where longing survives precisely because its object remains out of reach"; and *una miseria di speranza piena* "A poverty full of hope", adding "The reversal makes privation abundant in what it has yet to receive".

## See also

Gentile; Ideal sentiment; Imaginative love; Meditative sweetness; Personification; Suavity.

# Sympathy

*Feeling with others, put where morality was · The Renaissance*
*sympathy*, *sympathies*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sympathy is fellow-feeling: the capacity to feel with another person and to enter into a condition not one's own.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "His morality is all sympathy" (BOT §6).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §6 says that Pater "turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically".

**A place to read.** BOT §6, with FRE §33.

## Meaning

The Greek *sympatheia* is feeling-with. The Stoics used it for the bond by which every part of the cosmos is affected by every other. Modern moral philosophy brought it inside the person: Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral*

*Sentiments* (1759) opens with a chapter on sympathy, the faculty by which we imagine ourselves in another's place and on which our moral judgements are built.[186] In Pater's century the word could mean pity, agreement or mere affinity; his strongest use takes it back to the moral philosophers' sense and then makes it the whole of a painter's morality.

## Use in the book

The key sentence comes at the end of the paragraph on the middle world. Botticelli accepts what Dante scorns, the men and women who take no side (see Middle world), and sets himself limits within which art does its "most sincere and surest work" (BOT §6; see Moral ambition). His interest is not in untempered goodness or untempered evil (BOT §6; see Untempered), but in men and women "in their mixed and uncertain condition". Then: "His morality is all sympathy; and it is this sympathy, conveying into his work somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity, which makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist" (BOT §6).

"All sympathy" is a strong phrase. It does not say that Botticelli's morality includes sympathy; it says that sympathy is all the morality he has. He does not judge his figures; he feels with them. And the feeling has a consequence for truth. Sympathy conveys "the true complexion of humanity" (see Complexion of humanity), and so makes the visionary a realist (see Realist). Judgement simplifies; sympathy sees the mixture. Three paragraphs later Pater restates the thesis with the word again at its centre: Botticelli's character is "a blending in him of a sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition" with the consciousness of its shadow (BOT §9).

The book's other uses show where the idea comes from. Winckelmann, by his Hellenism, "is in sympathy with the humanists of a previous century" (PRE §9); the narrow culture of the Middle Ages "had no sympathy with, because no understanding of, a culture richer and more ample than their own" (FRE §6), so that sympathy follows understanding. And the student of the Renaissance has an advantage: he is not beset by controversies "exhausting the intelligence and limiting one's sympathies" (FRE §33; see Unity of culture). That sentence can be read as the critic's version of Botticelli's morality. The Renaissance, as Pater studies it, is a region where one may feel with all sides because no controversy compels a verdict.

One risk can be named. Sympathy without judgement can become indifference, the attitude Dante punished in the neutrals at the gate of hell. The second half of Pater's thesis can be read as an answer: Botticelli's sympathy is joined to "his consciousness of the shadow upon it of the great things from which it shrinks" (BOT §9; see Complexion of humanity). He feels with those who refuse, and he sees what they refuse. The morality of

[186] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), part I, section i, chapter 1, "Of Sympathy".

sympathy is not a morality without standards; it is one that keeps the standards in view as a shadow on the face.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sympathy" or "sympathies" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §9** By his Hellenism Winckelmann is in sympathy with the humanists of a previous century.

**FRE §6** The adherents of the narrower culture had no sympathy with, because no understanding of, a richer one.

**FRE §33** The student of the Renaissance is not beset by controversies that limit one's sympathies.

**BOT §6** Botticelli's morality is all sympathy, which makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist.

**BOT §9** Botticelli's character blends a sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition with the consciousness of its shadow.

**LEO §34** At Rome Leonardo came to be suspected of secret French sympathies.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §6, on "make great refusals", reads: "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III. Pater turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Middle world; Moral ambition; Realist; Unity of culture; Untempered.

# Traditional friendship

*The friendship of Amis and Amile, handed down through the ages · The Renaissance*

*traditional friendship*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A traditional friendship is one handed down in story from age to age, a friendship of legend whose authority is its long telling.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater ends the first essay with "a morsel from Amis and Amile, in which the harmony of human interests is still entire. For the story of the great traditional friendship, in which, as I said, the liberty of the heart makes itself felt, seems, as we have it, to have been written by a monk" (FRE §33).

**In this edition.** The notes at FRE §§7 and 33 trace the story's many versions, in French prose and verse, Latin, Middle English and the lives of the saints.

**A place to read.** FRE §§33–36.

## Meaning

"Traditional", from the Latin *traditio*, a handing over, describes what is passed from one generation to the next. A traditional story has no single author; it lives in its versions. Pater's adjective sets the friendship of Amis and Amile among the great friendships of legend and gives it the weight of time: it is not a tale he found but one the ages kept.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the close of the essay, and it gathers the story's earlier description into a title. When Pater introduced it, it was a great friendship, pure and generous and "more than faithful unto death" (FRE §7; see Comradeship; Passionate exaltation). At the end it is "the great traditional friendship", and two facts about its tradition matter to him. It "seems, as we have it, to have been written by a monk", and the friends' names stood in the martyrology until the end of the seventeenth century (FRE §33; see Martyrology).

That is why Pater can end with it. He has just admitted that in Aucassin and Nicolette "the note of defiance, of the opposition of one system to another, is sometimes harsh"; Amis and Amile is the story "in which the harmony of human interests is still entire" (FRE §33; see Unity of culture). The tradition is the evidence of the harmony: an earthly friendship, which earlier in the story outweighed a father's love for his children (FRE §§15–16), was written down, it seems, by a monk, and ends in a "monkish miracle of earthly comradeship" (FRE §33; see Monkish miracle). The last paragraphs, in Pater's English, give the miracle: the friends fall together in battle, are buried in two churches, and are found next morning side by side (FRE §§34–35; see Amity), and the bishop ordains clerks to guard "the bodies of the two companions, Amis and Amile" (FRE §36).

The book can be read as setting the traditional friendship beside the other traditions it describes. In the Michelangelo essay "two great traditional types" of idealised love lie before an Italian of the sixteenth century, Dante's love in the *Vita Nuova* and the Platonic tradition (MIC §14; see Idealise; Imaginative love). Amis and Amile is the type for friendship, and the Winckelmann essay, with its "romantic, fervent friendships" (WIN §14; see Romantic love), takes up the theme again in a modern life. "Traditional" is also the word of the criticism Pater sets aside for Aucassin and Nicolette, which finds in it "only a traditional subject" (FRE §21; see Traditional subject); of Amis and Amile it is a title of honour.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph that introduces the friendship and the three that end the story.

**FRE §7** The friendship of Amis and Amile is pure and generous, pushed to a passionate exaltation, and more than faithful unto death.

**FRE §33** The great traditional friendship seems to have been written by a monk; its heroes stayed in the martyrology until the end of the seventeenth century.

**FRE §34** The friends fall together in battle, and two churches are built.

**FRE §35** Amile's coffin is found next morning beside Amis's.

**FRE §36** The bishop ordains clerks to guard the bodies of the two companions.

## Pater's sources

The story's tradition is long. It was told in a Latin life of the two saints, the *Vita Amici et Amelii*, in an Old French chanson de geste of about 1200, in the French prose Pater read, and in the Middle English romance *Amis and Amiloun*, composed in the late thirteenth century (see Comradeship).[187]

## Later readings

In April 1894, a few months before Pater's death, William Morris issued at the Kelmscott Press his own English version of the same French prose, made from the volume Pater had used, as *Of the Friendship of Amis and Amile*. It was reprinted in *Old French Romances* (1896), where Joseph Jacobs's introduction answered Pater directly: "Mr. Pater seems to regard our stories as being a premonition of the freedom and gaiety of the Renaissance", a view which, Jacobs thought, "only proves that Mr. Pater knew less of Romance Literature than he did of his favourite subject".[188]

## In this edition

The note at FRE §7 says that the story "circulated in several medieval languages and forms, including French prose and verse, Latin, and Middle English", and the note at FRE §34 that "The survival of a pious local legend gives Pater a conclusion in which loyalty and sanctity can occupy the same scene". The note at FRE §33 renders the French title "The Life of the Holy

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[187] *Amis and Amiloun*; earliest copy in the Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Adv. MS 19.2.1), 1330s, fols 48r–61v.

[188] William Morris, trans., *Of the Friendship of Amis and Amile* (Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1894), from L. Moland and C. d'Héricault, eds, *Nouvelles françoises en prose du XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1856); reprinted as "The Friendship of Amis and Amile" in *Old French Romances* (London: George Allen, 1896), introduction by Joseph Jacobs, section VI.

Martyrs Amis and Amile", and says that "The friendship circulated in a saint's-life tradition as well as in romances" (see Comradeship).

## See also

Amity; Comradeship; Idealise; Imaginative love; Martyrology; Monkish miracle; Passionate exaltation; Romantic love; Traditional subject; Unity of culture.

### Tragic dividing of forces

*some tragic dividing of forces on their ways*

Attested: *some tragic dividing of forces on their ways* (CON §5; C73 §6). The phrase stands in the sentence that gives the Conclusion its fullest account of attention to persons. Not to discriminate in those about us, "in the very brilliancy of their gifts", "some tragic dividing of forces on their ways" is, Pater says, "to sleep before evening" (CON §5; see Discriminate). The words "on their ways" recall the end of the second paragraph, where our life is a concurrence of forces "parting sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2; see Concurrence). What was said there of the elements of the body is here seen in the gifts of those about us. The brilliance can be read as itself the sign of the parting: the forces that make a gift shine are the forces that will divide, and to see the gift truly is to see it already coming apart. The adjective "tragic" makes the physics a drama. The sentence asks for a double sight, of a passionate attitude and of its end, and the book has given it in its portraits, as when Pico's brief existence is said to have "flamed itself away" (PIC §14; see Flame-like). The 1873 text had "in the brilliance of their gifts" (C73 §6; see Brilliance); the revision added "very" and the form "brilliancy".

## See also

Brilliance; Concurrence; Discriminate; Flame-like; Powers or forces; Short day of frost and sun.

### Unfathomable smile

*The smile that plays over all Leonardo's work, with a touch of something sinister, traced by Pater to Verrocchio's faces · The Renaissance*

*unfathomable smile*; *smile*, *smiling*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A smile whose depth cannot be measured, whose meaning cannot be reached.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it, which plays over all Leonardo's work" (LEO §30).

**In this edition.** Pater's own note at LEO §30 adds that "for Vasari there was some further magic of crimson in the lips and cheeks, lost for us"; the edition's note on the sitter adds that the name Gioconda "also suggests a merry or pleasant woman in Italian".

**A place to read.** LEO §30.

## Meaning

To fathom is to measure a depth with a line marked in fathoms, the six feet of a man's outstretched arms, and so to get to the bottom of a thing. An unfathomable smile is one whose depth no line can find (see Sound its stops). "Sinister" is the Latin for "left", and so for the unlucky side, the side of ill omen. Pater's "touch of something sinister" is not malice; it is an omen, a shadow on the smile that the beholder cannot explain.

## Use in the book

The smile is the essay's thread from the beginning. Among Leonardo's early models in relief Vasari mentions "some of women smiling" (LEO §5; see Low relief); the two ideas that touched him "beyond the depth of other impressions" were "the smiling of women and the motion of great waters" (LEO §10; see Motion of great waters); the Saint John of the Louvre has a "treacherous smile" that "would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture or circumstance" (LEO §25); and the paragraph on La Gioconda names the smile and its source. Pater connects it with the designs by Verrocchio that Leonardo copied as a boy, "as with its germinal principle, the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it, which plays over all Leonardo's work" (LEO §30; see Germinal principle).

Three things are claimed in the phrase. The smile is one: it "plays over all Leonardo's work", the same in the Baptist as in La Gioconda. It has a history: Pater connects it with Verrocchio's designs "as with its germinal principle", and the face that wears it was "Present from the first incorporeally in Leonardo's brain, dimly traced in the designs of Verrocchio" (LEO §30). And it is double, a smile with something sinister in it, so that the face that charms also warns. "Plays" keeps it moving, and the paragraph's next sentences give the smile a body: the picture "is a portrait", and, by the legend, "that subtle expression was protracted on the face" by mimes and flute-players (LEO §30; see Portraiture; Legend). The essay's best-known passage, which follows, is an attempt to sound the unfathomable: the beauty "wrought out from within upon the flesh", the eyelids "a little weary", the thousand years of desire (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). Pater describes the face without explaining the smile, and the description can be taken as a confession that the line does not reach the bottom.

Pater's word changes Vasari's. In the *Lives* of 1568 the smile of the Mona Lisa is "so pleasant that the sight of it was more divine than human" (*un ghigno tanto piacevole, che era cosa più divina che umana a vederlo*), and the musicians and jesters are there to keep the sitter merry.[189] Vasari's smile is pleasant and admired; Pater's is unfathomable and sinister. The "treacherous" smile of the Saint John belongs to the same revision, which can be read as Pater's chief addition to the legend of Leonardo.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Leonardo essay in which "smile" or "smiling" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §5** Among Leonardo's early models in relief Vasari mentions some of women smiling.

**LEO §10** The smiling of women and the motion of great waters touched him beyond other impressions.

**LEO §25** The Saint John of the Louvre has a treacherous smile.

**LEO §30** The unfathomable smile, with a touch of something sinister, plays over all Leonardo's work.

## Later readings

Freud quoted Pater's phrase in the fourth chapter of his study of Leonardo (1910), in German, as the smile that seems always joined with something ominous. He took up Pater's sentence that the image had defined itself in Leonardo's dreams from childhood, judged it credible and worth taking literally, and found its source in the smile of the mother Leonardo lost.[190] Pater had traced the smile to Verrocchio's designs; Freud traced it further back, and made Pater's "germinal principle" a memory.

## See also

Beauty wrought from within; Germinal principle; Legend; Low relief; Maternity; Motion of great waters; Passing of a smile; Portraiture; Sound its stops.

# Untempered

*untempered*

Attested: *untempered* (BOT §6, twice; MIC §8). Unmixed, unmoderated; to temper was to mix in due proportion, as the humours were mixed in a body (see Complexion of humanity). Pater uses the word for the two extremes Botticelli avoids: "His interest is neither in the untempered goodness of Angelico's saints, nor the untempered evil of

[189] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (1568), life of Leonardo.

[190] Sigmund Freud, *Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci* (1910), chapter 4.

Orcagna's Inferno; but with men and women, in their mixed and uncertain condition" (BOT §6; see Middle world). The opposition is of purity against mixture (see Complexion of humanity): Angelico's saints and Orcagna's damned are pure types, and the untempered can be read as less true. In the Michelangelo essay the word turns to life: in reading of "its harsh, untempered incidents", Pater says, the thought arises that Michelangelo incurred Dante's judgment on those who wilfully lived in sadness (MIC §8; see Wilfully lived in sadness). There the untempered is harshness unrelieved.

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Middle world; Sympathy; Wilfully lived in sadness.

# Wilfully lived in sadness

*Dante's judgement on the sullen, which Michelangelo's harsh life seems to incur and his late friendship escapes · The Renaissance*
*wilfully lived in sadness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To live in sadness by choice: to keep a gloom that one might have put off, a sin in the moral theology Dante follows.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo seems "one of those who incur the judgment of Dante, as having 'wilfully lived in sadness'" (MIC §8).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §8 says that "Pater alludes to the submerged souls in Inferno VII", who "recall that they carried a sullen smoke within themselves while the sun shone above".

**A place to read.** MIC §§8, 13.

## Meaning

In the seventh canto of the *Inferno*, in the marsh of the Styx, Dante finds souls sunk under the mud whose sighs make the water bubble. They say: "We were sad in the sweet air that the sun makes glad, carrying a slothful smoke inside us; now we are sad in the black slime".[191] The smoke they carried is *accidïoso*, the smoke of *accidia*, the sin of spiritual sloth and gloom that medieval theology counted among the seven deadly sins. Pater's "wilfully lived in sadness" is his English for their fault: a sadness kept against the light, and so a sin.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is in the eighth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which tells of the bitterness of his life: "As we come, in reading his life, on its harsh, untempered incidents, the thought again and again arises

[191] Dante, *Inferno* VII.117–124.

that he is one of those who incur the judgment of Dante, as having 'wilfully lived in sadness.'" (MIC §8; see Untempered; Discordant note). The incidents are those of the sentences before: he "treats the Pope as the King of France himself would not dare to treat him"; he goes along the streets of Rome "like an executioner", as Raphael says of him; once he seems "to have shut himself up with the intention of starving himself to death" (MIC §8).

The judgement is a strong one. To place Michelangelo among the sullen of the fifth circle is to suggest that his gloom was not only suffered but chosen, and so a moral fault. Pater's sentence holds back from the verdict: the thought "again and again arises", but it is a thought, not a sentence passed. The next sentences turn to what explains the gloom: "some secret spring of indignation or sorrow" in his nature (MIC §8), and loves that "sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music" (MIC §8; see Dolce amaro).

The thirteenth paragraph withdraws the charge. The years with Vittoria Colonna form a "charmed and temperate space", "which saves him from the judgment of Dante on those who 'wilfully lived in sadness'" (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment). The sad souls of the *Inferno* carried their smoke "in the sweet air that the sun makes glad"; Michelangelo, on this reading, let the sweet air in. The essay's argument about sweetness and strength becomes, at this point, a moral argument. Three paragraphs later he lingers on to a great age "till the sweetness it had taken so long to secrete in him was found at last" (MIC §16; see Ex forti dulcedo), and that sweetness is what saves him from the sin of wilful gloom.

"Sadness" elsewhere in the book is a quality the critic can value. Botticelli conceived the goddess of pleasure with "sadness" (BOT §8; see Goddess of pleasure); the Winckelmann essay finds in Greek religion "the pagan sadness" (WIN §26) and in the Greek poet Theocritus, of the third century BC, "a note of romantic sadness" (WIN §44). These sadnesses are part of a sentiment, felt and expressed; the sadness Dante condemns is a sadness clung to. The phrase can be read as marking the line between the two: melancholy is a condition of art, but a gloom wilfully kept is a refusal of life, and the essay saves Michelangelo from it by the sweetness of his last years.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §8** In reading his harsh life the thought arises that Michelangelo is one of those who incur Dante's judgment, as having wilfully lived in sadness.

**MIC §13** The charmed and temperate space of the Colonna years saves him from that judgment.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §8 says: "Pater alludes to the submerged souls in Inferno VII. Dante has them recall that they carried a sullen smoke within themselves while the sun shone above."

## See also

Discordant note; Dolce amaro; Ex forti dulcedo; Goddess of pleasure; Ideal sentiment; Untempered.

# Wistfulness of exiles

*The sentiment of all Botticelli's figures, and of the book's returning gods · The Renaissance*

*the wistfulness of exiles*; *wistful*, *wistfulness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Wistfulness is a pensive longing for something absent; the wistfulness of exiles is the longing of those who remember a home they have lost.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's figures have "a sense of displacement or loss about them—the wistfulness of exiles" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §5 says that the poem Pater describes "assigns human beings an unusual origin in the angels who took neither side in Lucifer's revolt", and that "Pater borrows that intermediate position to describe his impression of Botticelli's figures".

**A place to read.** BOT §5.

## Meaning

"Wistful" is a pensive, half-hopeless longing, gentler than grief and less active than desire. The exile was a figure of Florentine memory: Dante, banished from the city in 1302, wrote in the *Paradiso* of learning how salt another's bread tastes and how hard it is to climb and come down another's stairs.[192] Pater's phrase joins the longing to its cause. The wistful are those who remember.

## Use in the book

The phrase completes the story Pater tells of a Florentine poem (see Incarnation). If human souls are the angels who took neither side in heaven's war, then every human being is a spirit out of place, and Pater finds that condition in Botticelli's faces: "True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment with which he infuses his profane and sacred persons, comely, and in a certain sense like angels, but with a sense of displacement or loss about them—the wistfulness of exiles, conscious of a

[192] Dante, *Paradiso* XVII.58–60.

passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains, which runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy" (BOT §5).

"True or false" is the essay's boldest move. Pater does not need the story to be true; the story "interprets" the sentiment, as a myth interprets an experience. (The edition's note gives the picture to the Florentine painter Francesco Botticini, and calls the changed attribution "consequential for his argument".) The sentiment itself is precisely defined. The figures are "comely", even angelic, so that the loss is not of beauty. They feel in themselves a passion and energy that no "known issue" explains, a capacity that no action they know of could use. Exile is the state of a power with no place to spend itself. The phrase that follows makes the condition universal across "all his varied work" (see Ineffable melancholy), and "profane and sacred" makes it cross the line between Venus and the Virgin (see Profane and sacred).

The word "wistful" returns at once in the Madonnas' children, with "that look of wistful inquiry on their irregular faces which you see in startled animals" (BOT §7; see Enfants du chœur), and then far beyond the essay. The sacristy of San Lorenzo, with Michelangelo's tombs, is a place of "wistful speculation" (MIC §20; see Wistful speculation); in Winckelmann's dreams of travel "there seems always to be rather a wistful sense of something lost to be regained, than the desire of discovering anything new" (WIN §4). Exile itself frames the book: the Pico essay turns at once to Heine's *Gods in Exile* (PIC §2; see Exile), and in the Du Bellay essay the poet in Rome dreams less of the real France than of "that other country" which "the fancy of the exile, and the pilgrim" builds up (BEL §22).

The phrase can be read as naming the book's master-sentiment. The Renaissance, in Pater's telling, is a return from exile, of the gods to the world and of the mind to Greece, and the returning are wistful because they half remember. Botticelli's figures stand at the first and least certain stage of the return, still displaced, and that is why Pater gives them the phrase. Winckelmann's "something lost to be regained" is the same sentiment grown conscious and turned into scholarship.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "wistful" or "wistfulness" occurs, with the two others that speak of exile, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** Heine's Gods in Exile tells how the gods of the older world fell into painful embarrassments after the triumph of Christianity.

**BOT §5** Botticelli's figures have a sense of displacement or loss about them, the wistfulness of exiles.

**BOT §7** The Madonna's true children have a look of wistful inquiry on their irregular faces.

**MIC §14** Dante's Beatrice is a child, with the wistful, ambiguous vision of a child.

**MIC §20** The sacristy of San Lorenzo, with Michelangelo's tombs, is a place of vague and wistful speculation.

**LEO §28** The arabesques of Ludovico's prison room at Loches may be the fruit of a wistful after-dreaming over Leonardo's experiments.

**BEL §22** Du Bellay in Rome dreams less of the real France than of that other country which the fancy of the exile and the pilgrim builds up.

**WIN §4** Winckelmann's plans of travel show a wistful sense of something lost to be regained.

**WIN §21** Goethe was expecting Winckelmann with wistful eagerness when the news of his murder arrived.

### In this edition

The note at BOT §5 says that "The National Gallery attributes this painting, The Assumption of the Virgin, to Francesco Botticini", and that "Pater uses the story of this painting to interpret Botticelli's other figures, so the changed attribution is consequential for his argument". The next note says that "Pater borrows that intermediate position to describe his impression of Botticelli's figures".

### See also

Enfants du chœur; Exile; Incarnation; Ineffable melancholy; Middle world; Profane and sacred; Religious reverie; Wistful speculation.

## History, culture and the Renaissance

### À la mode

*à la mode*

Attested: *à la mode* (BEL §13). In the fashion of the moment, from the French, "in the mode"; the phrase came into English in the seventeenth century and kept its accent. The note at BEL §13 renders it "In fashion", and says that it "names verse that once belonged to a shared taste in manner and decoration". Pater uses it of much of Du Bellay's poetry, which matters, like that of Ronsard and the rest of the Pleiad, as the record of a manner more than of a mind: "As with the writings of Ronsard and the other poets of the Pleiad, its interest depends not so much on the impress of individual

genius upon it, as on the circumstance that it was once poetry à la mode, that it is part of the manner of a time—a time which made much of manner, and carried it to a high degree of perfection" (BEL §13). What is à la mode passes, and the same paragraph tells how this fashion passed and returned: the lovers of the sustained, weighty poetry of Malherbe saw in the Pleiad "only the latest trumpery of the middle age", until the Romanticists took it up again with the rest of the middle age (BEL §13; see Romantic school).

## See also

Æsthetic value; Fashion; Manner; Romantic school; Style.

## Absorbed element

*an absorbed element*; *an absorbed, underground life*; *absorbed*; *absorb*; *absorbing*

Attested: *absorbed element*, *absorbed, underground life*, *absorbed* (WIN §22); *absorbed*, otherwise (BOT §10; GIO §6; WIN §28); *absorb* (GIO §20); *absorbing* (WIN §38). To absorb is to drink in, from the Latin *absorbere*, to swallow up; an absorbed element is one taken into a larger whole and no longer seen in itself. Pater uses the phrase in his account of the classical tradition. The spiritual forces of the past live within later culture "with an absorbed, underground life", but the Hellenic element "alone has not been so absorbed", and the paragraph ends by calling Hellenism "not merely an absorbed element" but a conscious tradition (WIN §22; see Conscious tradition). The word has the same sense of being swallowed elsewhere in the book. Botticelli is among the workmen whom the great masters "absorbed into themselves" (BOT §10; see General culture), the material details of a dull landscape are "easily absorbed" by an effect of light (GIO §6; see Informing expression), and in Greek thought "the spirit has not yet absorbed everything with its emotions" (WIN §28; see Finite image). Absorption, in the book, can be read as the fate of everything not strong enough to keep its own outline.

## See also

Conscious tradition; Finite image; General culture; Hellenism; Informing expression; Powers or forces.

## After-growth

*after-growth*

Attested: *after-growth* (FRE §2). A second growth from the same root, as of grass after mowing. Pater uses it of poetry: what the French writers have

in view when they speak of a medieval Renaissance is "its profane poetry, the poetry of Provence, and the magnificent after-growth of that poetry in Italy and France" (FRE §2; see Profane poetry). He does not name the poets. The after-growth can be taken as the Italian lyric that learned from the troubadours, down to Dante, whom the same essay calls "the central expression and type of experiences known well enough to the initiated, in that passionate age" (FRE §29), and the northern French poetry of the trouvères (FRE §3; see Trouvère). The image can be read as keeping the unity Pater cares for: the later poetry is not a new planting but the same root growing again. The Preface uses the same figure for the end of the Renaissance in France, "an aftermath, a wonderful later growth" (PRE §6; see Aftermath).

## See also

Aftermath; Medieval Renaissance; Profane poetry; Trouvère.

## Aftermath

*aftermath*

Attested: *aftermath* (PRE §6). An aftermath is a second crop of grass, mown after the first; Pater uses the word in that farmer's sense, not in the later one of consequences. "The Renaissance, in truth, put forth in France an aftermath, a wonderful later growth" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis), whose products have the sweetness of "a refined and comely decadence" (see Decadence). The gloss "a wonderful later growth" makes the image plain: the French Renaissance of Du Bellay and Ronsard is a late mowing from the same field. The first essay has the same figure in "the magnificent after-growth" of Provençal poetry in Italy and France (FRE §2; see After-growth), and the essay on Du Bellay calls the period the middle age's "temperate Saint Martin's summer", a mild spell in late autumn, about Martinmas (BEL §1).

## See also

After-growth; Ascêsis; Decadence; Renaissance; Saint Martin's summer.

## Alexandrian philosophy

*The Greek philosophy of late antique Alexandria, revived as Florentine curiosity · The Renaissance*

*Alexandrian philosophy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Alexandrian philosophy is the thought of the Greek schools of Alexandria in the first centuries of the Christian era, where Platonism met Jewish and Christian scripture.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Matteo Palmieri's poem was "a fantasy of that earlier Alexandrian philosophy about which the Florentine intellect in that century was so curious" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines Neoplatonism as "A family of late ancient and later philosophies shaped by interpretations of Plato", and adds that "Renaissance thinkers including Marsilio Ficino drew on this tradition".

**A place to read.** BOT §5.

## Meaning

Alexandria, founded by Alexander in 331 BC, became the learned capital of the Greek world, and under the Roman empire its schools joined Greek philosophy to the religions of the East. Philo read the books of Moses as Platonic allegory (see Allegorical interpretation); Plotinus studied there before teaching at Rome; and the Christian teacher Origen of Alexandria (about 185–254) taught that rational spirits existed before the world and that souls are such spirits who fell away and came into bodies.[193] The doctrine that makes human beings displaced spirits is Alexandrian in this sense, and the Church came to condemn it as Origen's.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in Pater's account of a picture and a poem. The Florentine humanist Matteo Palmieri (1406–1475) was the reputed author of a poem that made the human race an incarnation of the angels who took neither side in Lucifer's revolt (BOT §5; see Incarnation). That idea, Pater says in the words quoted above, was "a fantasy" (BOT §5). "Earlier" sets the Alexandrians behind the Florentine Platonism of Ficino, who in the 1480s translated Plotinus (see Mystic).

The next sentences ask how such a theory could reach a painter, and the answer is the paragraph's real subject. "Artists so entire as Botticelli are usually careless about philosophical theories, even when the philosopher is a Florentine of the fifteenth century, and his work a poem in terza rima. But Botticelli, who wrote a commentary on Dante, and became the disciple of Savonarola, may well have let such theories come and go across him" (BOT §5). "Entire" means whole, absorbed in his art. The influence Pater allows is not adoption but weather: the theories "come and go across him" as shadows cross a field. Pater does not say the theories were believed, only that Botticelli "may well" have let them cross him.

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[193] Origen, *On First Principles* I.8 and II.8–9.

"Fantasy" is Pater's judgement on the doctrine, and he does not withdraw it. The Alexandrian idea is a fancy, not a truth. Yet he uses it at once to read every picture of Botticelli's: "True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment" of his figures (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles). The phrase can be read as the book's model of how philosophy enters art. Pico reconciles the systems by argument and fails (see Order and beauty in knowledge); Botticelli lets one of them pass across him and paints its mood. The old philosophy survives in the painting not as a doctrine but as a sentiment, and Pater, who calls it a fantasy, still finds that it interprets the sentiment.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §5** Palmieri's poem, making men an incarnation of the neutral angels, is a fantasy of the earlier Alexandrian philosophy.

## In this edition

The Glossary defines Neoplatonism as "A family of late ancient and later philosophies shaped by interpretations of Plato", and adds that "Renaissance thinkers including Marsilio Ficino drew on this tradition". The note at BOT §5 says that "Palmieri's poem assigns human beings an unusual origin in the angels who took neither side in Lucifer's revolt".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Incarnation; Middle world; Mystic; Order and beauty in knowledge; Terza rima; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Alliance with mind

*alliance with mind*

Attested: *alliance with mind* (PRE §8). A close union of art with the thought of its age. In fifteenth-century Italy artists and philosophers "breathe a common air", and "it is to this intimate alliance with mind, this participation in the best thoughts which that age produced, that the art of Italy in the fifteenth century owes much of its grave dignity and influence" (PRE §8; see Common air; General culture). The phrase can be read as the reason the book studies the art of Italy alongside its scholars, Pico among them: its dignity comes from its share in the thought around it.

## See also

Common air; General culture; Intellectual isolation.

## Antique

*the antique*; *antique*; *antiques*

Attested: *antique*, *the antique*, of the ancient world and its art, in thirteen paragraphs of the Winckelmann essay (WIN §§3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 31, 42, 46, 47, 50, 52), and elsewhere (FRE §7; MIC §6); *antique*, old-fashioned (WIN §19). The antique, from the Latin *antiquus*, old, is in the language of the eighteenth century the art of Greece and Rome, and especially its sculpture; to draw "from the antique" was to draw from ancient statues or their casts, the training of every academy. Pater keeps that sense: Goethe spends a year at Rome "drawing from the antique" (WIN §13; see Drawing). But the word grows in the essay into the name of a world and a light. Passing out of the tarnished intellectual world of Germany "into the happy light of the antique", Winckelmann had "a sense of exhilaration almost physical" (WIN §3); the tradition of the French writer Voltaire will be supplanted by "the clear ring, the eternal outline, of the genuine antique" (WIN §6; see Artificial classicism); Goethe adds that in born antiquaries a constant handling of the antique, "with its eternal outline", keeps the mind to the concrete as effectually as a critical philosophy (WIN §7; see Mode of handling). "Eternal outline" can be read as the essay's definition of the word: the antique is what keeps its form, against the vague and the passing. At the end the question is whether "the blitheness and universality of the antique ideal" can be given to modern art (WIN §52; see Universality). Elsewhere the antiques are the same ancient things: an "antique tale" of friendship (FRE §7), the antiques the young Michelangelo copied and restored in the Medici garden (MIC §6); only the "antique, chivalrous letter" of one of Winckelmann's friendships (WIN §19) is merely old-fashioned.

### See also

Artificial classicism; Drawing; Mode of handling; Universality.

## Artificial classicism

*The flimsy classical taste of the eighteenth century, against which Winckelmann appealed to the genuine antique · The Renaissance*

*the artificial classicism of the day*; *that flimsier, more artificial, classical tradition*; *classicism*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A classicism of rules and borrowed forms, imitating the ancients at second hand.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann's first book was "an appeal from the artificial classicism of the day to the study of the antique" (WIN §13).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §13 says that Winckelmann's *Thoughts on the Imitation* "established the aesthetic program Winckelmann developed after moving to Rome".

**A place to read.** WIN §§6, 13.

## Meaning

Classicism is the following of classical models, Greek and Roman, in art and letters. By Winckelmann's day it had a long history: the Renaissance return to antiquity, the French classicism of the age of Louis XIV, with its rules for tragedy and its academies, and the ornamental classicism of courts, in which the antique was a repertory of forms for palaces and gardens. Pater calls that classicism "artificial": it takes the ancients through rules, intermediaries and fashions, not from the ancient works themselves. The word "classicism" had entered English only about 1830, and he uses it as a critic's term for a style.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the thirteenth paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, where Pater describes his first book. At Dresden "his first book appeared, Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works of Art in Painting and Sculpture. Full of obscurities as it was, obscurities which baffled but did not offend Goethe when he first turned to art-criticism, its purpose was direct—an appeal from the artificial classicism of the day to the study of the antique" (WIN §13). The appeal is to an original against its copies. Winckelmann's book bids the artist go back from the classicism of the academies to the ancient works themselves, and the note at WIN §13 says that it established the programme Winckelmann developed in Rome.

The essay has already named the classicism it means. At Seehausen Winckelmann "undergoes the charm of Voltaire", whose poems, plays and histories had made him the first man of letters of Europe. "Voltaire belongs to that flimsier, more artificial, classical tradition, which Winckelmann was one day to supplant, by the clear ring, the eternal outline, of the genuine antique" (WIN §6). The sentence sets two classicisms against each other, a flimsy one and a genuine one, and gives the genuine one two marks: a sound, "the clear ring", and a shape, "the eternal outline". Artificial classicism, on this account, rings false and has no outline; it is a manner, not a form. Pater is fair to Voltaire: "But it proves the authority of such a gift as Voltaire's that it allures and wins even those born to supplant it. Voltaire's impression on Winckelmann was never effaced" (WIN §6), and Winckelmann carried Voltaire's works into Rome (WIN §12).

The twenty-second paragraph adds the history of the danger. In the lands of the classical tradition national pride may light up an enthusiasm for

it; aliens, Pater says, "might imitate that enthusiasm, and classicism become from time to time an intellectual fashion" (WIN §22). Classicism as fashion is the artificial kind again, enthusiasm copied rather than felt. Winckelmann, an alien by language and place, escapes it because his enthusiasm is his own, as the maxim Pater borrows from Charlotte Corday requires (WIN §14; see Enthusiasm). The essay can be read as setting two ways of being classical, by imitation and by affinity, and as finding in Winckelmann the second, which reaches the antique directly because it is native to the man.

The phrase looks back across the book. The Du Bellay essay had praised an earlier classicism that worked differently, the Pleiad's effort "to adjust the existing French culture to the rediscovered classical culture" (BEL §9; see Classical culture), and the Pico essay had told of a reconciliation of the gods of Greece with Christianity that, lacking "the historic sense", fell back on "the quicksand of allegorical interpretation" (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation), while the art of the time made a "practical truce" between them (PIC §5). Artificial classicism can be read as the book's name for the failure of every return to antiquity that is not also a return of the senses.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "classicism" occurs, with WIN §6, where Pater names the flimsier, more artificial classical tradition, in the order of the book.

**WIN §6** Voltaire belongs to the flimsier, more artificial, classical tradition, which Winckelmann was to supplant by the genuine antique.

**WIN §13** Winckelmann's first book was an appeal from the artificial classicism of the day to the study of the antique.

**WIN §22** Aliens might imitate the enthusiasm for the classical tradition, and classicism become an intellectual fashion.

## Pater's sources

Pater does not quote it, but Winckelmann's *Thoughts on the Imitation* gave neoclassicism its most famous phrase, that the general mark of the Greek masterpieces is "a noble simplicity and a quiet grandeur, both in the pose and in the expression";[194] and the same book named *der grosse Bernini*, the Roman baroque master Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680), among those who would learn beauty from nature rather than from the Greeks, and said that he had not shown young artists the shortest way to it. Pater's "eternal outline" and his later "breadth" and "repose" (WIN §§35, 49) can be read as his English for that formula.

[194] Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (Dresden, 1755): *eine edle Einfalt, und eine stille Größe, so wohl in der Stellung als im Ausdruck*.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Antique; Classical culture; Classical tradition; Enthusiasm.

# Ascêsis

*The austere discipline of art in its youth · The Renaissance*
*ascêsis*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Greek *askēsis* is exercise, training, the discipline of an athlete, and later of a monk.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The earliest phases of the Renaissance have "the freshness which belongs to all periods of growth in art, the charm of ascêsis, of the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth" (PRE §6).

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §6 gives "Training or exercise", from the Greek.

**A place to read.** PRE §6, the last sentence.

## Meaning

*Askēsis*, from *askein*, to work raw material or to practise, was in classical Greek the training of the athlete and the soldier, and in the philosophers the practice of virtue. Christian writers used it for the discipline of the monk, and from it came "asceticism", the renunciation of the senses. Pater's spelling, with the circumflex marking the Greek long *e*, can be read as keeping the word Greek and at a distance from its Christian descendant.

## Use in the book

The word comes once, at the end of the Preface's sketch of the Renaissance. In France the movement put forth "an aftermath, a wonderful later growth, the products of which have to the full that subtle and delicate sweetness which belongs to a refined and comely decadence, as its earliest phases have the freshness which belongs to all periods of growth in art, the charm of ascêsis, of the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth" (PRE §6). The sentence sets two charms against each other: the sweetness of a late and refined decline, and the freshness of an early and austere discipline (see Decadence; Aftermath). Ascêsis is glossed at once by a Biblical image, the girding of the loins, the readiness of a runner or a traveller who ties up his robe (see Girding of the loins).

What the word praises is restraint in art, not renunciation of the senses. It is a "charm", a pleasure of its own, the pleasure of watching an art that holds back because it is still learning its powers. The Winckelmann essay shows the other side of the word. There "Christian asceticism, on the other hand, discrediting the slightest touch of sense", provokes the artistic life into

opposition (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism); the ascêsis Pater admires disciplines an art of the senses; the asceticism he distrusts denies them.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**PRE §6** The earliest phases of the Renaissance have the charm of ascêsis, the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater returned to the word in "Style" (1888), collected in *Appreciations* (1889), where restraint is a quality of the writer's art: "Self-restraint, a skilful economy of means, ascêsis, that too has a beauty of its own".[195] The two uses agree. In the Preface ascêsis is the charm of an art in its youth, in "Style" the beauty of a writer's economy; in both it is discipline that pleases.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §6 gives "Training or exercise. From Greek askēsis", and says that Pater "uses the word for the discipline and effort of an art still developing its powers".

## See also

Aftermath; Christian asceticism; Decadence; Girding of the loins; Renaissance.

# Bold speculator

*bold speculator*

Attested: *bold speculator* (LEO §2). A speculator, from the Latin *speculari*, to keep watch, to spy out, is one who looks beyond what is known; the word also named, then as now, one who gambles on prices, and the French Stories have popes and tyrants who were "mere speculators in its fortunes", the fortunes of the Renaissance (FRE §33). Pater uses the phrase for the Leonardo of the first edition of Vasari's *Lives* (1550), where "the painter who has fixed the outward type of Christ for succeeding centuries was a bold speculator, holding lightly by other men's beliefs, setting philosophy above Christianity" (LEO §2; see Outward type). The first edition had said that Leonardo esteemed it better to be a philosopher than a Christian, and had him return to the faith on his deathbed with many tears; the second, of 1568, dropped the sentence and made the deathbed scene one in which he has himself carefully instructed in the Catholic faith.[196] The note at LEO §2 says that the first edition "associated Leonardo's speculative disposition with religious heterodoxy". Pater weighs the charge and turns it.

[195] Walter Pater, "Style", in *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (London, 1889).

[196] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1550 and 1568), Life of Leonardo da Vinci.

"Words of his, trenchant enough to justify this impression, are not recorded", and the suspicion was "but the time-honoured mode" in which the world marks an independent mind (LEO §2; see High indifference). The irony of the sentence is in its first clause: the man suspected of unbelief is the painter whose Christ the centuries have accepted. At the end of the essay Pater sets the question of Leonardo's religion among those "of about equally little importance in the estimate of Leonardo's genius" (LEO §36).

## See also

High indifference; Legend; Outward type; Unsanctified and secret wisdom.

## Bonfire of vanities

*bonfire of vanities*

Attested: *bonfire of vanities* (PIC §11), in Pater's quotation marks. The burning of worldly goods held at carnival time in Florence under the preaching of Girolamo Savonarola. The diarist Luca Landucci records the one of February 1498, when a heap of "vain things" was raised in the Piazza della Signoria, nude figures, gaming boards, heretical books, copies of Luigi Pulci's comic poem *Morgante*, mirrors and much else, and burned.[197] Pater uses it to date Pico's renunciation. Pico had loved much, "but their reign over him was over, and long before Savonarola's famous 'bonfire of vanities,'" he had destroyed his love-songs in the vulgar tongue (PIC §11; see Vulgar tongue). The bonfire came after Pico's death in 1494, so "long before" is exact; the comparison sets Pico's private destruction of his own verses beside the public burning of the city's pleasures, and can be read as making his the gentler act. Savonarola appears again at Pico's death, "amid the prayers and sacraments of Savonarola" (PIC §12; see Dominican habit), and in the Michelangelo essay as the man "spiritualising the papal sovereignty" (MIC §16).

## See also

Dominican habit; Vulgar tongue.

## Breadth of humanity

*What the Greek works gained by leaving out the particular: a humanity that travels · The Renaissance*

*breadth of humanity*; *breadth*

[197] Luca Landucci, *Diario fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516*, ed. I. Del Badia (Florence, 1883), entry for 27 February 1497 in the Florentine reckoning (1498): "un capannuccio di cose vane".

## At a Glance

**The word.** Breadth is width, largeness of scope; a breadth of humanity is a humanity wide enough to belong to all.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Hence the breadth of humanity in them, that detachment from the conditions of a particular place or people, which has carried their influence far beyond the age which produced them" (ROB §8).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §35 says that "Pater will distinguish breadth achieved through disciplined selection from a generality produced by imprecise observation".

**A place to read.** ROB §8, with WIN §35.

## Meaning

"Breadth" is the first of Pater's three glosses on *Allgemeinheit*, "breadth, generality, universality" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit), and in the language of art it had a technical sense: a painting or statue has breadth when it is treated in large masses, without fussy detail. "Humanity" here is human nature in general, what all human beings share. The phrase joins the painter's word to the moralist's.

## Use in the book

The eighth paragraph of the della Robbia essay is one sentence, and it is the phrase's chief passage. It draws the consequence of the Greek law stated in the paragraph before: "In this way their works came to be like some subtle extract or essence, or almost like pure thoughts or ideas: and hence the breadth of humanity in them, that detachment from the conditions of a particular place or people, which has carried their influence far beyond the age which produced them, and insured them universal acceptance" (ROB §8; see Essence; Detachment; Universality).

The sentence is the gain side of the Greek account; the next paragraph gives the loss (ROB §9; see Abstraction). What the Greek works lose in expression they gain in reach. Because they have been purged of the accidents of one moment and one person, they belong to no place and to every place, and their influence has travelled across centuries and nations. "Insured them universal acceptance" makes the point almost commercially: the Greek work is a currency that passes everywhere.

The essay's second paragraph had said the opposite of Luca's work: "no work is less imitable: like Tuscan wine, it loses its savour when moved from its birthplace" (ROB §2; see Savour). The two sentences can be read as the essay's balance sheet. The Greek works have breadth and travel; the Tuscan works have *intimité* and stay at home (ROB §13; see Intimité). The essay prefers neither, but its affection is with the work that does not travel.

The Winckelmann essay defends Greek breadth against a misunderstanding. Hellenic breadth comes "of a culture minute, severe, constantly renewed" (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit; Pregnant type), and

"Works of art produced under this law, and only these, are really characterised by Hellenic generality or breadth" (WIN §38). The breadth is not vagueness; it is the result of much particular study concentrated (see Allgemeinheit). At the end of the essay the word joins the marks of Greek culture: "Breadth, centrality, with blitheness and repose, are the marks of Hellenic culture" (WIN §49).

The phrase can be read as Pater's answer to the question every humanist asks of the classics, why they still matter. They matter because their makers left out what would have tied them to Athens in the fifth century; their humanity is broad because it is general. The answer has its price, and the della Robbia essay, which ends by praising the most particular quality in art, never lets the reader forget it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "breadth" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §7** Allgemeinheit means breadth, generality, universality.

**ROB §8** The breadth of humanity in the Greek works has carried their influence far beyond their age.

**WIN §35** Hellenic breadth and generality come of a culture minute and severe, not of lax observation.

**WIN §38** Only works produced under the law of restraint are really characterised by Hellenic breadth.

**WIN §49** Breadth, centrality, with blitheness and repose, are the marks of Hellenic culture.

## In this edition

The note at WIN §35 glosses *Allgemeinheit* as "Generality or breadth", and says that "Pater will distinguish breadth achieved through disciplined selection from a generality produced by imprecise observation".

## See also

Abstraction; Allgemeinheit; Detachment; Essence; Intimité; Pregnant type; Repose; Savour; Universality.

# Brief

*brief*

Attested: *brief* (PIC §8), as a noun; the adjective comes in five further paragraphs. A papal letter, shorter and less formal than a bull; the Latin *breve*, "a short writing". Some of Pico's nine hundred theses had been suspected of heresy, and the reading of the book that contained them forbidden by the Pope: "It was not until 1493 that Pico was finally absolved, by a brief of Alexander the Sixth" (PIC §8; see Absolution;

Orthodoxy). Alexander VI, Rodrigo Borgia, was pope from 1492 to 1503. The brief closes the episode Pater has told as a romance, the "knight-errant of philosophy" who offered to defend his paradoxes "against all comers" (PIC §8; see Knight-errant of philosophy), with a document of the papal chancery. The edition's note at PIC §8 records that Innocent VIII's commission "investigated thirteen theses, and the disputation never took place", and that "Alexander VI absolved Pico in 1493".

## See also

Absolution; Knight-errant of philosophy; Orthodoxy.

## Byzantine decoration

*Byzantine decoration*

Attested: *Byzantine decoration* (GIO §12). Byzantine art is the art of the eastern Roman Empire, centred on Constantinople, whose mosaics of gold ground and solemn frontal figures reached Venice through its trade with the East. Pater begins the history of Venetian painting there: "The beginnings of Venetian painting link themselves to the last, stiff, half-barbaric splendours of Byzantine decoration, and are but the introduction into the crust of marble and gold on the walls of the Duomo of Murano, or of Saint Mark's, of a little more of human expression" (GIO §12). The note at GIO §12 says that in the basilica of Santi Maria e Donato on Murano, "a gold-ground Madonna in the apse and patterned pavement show distinct ways mosaics articulate an interior". "Stiff" and "half-barbaric" are the words of a nineteenth-century taste, but the sentence does not dismiss the inheritance. The Byzantine wall gives Venetian painting its first law, that it is part of a building, "always subordinate to architectural effect" (GIO §12; see Architectural effect).

## See also

Architectural effect; Decorative; Gold thread.

## Cette fatigue du nord

*cette fatigue du nord*; *that weariness of the north*

Attested: *cette fatigue du nord* (WIN §3); *weariness of the north* (WIN §§3, 21). French, "this weariness of the North", as the note at WIN §3 renders it. Pater quotes it from Madame de Staël on the young Winckelmann: "He felt in himself," says Madame de Staël, "an ardent attraction towards the south. In German imaginations even now traces are often to be found of that love of the sun, that weariness of the north (cette fatigue du nord) which carried the northern peoples away into the countries

of the south" (WIN §3). The passage is from the chapter of her book on Germany, *De l'Allemagne* (1813), that treats Lessing and Winckelmann.[198] Staël finds it still in German imaginations, the longing that once drew the northern peoples into the countries of the south; Pater makes it a personal fate. When Winckelmann left Rome in 1768, "a strange, inverted home-sickness" came over him (WIN §21; see Home-sickness), and at Vienna all his "weariness of the north" had revived with double force (WIN §21). The note at WIN §3 marks the reversal: Pater "later gives that homesickness a geographic reversal when Winckelmann wants to return to Rome". He turned back, and was murdered at Trieste.

## See also

Home-sickness; Return to antiquity.

## Charnel-house

*charnel-house*

Attested: *charnel-house* (BEL §16; WIN §46). A charnel-house is a vault or building in which the bones of the dead are laid, when graves are emptied to make room; "charnel" comes through Old French from the Late Latin *carnale*, a burial place, the neuter of *carnalis*, of the flesh. Pater uses it twice, both times of art that keeps the furniture of death in view. In the architecture of the French sixteenth century "the grotesque details of the charnel-house nest themselves, together with birds and flowers and the fancies of the pagan mythology" (BEL §16; see Danse macabre), and the Pleiad, too, can trifle with death, its imagery serving "for delicate ornament" (BEL §16; see La grandeur du rien). In the Winckelmann essay medieval painting ranges from the early German schools, "still with something of the air of the charnel-house about them, to the clear loveliness of Perugino" (WIN §46; see Danse macabre). The two uses suggest the beginning and the end of a story: in the German painters the charnel-house is still grim, in the French ornament it has become one more motif among birds and flowers.

## See also

Danse macabre; Grotesque; La grandeur du rien; Le beau sejour du commun jour.

## Chevalier

*chevaliers*

Attested: *chevaliers* (FRE §32). The French for knight, a horseman, from *cheval*, horse. Pater puts the French word into his English of Aucassin's

[198] Germaine de Staël, *De l'Allemagne* (London, 1813), part II, ch. 6.

speech on hell, among "the fair courteous ladies who had two or three chevaliers apiece beside their own true lords" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The Old French has *amis*, lovers, at this point (*deus amis ou trois avoc leur barons*); its *cevalier* is the word Pater gives as "the fine horsemen dead in battle".[199] In calling the lovers chevaliers Pater dresses them as knights in a lady's service; the French word keeps the courtly tone, and the arithmetic of "two or three chevaliers apiece" can be read as the burlesque in it (see Burlesque). The note on "the vair and the grey" at FRE §32 reads the catalogue as Aucassin's choice of company (see Vair).

## See also

Antinomianism; Burlesque; Chivalry; Vair.

## Chivalry

*chivalry*; *chivalrous*

Attested: *chivalry* (FRE §1); *chivalrous* (WIN §19). Knighthood and the code of honour, service and courtesy that went with it, from the French *chevalerie*. The French writers whom the first essay follows "tell us how Saint Francis of Assisi took not his name only, but all those notions of chivalry and romantic love which so deeply penetrated his thoughts, from a French source" (FRE §1; see Romantic love; Franciscan order). Francis of Assisi (1181/2–1226) was baptised Giovanni; in the thirteenth-century *Legend of the Three Companions* it is his father, a cloth merchant back from France, who calls him Francesco.[200] The adjective comes once more, of a friendship of Winckelmann's that "begins with an antique, chivalrous letter in French, and ends noisily in a burst of angry fire" (WIN §19; see Temperament). In both places the word goes with France, and "antique" can be read as marking chivalry as a manner already of the past.

## See also

Chevalier; Franciscan order; Romantic love; Temperament.

## Christian art

*Christian art*

Attested: *Christian art* (PRE §6; WIN §§46, 47). The art of the church, above all of the middle age. The Preface says it "is often falsely opposed to the Renaissance", since its "great aim and achievements" were another result of the same "general excitement and enlightening of the human mind" that produced the revival of antiquity (PRE §6; see Renaissance). The

[199] *Aucassin et Nicolette*, section 6, in the unique manuscript, Paris, BnF fr. 2168.

[200] *Legenda trium sociorum* (*Legend of the Three Companions*), chapter 1.

Winckelmann essay comes back to the point near its close. Christian art "was still dependent on pagan examples", and "The sensuous expression of ideas which unreservedly discredit the world of sense, was the delicate problem which Christian art had before it"; it had buried in itself relics of the antique, "ready to work wonders when their day came" (WIN §46). "Pagan and Christian art are sometimes harshly opposed", but "The two are really continuous" (WIN §47).

## See also

Christian asceticism; Renaissance; Revival of classical antiquity.

# Classical culture

*The culture of Greece and Rome, recovered in the Renaissance, to which Du Bellay set out to adjust the culture of France · The Renaissance*

*classical culture*; *classical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The learning, literature and art of ancient Greece and Rome, as a body of culture to be recovered, imitated or adjusted to.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Du Bellay's object is to adjust the existing French culture to the rediscovered classical culture; and in discussing this problem, and developing the theories of the Pleiad, he has lighted upon many principles of permanent truth and applicability" (BEL §9).

**In this edition.** The Outline opens its summary of the Du Bellay essay: "French poetry meets classical and Italian models."

**A place to read.** BEL §§9–10.

## Meaning

"Classical", from the Latin *classicus*, of the first class, came to mean the writers of the first rank and then the ancient writers of Greece and Rome, taken as the standard. Classical culture is their whole inheritance, the languages, the books and the forms of art, as a later age possessed it.

## Use in the book

The book begins by putting the classical revival in its place. The revival of classical antiquity, to which the word Renaissance was first applied, was "but one element or symptom" of a whole complex movement (FRE §1; see Revival of classical antiquity); the Preface had said the same (PRE §6). Classical culture is one of the things the Renaissance did, not what it was.

The Du Bellay essay shows the revival arriving in a country that already had a culture of its own. Du Bellay's object "is to adjust the existing French culture to the rediscovered classical culture" (BEL §9). The verb is exact. To adjust is neither to replace nor to translate, but to fit two things together so

that each can work, and the essay's whole account of the French Renaissance is of such a fitting: Italian ornament on a Gothic outline (BEL §1; see Gothic manner), Italian finesse doubling a French daintiness (BEL §3; see Daintiness). The rediscovered culture was a problem, and the problem had two wrong answers. One was despair of French: some thought the language "naturally incapable of the fulness and elegance of Greek and Latin" and that poetry could be nobly written "only in the dead languages" (BEL §9; see Copie; Dead words). The other was translation: some "thought that the translation of the classical literature was the true means of ennobling the French language" (BEL §10; see Ennoble), and Du Bellay moderates their expectations (BEL §10; see Law of translation).

Du Bellay's own answer, in the *Deffense*, is imitation. The Romans, he wrote, enriched their language by imitating the best Greek authors, transforming themselves into them, devouring them and, when they had digested them well, converting them into blood and food.[201] Pater does not quote the image, but it can be read as the method his verb implies. Adjustment by digestion makes the classical culture part of the living body of French, and the "principles of permanent truth and applicability" that Pater finds in the little book are principles of that kind: that a language is made by its users (BEL §9; see Freewill), that the grace and the naturalness, *le naïf*, of one language cannot be reproduced in another (BEL §10; see Le naïf).

The classical models enter the Pleiad's music as well as its language. The Pleiad desired a music more various than that of older French verse or of the classical poets (BEL §15; see La poésie chantée), and sought to combine the measured verse of Latin and Greek with the rhymed verse of France (BEL §15; see Double music). Here too the aim is a union, not a conversion.

The Winckelmann essay names the failure that the Pleiad's way avoided. Voltaire belongs to a "flimsier, more artificial, classical tradition", which Winckelmann was to supplant by "the genuine antique" (WIN §6; see Artificial classicism), and Raphael's Parnassus commemorates the true one, "the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22; see Classical tradition). The French classical tradition of the eighteenth century can be read as classical culture adopted and not adjusted, a manner without the native strength under it. Du Bellay's problem, in the essay's account, was how to have the rediscovered culture without losing one's own; Winckelmann's was how to get past the artificial one to the genuine antique (WIN §13; see Artificial classicism).

[201] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 7.

## Places to read

The paragraphs of the Du Bellay essay in which "classical" occurs, with four others where Pater names the classical revival or the classical tradition (PRE §6; FRE §1; WIN §§6, 22), in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The word Renaissance was first used to denote the revival of classical antiquity, one result among many.

**FRE §1** The revival of classical antiquity was but one element or symptom of the Renaissance.

**BEL §9** Du Bellay's object is to adjust the existing French culture to the rediscovered classical culture.

**BEL §10** Some thought the translation of the classical literature the true means of ennobling French.

**BEL §15** The Pleiad desired a music more various than that of older French verse or of the classical poets.

**WIN §6** Voltaire belongs to the flimsier, more artificial classical tradition which Winckelmann was to supplant.

**WIN §22** In the Parnassus Raphael commemorates the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste.

## Pater's sources

The method that Pater sums up as adjustment is Du Bellay's own in the *Deffense*, whose first book argues that translations cannot perfect the French language (I.5) and that it must be enlarged by the imitation of the ancient Greek and Roman authors (I.8), after the example of the Romans (I.7).[202]

## See also

Artificial classicism; Classical tradition; Copie; Daintiness; Dead words; Double music; Ennoble; Freewill; Gothic manner; La poésie chantée; Law of translation; Le naïf; Revival of classical antiquity.

### Classical tradition

*The tradition of taste that descends from Greece, which Raphael painted and Winckelmann authenticated · The Renaissance*

*the classical tradition*; *the Hellenic tradition*; *the supreme tradition of beauty*

[202] Du Bellay, *Deffence*, book I, chs. 5, 7 and 8; the titles of chs. 5 and 8 read "That translations are not sufficient to give perfection to the French language" and "Of enlarging the French language by the imitation of the ancient Greek and Roman authors".

## At a Glance

**The word.** The continuous handing on, from Greece and Rome to later ages, of the forms and standards of ancient art and letters.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Raphael commemorates the classical tradition as "the orthodoxy of taste", and Winckelmann's history "authenticates the claims of this tradition" (WIN §22).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §22 identifies the frescoes as "the Disputation of the Sacrament and Parnassus in the Stanza della Segnatura".

**A place to read.** WIN §§22–23.

## Meaning

A tradition is a handing on, from the Latin *traditio*, a delivery. The classical tradition is the handing on of the classics: the texts, forms and standards of Greek and Roman antiquity, as they passed through the Roman schools, the medieval copyists and the Renaissance into modern Europe. The phrase can also mean a standard of taste, the canon of what was correct in art, and it is in that sense, as "the orthodoxy of taste", that Pater uses it.

## Use in the book

The phrase has two sides in the essay, a false one and a true. The false is "that flimsier, more artificial, classical tradition" of Voltaire (WIN §6; see Artificial classicism), and the Germany of Winckelmann's youth "presented nothing in which he could have anticipated Iphigenie, and the formation of an effective classical tradition in German literature" (WIN §6). The true is the tradition of Greece itself, which Winckelmann longed to see in "the countries of the classical tradition" (WIN §8) and from which, Winckelmann might reflect, the Protestant principle in art had cut Germany off, "the supreme tradition of beauty" (WIN §12).

The twenty-second paragraph gives the tradition its picture. In the Stanza della Segnatura Raphael painted two companies on neighbouring walls, the Church round the Sacrament and the poets round Apollo, "Dante alone appearing in both" (WIN §22). In this fresco Raphael commemorates "the classical tradition, the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22; see Orthodoxy of taste), and the waters of Castalia flow down to the poets, a river making glad another City of God (WIN §22; see Castalia). The image can be read as making the classical tradition a second church, with its own saints and its own sacred spring. Then Pater's claim: "Winckelmann's intellectual history authenticates the claims of this tradition in human culture" (WIN §22). The proof is that the tradition reached a man who had every reason to miss it. In the lands where it arose national pride might revive it, and aliens might imitate that enthusiasm, and classicism become a fashion (WIN §22; see Artificial classicism); but Winckelmann "was not further removed by language, than by local aspects and associations, from

those vestiges of the classical spirit; and he lived at a time when, in Germany, classical studies were out of favour" (WIN §22). Yet he "feels after the Hellenic world, divines those channels of ancient art, in which its life still circulates" (WIN §22; see Divination), like Scyles, the Scythian king in Herodotus who worshipped as a Greek in secret (WIN §22; see Hellenism). A tradition that can reach such a man is not a convention but a need, and this testimony "to the authority of the Hellenic tradition, its fitness to satisfy some vital requirement of the intellect, which Winckelmann contributes as a solitary man of genius, is offered also by the general history of the mind" (WIN §22).

The twenty-third paragraph explains how such a tradition works. Genius is coloured by its time and place, and criticism must remember, in a phrase Pater sets in quotation marks, that the artist is "the child of his time"; but there is also "an element of permanence, a standard of taste, which genius confesses", maintained by a tradition (WIN §23; see Conscious tradition). The standard, Pater says, "was fixed in Greece, at a definite historical period" (WIN §23). The essay can be read as joining two views that its century kept apart: the historian's, for whom every art is the child of its time, and the classicist's, for whom one art is a standard for all. Pater keeps both. Greece is a historical moment, explained by its climate, its religion and its bodies (WIN §§24–31), and it is also the standard by which later ages measure themselves.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the classical tradition, or the Hellenic tradition of beauty and taste, is named, in the order of the book.

**WIN §5** Winckelmann, votary of the gravest of intellectual traditions, meets only suppression from its professional guardians.

**WIN §6** Voltaire belongs to a flimsier, more artificial classical tradition; Germany could not then anticipate an effective one.

**WIN §8** Plato increased Winckelmann's desire to visit the countries of the classical tradition.

**WIN §12** Winckelmann might reflect that the Protestant principle had cut off Germany from the supreme tradition of beauty.

**WIN §22** Raphael commemorates the classical tradition, and Winckelmann's history authenticates its claims.

**WIN §23** The standard of taste fixed in Greece is maintained in a purely intellectual tradition.

## See also

Artificial classicism; Castalia; Conscious tradition; Divination; Divinatory power; Hellenism; Orthodoxy of taste.

## Combined action

*combined action*

Attested: *combined action* (BEL §8), twice. Combined action is the action of many in concert, a movement that knows itself as one. Pater uses the phrase in the Du Bellay essay to warn against the unity that a single name suggests. "because we have a single name for it we may sometimes fancy that there was more unity in the thing itself than there really was" (BEL §8; see Unity of culture), and the next sentence measures the Renaissance against the Reformation: "Even the Reformation, that other great movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had far less unity, far less of combined action, than is at first sight supposed; and the Renaissance was infinitely less united, less conscious of combined action, than the Reformation" (BEL §8). The second use adds "conscious", and the paragraph goes on to name the one place where, "if anywhere", the Renaissance became conscious: Du Bellay's little book (BEL §8; see Illustrate). The phrase can be read as setting the terms of that discovery. A movement without combined action may still have a moment of self-knowledge, and the *Deffense* is that moment for the Renaissance.

### See also

Illustrate; Literary revolution; Unity of culture.

## Common air

*common air*

Attested: *common air* (PRE §8; LEO §23). The air all breathe alike, and so the shared atmosphere of an age. In fifteenth-century Italy "artists and philosophers and those whom the action of the world has elevated and made keen, do not live in isolation, but breathe a common air, and catch light and heat from each other's thoughts" (PRE §8; see General culture). In the Leonardo essay the phrase has another sense: his women seem "to feel powers at work in the common air unfelt by others", and to become their receptacle (LEO §23; see Receptacle). In the Preface the common air joins minds; in the Leonardo essay it holds forces only a few can feel.

### See also

Alliance with mind; General culture; Intellectual isolation; Receptacle.

## Condottiére

*condottiére*

Attested: *condottiére* (GIO §17). The Italian *condottiere* is the captain of a band of hired soldiers, from *condotta*, the contract by which a city or a prince hired him and his men; the wars of fifteenth-century Italy were fought largely by such captains. Pater's spelling, with an accent the Italian does not use, marks the word as foreign. He uses it of a neighbour of Giorgione's youth at Castelfranco: "and, up in the towers which still remain, Tuzio Costanzo, the famous condottiére, a picturesque remnant of medieval manners, amid a civilisation rapidly changing" (GIO §17). The phrase places the condottiere among the old things of the Renaissance, a knight of the towers in an age of courts and collectors. Giorgione paints his portrait, and when his son Matteo dies young, adorns a chapel in his memory, "painting on this occasion, perhaps, the altar-piece" of Castelfranco (GIO §17; see Altar-piece). In the armoured saint of that picture, "as in some other knightly personages attributed to him, people have supposed the likeness of the painter's own presumably gracious presence" (GIO §17); the figures can also be read as the condottiere's world passed into paint. The Leonardo essay has the most famous of the type in bronze, the Colleoni at Venice "modelled by Leonardo's master" (LEO §28; see Modelling).

## See also

Altar-piece; Cortesia; Modelling.

# Conscious tradition

*Pater's name for Hellenism's place in modern culture: not absorbed into it but returning, again and again, to the surface · The Renaissance*
*a conscious tradition*; *a purely intellectual tradition*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A tradition that knows itself as such, handed on deliberately and recognised by those who receive it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Unlike the other spiritual forces of the past, Hellenism is "a conscious tradition" in our intellectual life (WIN §22).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §22 says that Pater sees the Vatican room "as giving visual form to the transmission of two traditions".

**A place to read.** WIN §§22–23.

## Meaning

A tradition can be unconscious, carried in habits and forms whose origin is forgotten, or conscious, kept and returned to as a known source. Pater's distinction can be read as answering the historians of his century, who were learning to see the past at work in the present without its knowledge, in

laws, languages and customs. Most of the past, he grants, lives so; one part of it lives otherwise.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the twenty-second paragraph, after the account of the two frescoes and of Winckelmann's solitary witness to the classical tradition. The general history of the mind offers the same testimony: "The spiritual forces of the past, which have prompted and informed the culture of a succeeding age, live, indeed, within that culture, but with an absorbed, underground life" (WIN §22). "The Hellenic element alone has not been so absorbed, or content with this underground life; from time to time it has started to the surface; culture has been drawn back to its sources to be clarified and corrected" (WIN §22). The conclusion names the difference: "Hellenism is not merely an absorbed element in our intellectual life; it is a conscious tradition in it" (WIN §22).

The image beneath the phrase can be read as one of water. Most traditions are like rain that sinks into the soil and nourishes it unseen; Hellenism is a spring that rises again and again, and to which culture goes back to drink and to clear itself. The two frescoes of the paragraph's opening show the same thing in paint: the Christian tradition with the Sacrament at its centre, the classical with the waters of Castalia flowing down (WIN §22; see Castalia). The essay can be read as setting the two traditions in one room while claiming for the Hellenic alone that it has not been absorbed.

The twenty-third paragraph explains the mechanism. Beside the element of change in art, which makes every artist "the child of his time", there is "an element of permanence, a standard of taste, which genius confesses. This standard is maintained in a purely intellectual tradition. It acts upon the artist, not as one of the influences of his own age, but through those artistic products of the previous generation which first excited, while they directed into a particular channel, his sense of beauty" (WIN §23). A conscious tradition passes through works, not through the air of the time. "The supreme artistic products of succeeding generations thus form a series of elevated points, taking each from each the reflexion of a strange light, the source of which is not in the atmosphere around and above them, but in a stage of society remote from ours" (WIN §23). The image is of mountain-tops catching a light from beyond the horizon, each lit by the one before. It can be read as Pater's picture of the book itself: the studies of *The Renaissance*, from Abelard to Winckelmann, are such a series of high points, each catching from its predecessors a light whose source is Greece.

The paragraph ends with the question the rest of the essay answers: "What were the conditions under which this ideal, this standard of artistic orthodoxy, was generated? How was Greece enabled to force its thought upon Europe?" (WIN §23). The answer, through religion, the body and

sculpture (WIN §§24–41), makes the conscious tradition historical; and the essay's later claim, that there is a sense in which the Renaissance "was an uninterrupted effort of the middle age" (WIN §47; see Renaissance), makes the medieval centuries part of its channel.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which Pater speaks of Hellenism as a conscious and purely intellectual tradition, in the order of the book.

**WIN §22** Hellenism is not merely an absorbed element in our intellectual life; it is a conscious tradition in it.

**WIN §23** The standard of taste is maintained in a purely intellectual tradition, a series of elevated points lit from Greece.

## See also

Absorbed element; Castalia; Classical tradition; Hellenism; Powers or forces; Renaissance.

# Contagion

*contagion*; *uninfected*

Attested: *contagion* (WIN §47); *uninfected* (WIN §7). Contagion is the passing of disease by contact, from the Latin *contagio*, a touching. Pater uses the word at the turn of the forty-seventh paragraph, in the ascetic's view of the Renaissance. When the actual relics of the antique were restored to the world, it was to the Christian ascetic "as if an ancient plague-pit had been opened" (WIN §47; see Plague-pit). "All the world took the contagion of the life of nature and of the senses" (WIN §47). The sentence can be read as keeping the ascetic's metaphor and reversing its value. For him the senses are a plague, caught from buried pagan bodies; for Pater the contagion is the Renaissance itself, the spread of a life that no quarantine could stop. The word has a counterpart earlier in the essay, where the youths of Plato's *Lysis* are "still uninfected by any spiritual sickness" (WIN §7; see Affinity): there the sickness is the spirit's, and the health is Greek. The two figures can be read as the essay's whole quarrel with asceticism, in which each side calls the other's life a disease (see Christian asceticism).

## See also

Affinity; Christian asceticism; Plague-pit; Reliquary.

# Conventual church

*conventual church*

Attested: *conventual church* (PIC §12). The church of a convent, here a house of friars, as distinct from a parish church or a cathedral. Pico's end comes in a single sentence: "He was buried in the conventual church of Saint Mark, in the hood and white frock of the Dominican order" (PIC §12; see Dominican habit). San Marco in Florence was a house of Dominican friars; Pico, who "did not become a monk" (PIC §12), was laid among them in their habit. The edition's note at PIC §12 adds that "A modern forensic study of the remains reported arsenic in quantities consistent with fatal poisoning", and that "The circumstances of Pico's death are less securely established than Pater's sentence implies".

## See also

Dominican habit.

## Convulsive energy

*The violent force that marks medieval art off from classical work, which some critics took for the whole of Michelangelo · The Renaissance*

*convulsive energy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Convulsive is seized by violent, involuntary spasms; a convulsive energy is a force that breaks out in jerks and strains rather than flowing evenly.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Medieval art is distinguished from classical work by "the presence of a convulsive energy in it" (MIC §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §2, with MIC §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *convellere* is to tear up or wrench, and *convulsio*, in the medical Latin that gave English the word, is a cramp or spasm. Convulsive things move by violent contraction: a convulsive sob, a convulsive grip. Joined to energy, which in Pater is the force of a nature or a work (see Energy of conception), the adjective names force that is not mastered, that strains against its own limits and shows the strain.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which reports the view of the critics who see only strength in him: "In this way he sums up for them the whole character of medieval art itself in that which distinguishes it most clearly from classical work, the presence of a convulsive energy in it, becoming in lower hands merely monstrous or forbidding, and felt, even in its most graceful

products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque" (MIC §2; see Grotesque; Quaintness).

The sentence is a history of art in a clause. Classical work is balanced and self-contained, as the Greek ideal of the Winckelmann essay is (see Allgemeinheit); medieval work is driven by a force that will not stay within its forms. In lesser hands that force produces the "monstrous or forbidding", the gargoyle and the demon; in the finest it remains as a trace, "a subdued quaintness or grotesque", a strangeness in the line even of a graceful thing. To the critics of strength, Michelangelo is the sum of that tradition: medieval energy at its height.

Pater can be read as accepting the history and correcting its application. The sentence is framed by "for them": it is the strength-only critics who sum Michelangelo up so. The next sentence turns: "Yet those who feel this grace or sweetness in Michelangelo might at the first moment be puzzled if they were asked wherein precisely such quality resided" (MIC §2). The essay answers it three paragraphs later, and finds the sweetness not in accessories but in "this penetrative suggestion of life" (MIC §5; see Brooding spirit of life). The energy of conception of the first paragraph, which "seems at every moment about to break through all the conditions of comely form" (MIC §1; see Energy of conception), can be read as this convulsive energy mastered: what the critics miss is that it only seems about to break through.

The phrase belongs to a view of the middle age that runs through the book. In the della Robbia essay the Tuscan system relieves the intensity that "might otherwise have stiffened into caricature" (ROB §11; see Caricature). Convulsive energy can be read as what that relief and the Greek abstraction tame. The phrase may be taken as Pater's name for the medieval inheritance that the Renaissance had to master rather than discard, the force of the Gothic that became, in Michelangelo, a strength under discipline.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §2** Medieval art is distinguished from classical work by a convulsive energy, monstrous in lower hands, a subdued grotesque in the most graceful.

## Pater's sources

Pater names no source for the phrase. The nearest English account of the quality is John Ruskin's chapter "The Nature of Gothic" in *The Stones of Venice* (1853), which makes grotesqueness the fourth of the six characteristics of Gothic and praises "that strange disquietude of the Gothic spirit".[203] Pater's adjective can be read as weighing the same quality differently: where Ruskin praised the restless energy of the Gothic,

[203] John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. II (1853), ch. VI, "The Nature of Gothic", §§6, 40.

"convulsive" makes it a spasm, one that the Tuscan sculptors relieved and Michelangelo held in check.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Brooding spirit of life; Caricature; Comely form; Energy of conception; Grotesque; Quaintness.

# Danse Macabre

*The northern dance of death, the morbid form that Florentine thoughts of death escaped · The Renaissance*

*Danse Macabre*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, "the dance of death": a picture or poem in which Death leads people of every rank, one by one, in a dance to the grave.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Florentine preoccupation with death might have resulted "in something merely morbid or grotesque, in the Danse Macabre of many French and German painters, or the grim inventions of Dürer" (MIC §19).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §19.

## Meaning

The Danse Macabre was a theme of the late middle age in France, Germany and the Low Countries. Its best-known early example was painted in 1424–25 on the wall of the cloister of the Cimetière des Innocents in Paris, the crowded city burial ground whose charnel-houses held the bones dug up to make room for new graves; the pope, the emperor, the bishop, the merchant, the peasant and the child each received a dead partner and a verse. The Paris printer Guyot Marchant published the series in woodcuts in 1485. A *Totentanz*, a dance of death, painted on the churchyard wall of the Dominicans at Basel about 1440 was copied and admired until its destruction in 1805, and the woodcuts of the German painter Hans Holbein the Younger of the dance of death, cut in the 1520s and published at Lyon in 1538, carried the theme across Europe.[204] The origin of the word *macabre* is uncertain.

[204] On the Paris painting, Guyot Marchant, *La Danse macabre* (Paris, 1485; copy in the Bibliothèque nationale de France); on the Basel painting, its surviving fragments in the Historisches Museum Basel; on Holbein's woodcuts, *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort* (Lyon, Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel, 1538).

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the eleventh sentence of the nineteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which describes the Florentines' preoccupation with death and the form it might have taken: "This preoccupation with serious thoughts and sad images might easily have resulted, as it did, for instance, in the gloomy villages of the Rhine, or in the overcrowded parts of medieval Paris, as it still does in many a village of the Alps, in something merely morbid or grotesque, in the Danse Macabre of many French and German painters, or the grim inventions of Dürer" (MIC §19; see Grotesque).

The places Pater names can be read as the dance's own geography. The overcrowded parts of medieval Paris were the quarter of the Innocents, where the dance was painted in the charnel galleries; the villages of the Rhine are the country of Basel; and Dürer engraved Death riding beside the knight with an hourglass in *Knight, Death and the Devil* (1513).[205] Pater gives the whole northern tradition one judgement: "merely morbid or grotesque". It dwells on the corpse and the skeleton, on decay as a leveller; it makes death a grim joke at the expense of rank.

The next sentence names the Florentine alternative: the Florentine masters were saved from that result by their culture and by their pity (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction). The Danse Macabre is what the Florentines were saved from, and the contrast is the paragraph's argument. The northern painters show death dancing; the Florentines, Pater supposes, "must often have leaned over the lifeless body", where, "it is said", the lines "become more simple and dignified" (MIC §19; see Abstract line).

The book returns twice to the northern image of death. In the French Renaissance of the sixteenth century "the grotesque details of the charnel-house nest themselves, together with birds and flowers and the fancies of the pagan mythology, in the traceries of the architecture of that time, which wantons in its graceful arabesques with the images of old age and death" (BEL §16); and medieval painting ranges "from the early German schools, still with something of the air of the charnel-house about them, to the clear loveliness of Perugino" (WIN §46). The charnel-house belongs to the north; Italy, in the book's map, escapes it by culture and by pity.

Taken as a foil, the phrase sets off the essay's highest claim. Michelangelo's Medici tombs are the final expression of a Florentine tradition of thinking about death, and Pater measures that tradition by what it refused: not the skeleton but the dignified face, not the dance but the pause, "with a sentiment of profound pity" (MIC §19).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the Danse Macabre or the charnel-house occurs, in the order of the book.

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[205] Albrecht Dürer, *Knight, Death and the Devil*, engraving, 1513.

**MIC §19** The Florentine preoccupation with death might have become morbid or grotesque, as in the Danse Macabre and the grim inventions of Dürer.

**BEL §16** The grotesque details of the charnel-house nest among birds and flowers in the traceries of French architecture.

**WIN §46** Medieval painting ranges from the early German schools, with the air of the charnel-house, to the clear loveliness of Perugino.

## See also

Abstract line; Charnel-house; Death in its distinction; Grotesque.

## Dark age

*dark age*

Attested: *dark age* (FRE §1). The name, often in the plural, for the early middle ages as a time without learning or art. Pater puts it in quotation marks and moves it: the outbreak of the late twelfth century comes "after a long period in which this instinct had been crushed, that true 'dark age,' in which so many sources of intellectual and imaginative enjoyment had actually disappeared" (FRE §1; see Intellectual or imaginative enjoyment). "True" makes a correction. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries, often lumped with the dark age, are for Pater a Renaissance; the true dark age is the time before, and it is dark because the sources of enjoyment had gone. The essay's later remark on "what is often in one all-embracing confusion called the middle age" (FRE §32) makes the same point about the larger name.

## See also

Intellectual or imaginative enjoyment; Medieval Renaissance; Renaissance.

## Decadence

*decadence*

Attested: *decadence* (PRE §6). A falling away, the late phase of an art or a culture after its height. Pater uses the word without reproach: the French aftermath of the Renaissance has the sweetness "which belongs to a refined and comely decadence", as its earliest phases have "the charm of ascêsis" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis). Both ends of a movement have their charm, the early one austere, the late one sweet. The essay on Du Bellay can be read as describing that late charm at length, "an exquisite faintness, une fadeur exquise", a poetry for "those who can bear nothing vehement or strong"

(BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise). In the decades after the book "decadence" became the name of a movement in French and English letters, and the poet and critic Arthur Symons, Pater's disciple, counted Pater's prose among its English examples.[206]

## See also

Aftermath; Ascêsis; Renaissance; Une fadeur exquise.

# Detachment

*Freedom from the conditions of place, need or wall: what the Greek works, the dead and the easel picture share · The Renaissance*
*detachment*; *detach*, *detaches*, *detaching*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Separation, the state of being unattached; also aloofness, freedom from the claims of circumstance.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Greek works have "that detachment from the conditions of a particular place or people, which has carried their influence far beyond the age which produced them" (ROB §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §8, with MIC §15 and GIO §12.

## Meaning

The French *détacher* is to unfasten, the opposite of *attacher*, and "detachment" was first the act of separating, then a body of troops sent off on its own, then, from the end of the eighteenth century, a state of mind, the aloofness of one who is not bound by interest or feeling. Pater's uses touch all three: the separating act, the separated thing, and the condition of freedom.

## Use in the book

The noun's chief use is in the account of Greek sculpture, whose works have "that detachment from the conditions of a particular place or people" which has carried their influence far beyond their age (ROB §8; see Breadth of humanity). Detachment here is the cause of travel. A work tied to one place and people stays there; a work detached from them goes everywhere.

The Michelangelo essay gives the noun to death. Michelangelo's true mistress is death, "at first as the worst of all sorrows and disgraces, with a clod of the field for its brain; afterwards, death in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs, the angry stains of life and action escaping fast" (MIC §15; see Death in its distinction). The phrase "angry stains"

[206] Arthur Symons, "The Decadent Movement in Literature", *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (November 1893).

returns in the Winckelmann essay, where the white light of sculpture is "purged from the angry, bloodlike stains of action and passion" (WIN §34; see Purge). The detachment of the dead and the detachment of the statue are the same: both are free of the accidents of life, and both have the dignity of what no longer needs anything.

The verb gives three more scenes. In lyrical poetry "we are least able to detach the matter from the form" (GIO §7; see Matter and manner), and that inseparability is why lyric is artistically the highest kind of poetry. Giorgione takes the spaces of colour that had filled "a mere architectural scheme", and "detaches from the wall" (GIO §12), making the easel picture, a thing that can be moved and hung anywhere. And Winckelmann "multiplied his intellectual force by detaching from it all flaccid interests" (WIN §6).

The uses can be read as one idea seen in four lights. Detachment frees a work from its conditions and gives it range: the Greek statue travels, Giorgione's picture leaves the wall, Winckelmann's mind gains force. The Giorgione essay marks its limit: in the highest form of poetry, the lyric, matter cannot be detached from form. And the della Robbia essay, which praises Greek detachment, praises more warmly the work that cannot be detached from its walls without losing its savour (ROB §2; see Savour). Detachment is a power Pater admires and does not wholly trust.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "detachment" or the verb "detach" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §8** The Greek works have a detachment from the conditions of a particular place or people.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo's true mistress is death, at last death in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs.

**GIO §7** In lyrical poetry we are least able to detach the matter from the form.

**GIO §12** Giorgione detaches the spaces of colour from the wall.

**WIN §6** Winckelmann multiplied his force by detaching from it all flaccid interests.

## See also

Breadth of humanity; Death in its distinction; Matter and manner; Purge; Savour; Universality.

# Device

*devices*, *device*

Attested: *devices* (LEO §10); *device* (LEO §14). The word comes from the Old French *devise*, a plan, a design, and in the Renaissance it named the personal emblem, often with a motto, that a prince or a scholar took as a sign of his character or policy. Pater uses both senses in the Leonardo essay. Leonardo in his years of study "wasted many days in curious tricks of design, seeming to lose himself in the spinning of intricate devices of line and colour" (LEO §10; see Line and colour): devices there are patterns, the interlacings of a designer at play. Ludovico Sforza "took for his device the mulberry-tree—symbol, in its long delay and sudden yielding of flowers and fruit together, of a wisdom which economises all forces for an opportunity of sudden and sure effect" (LEO §14). The tree was a pun as well as a symbol, for the Italian *moro* is the mulberry and Ludovico was called il Moro. Pliny the Elder records that the mulberry was called the wisest of trees, because it is the last of the cultivated trees to bud and waits until the cold is over; then it breaks into leaf in a single night.[207] Pater's gloss makes the device a picture of statecraft, patient and then sudden, and the sentence that contains it begins with Pater's charge, a rumour of Ludovico's own day, that he murdered his nephew "by slow poison". The emblem and the alleged crime can be read as one policy.

## See also

Line and colour; Religious sentimentalism.

# Dignity of human nature

*Pico's theme, the greatness of man, and its false foundation · The Renaissance*

*dignity of human nature*; *this high dignity of man*; *dignity*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The dignity of human nature is man's worth and rank among created things: the old theme of the greatness of man, which Pico's Oration made famous.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico's oration for his philosophical tournament "still remains; its subject is the dignity of human nature, the greatness of man" (PIC §9). "For this high dignity of man, thus bringing the dust under his feet into sensible communion with the thoughts and affections of the angels, was supposed to belong to him, not as renewed by a religious system, but by his own natural right" (PIC §10).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §9 says that "The familiar title On the Dignity of Man is posthumous", and that "its famous opening on human freedom leads to a program of philosophical and spiritual ascent".

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[207] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* XVI.102.

**A place to read.** PIC §§9–10.

## Meaning

The Latin *dignitas* is worthiness, and so rank and the bearing that goes with rank. The dignity of man was a theme of ancient and Christian writers alike, from the Hermetic *Asclepius* to the treatises of fifteenth-century Italy; Giannozzo Manetti's *On the Dignity and Excellence of Man* (1452) answered the treatise *On the Misery of the Human Condition* written by Lotario dei Segni, later Pope Innocent III, at the end of the twelfth century.[208] Pater's phrase, "the dignity of human nature, the greatness of man", gives the subject of Pico's speech in two forms, the abstract and the plain.

## Use in the book

Pater praises the theme and denies its ground. "In common with nearly all medieval speculation, much of Pico's writing has this for its drift; and in common also with it, Pico's theory of that dignity is founded on a misconception of the place in nature both of the earth and of man" (PIC §9). "For Pico the earth is the centre of the universe" (PIC §9; see Centre of the universe), and man, set in the midst of all as "the bond or copula of the world", is a little world in which every grade of being is found (PIC §9; see Copula; Interpreter of nature; Little world). Man's dignity, on this view, is his place: he stands at the centre of a small, ordered world.

The next paragraph turns from the ground to the use. The theory was a commonplace of the schools, yet, "false as its basis was, the theory had its use" (PIC §10; see Tritum est in scholis), for the dignity was supposed to belong to man by natural right (PIC §10; see Natural right; Sensible communion). On this theory the dignity belongs to man by nature, not by grace, and that is what made it useful. Its proclamation "was a counterpoise to the increasing tendency of medieval religion to depreciate man's nature" (PIC §10), and it helped toward the rehabilitation of human nature "which the Renaissance fulfils" (PIC §10; see Rehabilitation of human nature). The theory was false and the effect true, as with the allegorical method and the generous faith behind it (see Allegorical interpretation).

The rest of the book finds dignity elsewhere than in cosmology. Greek tragedy shows how the conflict of rival claims "may be treated with serenity, how the evolution of it may be a spectacle of the dignity, not of the impotence, of the human spirit" (WIN §44). The Florentine masters, studying the dead, came "to see death in its distinction" (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction), and, following it "perhaps one stage further", dwelt "for a moment on the point where all this transitory dignity must break up" (MIC §19). Pater's dignity can be read as a quality shown in the

[208] Giannozzo Manetti, *De dignitate et excellentia hominis* (1452); Lotario dei Segni (Innocent III), *De miseria condicionis humane* (about 1195).

face of conflict and death, where Pico's was a rank conferred by the shape of the universe.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which Pater speaks of the dignity of man or of the human spirit, in the order of the book; the word in other senses is left out.

**PIC §9** The subject of Pico's oration is the dignity of human nature, founded on a misconception of the place of the earth and of man.

**PIC §10** False as its basis was, the theory had its use: man's high dignity was supposed to belong to him by natural right, a counterpoise to the medieval depreciation of human nature.

**MIC §19** The Florentine masters dwelt for a moment on the point where all the transitory dignity of the dead must break up.

**WIN §44** Greek tragedy shows how a conflict may be a spectacle of the dignity, not the impotence, of the human spirit.

## Pater's sources

Pico's Oration opens with the saying of Abdala the Saracen that nothing is more wonderful than man, and with the words of Hermes in the *Asclepius*: "Magnum, o Asclepi, miraculum est homo", "Man, Asclepius, is a great wonder". It then lists the common reasons given for man's excellence, among them that he is the interpreter of nature and, "as the Persians say", the bond or copula of the world, and sets them aside as "great, but not the chief" reasons. The chief reason is freedom: God tells Adam, "Nec certam sedem, nec propriam faciem, nec munus ullum peculiare tibi dedimus, o Adam", "We have given you, Adam, no fixed seat, no form of your own, no function peculiar to you", so that he may shape himself as he chooses.[209] Pater gives Pico the commonplaces that Pico himself called secondary, and says nothing of the freedom. His account can be read as making Pico's dignity rest on the old cosmology, which the Oration had already looked beyond.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §9 says that "The familiar title On the Dignity of Man is posthumous", that "The speech was written to introduce the defense of the theses", and that "its famous opening on human freedom leads to a program of philosophical and spiritual ascent". The Introduction asks the reader to set Pater's account of the planned disputation beside the edition's research on "the speech later called the *Oration on the Dignity of Man*": "Pater's language of reconciliation gives the episode one shape. The

[209] Pico, *Oratio* (1486), sentences 1–4 and 18 in the numbering of the Latin Library text; the opening quotes *Asclepius* 6.

occasions for which Pico wrote, and the successive names under which his text has been read, give it another."

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Centre of the universe; Copula; Death in its distinction; Interpreter of nature; Little world; Natural right; Nodus et vinculum mundi; Rehabilitation of human nature; Sensible communion; Tritum est in scholis.

## Disputation

*disputation*, *disputations*

Attested: *disputations* (FRE §33); *disputation* (PIC §12). Formal argument, and in the schools the set debate in which a thesis is defended against all objections. The great disputation of Pico's life, as the edition's note at PIC §8 says, "never took place": in Rome he offered, "like some knight-errant of philosophy", to defend nine hundred paradoxes (PIC §8; see Knight-errant of philosophy; Paradox), and the oration composed "for the opening of this philosophical tournament still remains" (PIC §9; see Philosophical tournament). After his conversion the word marks a change of temper: "he did not become a monk; only he became gentle and patient in disputation" (PIC §12). The champion of the tournament becomes a patient disputant. In the first essay disputation belongs to the outside of the Renaissance: the wicked popes and loveless tyrants "who from time to time became its patrons, or mere speculators in its fortunes, lend themselves easily to disputations", while "the painter of the Last Supper, with his kindred, lives in a land where controversy has no breathing-place" (FRE §33; see Unity of culture).

## See also

Knight-errant of philosophy; Paradox; Philosophical tournament; Unity of culture.

## Dominican habit

*Dominican habit*; *Dominican order*; *Dominican*

Attested: *Dominican order* (PIC §12); *Dominican habit* (PIC §13); *Dominican* (LEO §26). The dress of the Order of Preachers, the friars founded by Saint Dominic and approved by Pope Honorius III in 1216.[210] Pico "did not become a monk" (PIC §12), but he was buried "in the hood and white frock of the Dominican order" (PIC §12; see Conventual church). The next paragraph makes the habit an image: Pico lies down to

[210] Honorius III, bull *Religiosam vitam* (22 December 1216).

rest “in the Dominican habit, yet amid thoughts of the older gods”, and so his life parallels his writings (PIC §13; see Natural piety; Analogue). The Christian habit is outward; the thoughts of the older gods are within. The Leonardo essay names “The low, gloomy Dominican church of Saint Mary of the Graces” in Milan, the favourite oratory of the Duchess Beatrice (LEO §26).

## See also

Analogue; Conventual church; Natural piety.

## Éclaircissement

*éclaircissement*

Attested: *éclaircissement* (PIC §3). French, “clearing up”, “clarification”; the note at PIC §3 renders it “Clarification or enlightenment”, and says that “it names the intellectual clarification Pater credits to the eighteenth-century Enlightenment”. The Renaissance of the fifteenth century, Pater says, was “in many things” great by its designs more than its achievements: “Much which it aspired to do, and did but imperfectly or mistakenly, was accomplished in what is called the éclaircissement of the eighteenth century, or in our own generation” (PIC §3; see Initiatory idea). “What is called” marks the word as borrowed. The example that follows is the reconciliation of the religions, which a modern scholar might effect by treating them as stages “in the gradual education of the human mind” (PIC §3; see Development; Historic sense). The book’s own English words, “enlightening” and “enlightenment”, are used of the fifteenth century, not of the eighteenth-century movement (PRE §§6, 8; see Enlightenment).

## See also

Development; Enlightenment; Historic sense; Initiatory idea.

## Enlightenment

*enlightenment*; *enlightening*

Attested: *enlightening* (PRE §6); *enlightenment* (PRE §8). The spreading of light in the mind, without the capital that marks the eighteenth-century movement. The revival of antiquity was “only one of many results of a general excitement and enlightening of the human mind” (PRE §6; see Revival of classical antiquity), and in fifteenth-century Italy “There is a spirit of general elevation and enlightenment in which all alike communicate” (PRE §8; see General culture), and in the same paragraph artists and philosophers “catch light and heat from each other’s thoughts”. Hellenism is later “the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light” (WIN

§14; see Intellectual light). The eighteenth-century movement appears in the book under a French word that English then used for it, "what is called the éclaircissement of the eighteenth century" (PIC §3; see Éclaircissement).

## See also

Éclaircissement; General culture; Intellectual light; Revival of classical antiquity.

## Erudition

*erudition*; *erudite*

Attested: *erudition* (PIC §8; BEL §9); *erudite* (BEL §14). Learning of the bookish kind; the Latin *eruditio* is a bringing out of rudeness, instruction. Pater describes Pico's learning before he names it: "with an inexhaustible, unrivalled thirst for knowledge, the strange, confused, uncritical learning of that age", Pico "passed through the principal schools of Italy and France, penetrating, as he thought, into the secrets of all ancient philosophies, and many eastern languages. And with this flood of erudition came the generous hope, so often disabused, of reconciling the philosophers with one another, and all alike with the Church" (PIC §8). "As he thought" and "uncritical" judge the learning; "generous" honours the hope. In the Du Bellay essay the word is Du Bellay's own, in his surprise at learned men who think French "wholly incapable of erudition and good literature" (BEL §9; see Vulgar tongue), and the poetry of the Pleiad is written "for courtiers, great lords and erudite persons" (BEL §14).

## See also

Higher culture; Vulgar tongue.

## Famulus

*famulus*

Attested: *famulus* (WIN §3). Latin, a servant; in the German universities and schools, a poor student who served a master in return for his keep and teaching. The note at WIN §3 renders it "Personal attendant" and says that the post "gives the young Winckelmann access to a schoolmaster's books in Pater's account". Pater gives it in a short, exact sentence: "The master of this school grows blind; Winckelmann becomes his famulus" (WIN §3). The old man would have had him study theology; "Winckelmann, free of the master's library, chooses rather to become familiar with the Greek classics" (WIN §3). Pater does not say so, but the word had a literary fame in Germany: in Goethe's *Faust* the scholar, interrupted in his midnight study,

groans that the knock at the door is his famulus, the dry pupil Wagner.[211] The comparison can be read as sharpening Pater's point. Wagner serves his master to inherit his learning; Winckelmann serves a blind master and takes from his library a learning the master would have had him leave for theology.

## See also

Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst.

# For their own sake

*Valued as ends, not as means · The Renaissance*
*for their own sake*; *for its own sake*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To value something for its own sake is to value it as an end in itself, not for what it brings.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann has an "enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake" (PRE §9), and the same love defines the Renaissance (FRE §1). The phrase can also condemn: the "ignorant worship of system for its own sake" (FRE §6). The Conclusion's last paragraph gives the palm to "the love of art for its own sake" (CON §6), where 1873 had "art for art's sake" (C73 §7).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §7 compares the two wordings of the Conclusion.

**A place to read.** FRE §1 with CON §6.

## Meaning

The phrase is long-established English idiom for valuing a thing as an end. Philosophy had long distinguished goods sought for their own sake from goods sought for something else, a distinction Aristotle drew at the opening of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1.1–2, 1094a1–22). In Pater's century the French formula *l'art pour l'art*, art for art's sake, credited to the philosopher Victor Cousin and made a creed by the French poet Théophile Gautier's preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835), made it the watchword of a doctrine about art.

## Use in the book

The phrase frames the book. In the Preface it is the "enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake" of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the eighteenth-century German historian of ancient art (PRE §9; see Hellenism). In the first essay it defines the Renaissance

[211] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust: Der Tragödie erster Teil* (1808), "Nacht", l. 518: *das ist mein Famulus*.

itself, “a many-sided but yet united movement, in which the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake, the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life, make themselves felt” (FRE §1; see Renaissance). The things loved are of two kinds, “the intellect and the imagination”, and the love is the same: neither learning nor art is to be valued for its use.

The phrase does not always praise. The hireling ministers of the medieval system had “their ignorant worship of system for its own sake”, against which Abelard stood as “the true child of light, the humanist” (FRE §6; see Humanist). A thing loved for its own sake can be a dead form. Pater’s test here is whether the faculties are “quick” (FRE §6).

In the essays on Italy it marks a shift in the use of subjects. In Pico’s age “the imagery of the Greek religion, the direct charm of its story, were by artists valued and cultivated for their own sake”, and a new mythology came of it (PIC §15; see Sacred and profane). Leonardo used “incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake, or as mere subjects for pictorial realisation, but as a cryptic language for fancies all his own” (LEO §29; see Cryptic language). The phrase now separates two ways of using a story, as a subject or as a vehicle.

The Conclusion gives the phrase its most famous form. Of the wisdom that spends life’s interval in passions yielding “a quickened, multiplied consciousness”, the love of art “for its own sake” has most, and art gives the highest quality to our moments “simply for those moments’ sake” (CON §6; see Art for its own sake). The last words turn the phrase round: art is loved for its own sake because it gives moments that are valued for theirs.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “for its own sake” or “for their own sake” occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §9** Winckelmann has an enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake.

**FRE §1** The Renaissance is a movement in which the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake makes itself felt.

**FRE §6** The hireling ministers of the medieval system worship system for its own sake.

**PIC §15** Artists valued the imagery and story of the Greek religion for their own sake.

**LEO §29** Leonardo used sacred stories not for their own sake but as a cryptic language for his own fancies.

**CON §6** The love of art for its own sake has most of the wisdom of quickened consciousness.

## In this edition

The note at CON §6 records that the first edition has "the more slogan-like phrase", "the love of art for art's sake", and adds that in either version what art gives is "a quality of experience while the moment is passing". The note at C73 §7 makes the same comparison from the other side.

## See also

Art for its own sake; Cryptic language; End in itself; Hellenism; Humanist; Renaissance; Sacred and profane.

# Free play

*free play*

Attested: *free play* (FRE §§2, 7). Unhindered movement, as of a part in a machine with room to move; of the mind, its ranging without fixed limits. Abelard's name "connects the expression of this liberty of heart with the free play of human intelligence around all subjects presented to it, with the liberty of the intellect, as that age understood it" (FRE §2; see Liberty of the heart; Liberty of the intellect). In Amis and Amile "that free play of human affection, of the claims of which Abelard's story is an assertion, makes itself felt in the incidents of a great friendship" (FRE §7; see Comradeship). The phrase can be read as an echo of Matthew Arnold's definition of criticism in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864), which is to follow "the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches".[212] Pater extends the play from the mind to the affections. The end of the essay returns to it in "The opposition of the professional defenders of a mere system to that more sincere and generous play of the forces of human mind and character, which I have noted as the secret of Abelard's struggle" (FRE §33).

## See also

Comradeship; Liberty of the heart; Liberty of the intellect.

# Frippery

*frippery*

Attested: *frippery* (ROB §1). Showy, worthless finery; trifles of dress or decoration. The French *friperie* was the trade in old clothes, from *frepe*, a rag, and English took the word first for cast-off garments, then for tawdry ornament. Pater uses it once, of the setting in which the work of the sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century survives: "Their works have been

[212] Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", *National Review* (November 1864), reprinted in *Essays in Criticism* (1865).

much neglected, and often almost hidden away amid the frippery of modern decoration, and we come with some surprise on the places where their fire still smoulders" (ROB §1). The "modern decoration" can be read as the gilt and stucco that later centuries added to the churches of Italy. The sentence sets two images against each other, cheap clothing and a buried fire, and the second wins: the work is not only hidden but alive, and the surprise of finding it is part of its charm. The essay's next paragraph says that Luca's earthenware "loses its savour" when taken from its walls (ROB §2; see Savour), so the frippery that hides it is also the place that keeps it.

## See also

Austere dignity; Earthenware; Savour.

# Frozen orthodoxy

*The fixed belief of the Church of the Catholic revival, to which Michelangelo in old age was a stranger · The Renaissance*

*frozen orthodoxy*; *frozen*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Orthodoxy is right belief, the doctrine a church holds true; a frozen orthodoxy is a belief that has hardened and can no longer move or be discussed.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "But in thus fixing itself in a frozen orthodoxy, the Roman Church had passed beyond him, and he was a stranger to it" (MIC §16).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §16 says that "The Congregation of the Oratory received formal papal approval in 1575, after the artist's death".

**A place to read.** MIC §16.

## Meaning

Orthodoxy, from the Greek *orthos*, straight, and *doxa*, opinion, is the Church's settled teaching (see Orthodoxy). Pater's adjective sets it in a physical image: a liquid that freezes keeps its shape and can no longer flow.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is in the sixteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which describes the world of his old age: "The 'new catholicism' had taken the place of the Renaissance" (MIC §16; see New catholicism). The essay sets the Catholic revival above the Reformation as an enemy of art (MIC §16; see New catholicism), and goes on: "But in thus fixing itself in a frozen orthodoxy, the Roman Church had passed beyond him, and he was a stranger to it. In earlier days, when its beliefs had been in

a fluid state, he too might have been drawn into the controversy" (MIC §16).

The image works by its opposite. "Frozen" stands against "fluid": in Michelangelo's youth the Church's beliefs moved, and a thoughtful man might hope to change them, as Savonarola sought to spiritualise "the papal sovereignty" and Pico to adjust "the dreams of Plato and Homer with the words of Christ" (MIC §16; see Spiritualise; Artistic reconciliation). Those adjustments, the essay says, were no longer possible. The reconciliations of Pico and the reforms of Savonarola belonged to the fluid state; the frozen orthodoxy admits neither.

The sentence is careful about who has moved. "The Roman Church had passed beyond him": it is the Church that has gone on, and Michelangelo who is left behind, "a stranger to it". The essay does not make him a rebel. He had long since fallen back on a divine ideal above the creeds (MIC §16; see Divine ideal), and the frozen Church could even console him, as a stately foreign city consoles a traveller "just because with those fortunes he has nothing to do" (MIC §16). He lingers on "a revenant, as the French say, a ghost out of another age" (MIC §16; see Revenant).

"Frozen" has two other places in the book, and both carry the same opposition of the fixed to the living. The Greek sculptor purged from the individual all that "is apt to look like a frozen thing if one arrests it" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit), the passing gesture that sculpture would congeal. At the Renaissance, "in the midst of a frozen world, the buried fire of ancient art rose up from under the soil" (WIN §9; see Buried fire). The frozen world of the Winckelmann sentence is the medieval one, thawed by the classical revival; the frozen orthodoxy of the Michelangelo essay is the Church after the revival, set again.

Pater does not name the Council of Trent, which sat in three periods between 1545 and 1563, defined the doctrines the Reformation had questioned and closed the debates that had been open in Michelangelo's youth; Michelangelo died in February 1564, ten weeks after it ended.[213] The frozen orthodoxy can be read as its work.

The phrase can be read as marking the end of Pater's Renaissance. The first essay defines a movement in which "the things of the intellect and the imagination" were loved "for their own sake" (FRE §1; see Renaissance), and its Italian essays are full of the free play of beliefs in a fluid state: Pico's Platonism, the heresy suspected in the picture for Palmieri that Pater gives to Botticelli (BOT §5), Leonardo's science (LEO §13). The frozen orthodoxy is the condition in which that play stops, and Michelangelo, outliving it, shows what remains: a private faith, a divine ideal above creeds, and the art in which it had been expressed.

[213] The Council of Trent held its last session on 4 December 1563; Michelangelo died in Rome on 18 February 1564.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "frozen" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §7** The Greek sculptor purged from the individual all that is apt to look like a frozen thing if one arrests it.

**MIC §16** In fixing itself in a frozen orthodoxy the Roman Church had passed beyond Michelangelo, and he was a stranger to it.

**WIN §9** At the Renaissance, in the midst of a frozen world, the buried fire of ancient art rose up from under the soil.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §16 says that "The circle of Filippo Neri met in Rome in Michelangelo's later years. The Congregation of the Oratory received formal papal approval in 1575, after the artist's death. Pater is writing about its early associates."

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Artistic reconciliation; Buried fire; Divine ideal; New catholicism; Orthodoxy; Renaissance; Revenant; Spiritualise.

# Frugality

*frugality*

Attested: *frugality* (ROB §12). Sparing use of goods; thrift and simplicity of living. The Latin *frugalitas* comes, through *frugalis*, from *frugi*, "useful, honest", in origin the dative of *frux*, fruit or produce. Pater uses the word in the sentence that opens the account of Luca's life: "The life of Luca, a life of labour and frugality, with no adventure and no excitement except what belongs to the trial of new artistic processes, the struggle with new artistic difficulties, the solution of purely artistic problems, fills the first seventy years of the fifteenth century" (ROB §12). Vasari tells a plainer story of the turn to clay: Luca found that marble and bronze brought him little profit for great labour, and looked for an easier way to earn.[214] Pater keeps the frugality and drops the motive of gain, so that every excitement in the life is artistic. The sentence is of a piece with the essay's first paragraph, where the loss of the sculptors' histories is "part of the reserve, the austere dignity and simplicity of their existence" (ROB §1; see Austere dignity), and with the "old-world modesty and seriousness and simplicity" that Pater finds in the Florence of the century (ROB §12; see Homely art).

## See also

Austere dignity; Earthenware; Homely art; Terra cotta.

[214] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (1568), "Life of Luca della Robbia".

# General culture

*The common life of the mind that art and thought join · The Renaissance general culture*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Culture is the cultivation of the mind and its fruits; general culture is that cultivation shared across the arts, learning and life, as against a special skill.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In fifteenth-century Italy "the many interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of general culture" (PRE §8). The work of great painters like Michelangelo and Leonardo has become "a force in general culture", and lesser ones who give "a peculiar quality of pleasure" have "their place in general culture" too (BOT §10).

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §8 explains the comparison of Lorenzo's Florence with the Athens of Pericles.

**A place to read.** PRE §8.

## Meaning

"Culture" is the Latin *cultura*, tilling, used since the Romans for the tilling of the mind; for Cicero philosophy is the cultivation of the mind, *cultura animi*.[215] In the England of the 1860s it became a watchword. Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) called culture "a study of perfection", pursued "by means of getting to know ... the best which has been thought and said in the world".[216] "General" here stands against "special": a general culture joins what the special pursuits keep apart.

## Use in the book

The Preface describes the ordinary condition first. "The various forms of intellectual activity which together make up the culture of an age, move for the most part from different starting-points, and by unconnected roads"; each group of producers "is solitary, gaining what advantage or disadvantage there may be in intellectual isolation" (PRE §8; see Intellectual isolation). Then the exception: "There come, however, from time to time, eras of more favourable conditions, in which the thoughts of men draw nearer together than is their wont, and the many interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of general culture. The fifteenth century in Italy is one of these happier eras" (PRE §8). What is said of the Athens of Pericles is true of Lorenzo's Florence: "it is an age productive in personalities, many-sided, centralised, complete" (PRE §8; see Engaging personality). Artists and philosophers "breathe a common air, and catch light and heat from each other's thoughts", and the art of that century owes

[215] Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 2.13.

[216] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), chapter 1 and Preface.

"much of its grave dignity and influence" to "this intimate alliance with mind" (PRE §8; see Common air; Alliance with mind). General culture is the condition of the period the book most admires.

The Botticelli essay uses the phrase three times to place a minor painter. A few great painters, Michelangelo and Leonardo, have work that "has become a force in general culture", partly because they have absorbed lesser workmen into themselves; general criticism "may be very well employed" in adjusting their position to general culture (BOT §10; see General criticism). But artists of a "peculiar quality of pleasure" have their place in general culture too, and must be interpreted to it by those who have felt their charm (BOT §10; see Peculiar quality of pleasure). General culture is now the reader's world, into which the critic brings what he has found. The essays can be read as such interpretations, each carrying one quality of pleasure into the common stock.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §8** In fifteenth-century Italy the interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of general culture.

**BOT §10** The great painters are a force in general culture; artists with a peculiar quality of pleasure have their place in it and must be interpreted to it.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §8 explains "the age of Pericles" and "that of Lorenzo" as fifth-century Athens and the Florence of Lorenzo de' Medici, "a culture in which art, thought, and public life develop in close contact".

## See also

Alliance with mind; Common air; Engaging personality; General criticism; Intellectual isolation; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Secondary painter.

# Girding of the loins

*girding of the loins*

Attested: *girding of the loins* (PRE §6). To gird the loins is to tie up a long robe at the waist so as to run, work or travel: an image of readiness from the Bible, where Elijah girds up his loins to run before Ahab's chariot (1 Kings 18:46) and Christ bids his followers have their loins girded (Luke 12:35). Pater uses it to gloss the Greek *ascêsis*: the earliest phases of the Renaissance have "the charm of ascêsis, of the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis). The figure joins the athlete's discipline of the Greek word to a Biblical gesture of readiness.

## See also

Ascêsis; Renaissance.

### Greek spirit

*Greek spirit*

Attested: *Greek spirit* (PRE §9; WIN §§32, 42, 44). The character of Greek life and art taken as a whole. Winckelmann's Hellenism is "his life-long struggle to attain to the Greek spirit" (PRE §9; see Hellenism). In the Winckelmann essay the art of Egypt is, in Hegel's comparison, a Memnon waiting for "the day of the Greek spirit" (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit); Winckelmann possessed in his own nature the "key to the understanding of the Greek spirit" (WIN §42; see Plastic character); and in tragedy and in Theocritus "the Greek spirit showed itself capable of thus bringing joy out of matter in itself full of discouragements" (WIN §44; see Hellenic ideal). The phrase moves from what Winckelmann struggles towards to what he already has.

## See also

Hellenic ideal; Hellenic spirit; Hellenism; Humanistic spirit; Memnon waiting for the day; Plastic character.

### Greek temper

*The disposition of the Greeks, reached through a Florentine picture · The Renaissance*

*the Greek temper*; *temper*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A temper is a characteristic mixture of qualities, a disposition; the Greek temper is the disposition of the Greeks, as distinct from their knowledge or their works.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's "quaint design" is "a more direct inlet into the Greek temper than the works of the Greeks themselves even of the finest period" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The Key Word on Hellenism says that "Pater's Greece comes to him through sculpture, copies, excavations, and later writers".

**A place to read.** BOT §8.

## Meaning

The Latin *temperare* is to mix in due proportion, and a temper is the mixture that results: the temper of steel is the balance of hardness and give that heating and cooling produce. The word belongs with "temperament"

and "complexion", the old vocabulary of mixtures (see Complexion of humanity; Temperament). A Greek temper is the Greeks' particular balance of qualities, and Pater speaks of it as he would of a person's.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the sentence on imaginative colouring, after "the better you will like this peculiar quality of colour" (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring). The claim is a paradox. A Florentine picture with Gothic daisies and grotesque emblems (see Quaint conceit) is nearer the Greeks than Greek sculpture. "Inlet" explains it: an inlet is a channel by which the sea comes in. Botticelli can be read as not possessing the Greek temper but letting it flow in, and the way he lets it in is the measure of its force on a mind that had been closed to it (see First impression).

The word "temper" is one of Pater's units of criticism, and the ninth paragraph, which closes the study proper, ends on it: "the object of this brief study has been attained, if I have defined aright the temper in which he worked" (BOT §9). Elsewhere it names what criticism looks for in a person: Michelangelo's poetry "brings us nearer to himself, his own mind and temper" (MIC §9), and the poet who is to have more than historical value must show "the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality" (BEL §21). Temper is also the unity behind a style, and the style may be an age's: of the poetry of the Pleiad Pater says "there is style there; one temper has shaped the whole" (BEL §13). And it names ages: Pater marks "changes and distinctions of temper" within the middle age (FRE §32), and finds "a sort of preparation for the romantic temper" even within the Greek ideal (WIN §45).

The Greek temper, then, is the Greeks considered as a single disposition that can be felt, as one feels a friend's temper, and not as a body of facts. That is why a later painter's picture may give access to it that the marbles do not. The phrase can be read as Pater's quarrel with antiquarian Hellenism (see First impression). The same principle governs the Winckelmann essay, where Winckelmann apprehends the Hellenic manner "by instinct or touch" (WIN §19; see Temperament). Temper answers to temperament.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the noun "temper" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** We come to mark changes and distinctions of temper in what is called the middle age.

**BOT §8** Botticelli's quaint design is a more direct inlet into the Greek temper than the works of the Greeks themselves.

**BOT §9** The study has attained its object if it has defined aright the temper in which Botticelli worked.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness fell in with Michelangelo's peculiar temper and mode of living.

**MIC §9** Michelangelo's occasional poetry brings us nearer to his own mind and temper.

**MIC §17** His professed disciples did not share his temper.

**BEL §13** Much of Du Bellay's poetry shows his age more than his own temper; in the Pleiad's poetry one temper has shaped the whole.

**BEL §21** A poet's work must bear the impress of his own temper and personality.

**WIN §45** A preparation for the romantic temper is noticeable within the Greek ideal itself.

## In this edition

The Key Word on Hellenism says that "Pater's Greece comes to him through sculpture, copies, excavations, and later writers. It is a subject of historical study and an ideal he uses to read later art."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; First impression; Hellenic spirit; Imaginative colouring; Quaint conceit; Temperament.

# Hellenic humanism

*The Greek recognition of man by himself, which Pater finds expressed in the clear outlines of sculpture · The Renaissance*
*Hellenic humanism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Greek sense of the worth and centrality of man, as distinct from the humanism of the Renaissance scholars.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Sculpture corresponds "to the unperplexed, emphatic outlines of Hellenic humanism" (WIN §52).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§28, 34, 52.

## Meaning

The humanists of the Renaissance were scholars of the humane letters, and the noun "humanism", coined in German in 1808, first named a schooling founded on the classics (see Humanism). Pater's adjective moves the word back to its source. Hellenic humanism is not a programme of study but a state of mind: the Greek discovery that man himself, his body and his spirit, is the centre of attention and the proper subject of art. The

two humanisms are related, since the scholars of the fifteenth century were recovering what the Greeks had made; but they are not the same, and the book holds them apart.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands once, in the fifty-second paragraph, where Pater sums up the series of the arts. Sculpture corresponds to "the unperplexed, emphatic outlines of Hellenic humanism", as painting corresponds to the middle age and music and poetry to the modern world (WIN §52; see Correspondence). Each art fits a stage of the mind's knowledge of itself, and sculpture fits the stage at which man first saw himself clearly.

The essay's earlier paragraphs explain what that stage was. In oriental thought humanity is still confused "with the fantastic, indeterminate life of the animal and vegetable world"; in Greek thought "the 'lordship of the soul' is recognised" (WIN §28; see Lordship of the soul). Sculpture "records the first naïve, unperplexed recognition of man by himself" (WIN §34; see Individuality). The art of Egypt waits as a Memnon for "the day of the Greek spirit, the humanistic spirit, with its power of speech" (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit). Hellenic humanism is that day: the moment when man, having distinguished himself from nature, made his own form the vehicle of every thought he had about the world.

The adjective "unperplexed" runs through the essay as the mark of this moment. Winckelmann solves the question of Greek art by "a happy, unperplexed dexterity" (WIN §9; see Concrete terms); the youth of humanity is "unperplexed" and "satisfied with the vision of itself" (WIN §31); the adorante, fresh and "unperplexed", is "the image of man as he springs first from the sleep of nature" (WIN §40; see Adorante). Against it stand the artist whom architecture can only hint at, who "wanders in the perplexed intricacies of things" (WIN §32), the "gaudy, perplexed light of modern life" (WIN §49) and the "perplexed currents of modern thought" (WIN §50). The essay can be read as using the one word to mark the boundary of the Hellenic: before it, thought is not yet clear about man; after it, thought is too much occupied with itself. Hellenic humanism is the short period between, when man was clear about himself and had not yet begun to be troubled.

The phrase also measures the Renaissance. The Pico essay calls "the essence of humanism" the belief "that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality" (PIC §16; see Humanism). That is a humanism of reconciliation, generous and confused, gathering every past belief. Hellenic humanism is its opposite in temper: emphatic where Pico's is accommodating, unperplexed where his is learned. The book admires both, and the Winckelmann essay can be read as showing what the Renaissance humanists were reaching for.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraphs on the Greek recognition of man that it sums up, in the order of the book.

**WIN §28** In Greek thought the lordship of the soul is recognised, and gives authority and divinity to human eyes and hands and feet.

**WIN §32** The art of Egypt is a Memnon waiting for the day of the humanistic spirit.

**WIN §34** Sculpture records the first naïve, unperplexed recognition of man by himself.

**WIN §52** Sculpture corresponds to the unperplexed, emphatic outlines of Hellenic humanism.

## See also

Adorante; Concrete terms; Correspondence; Humanism; Humanistic spirit; Individuality; Lordship of the soul.

# Hellenic spirit

*The spirit of Greece, owed without knowing it, and recovered through pain · The Renaissance*

*the Hellenic spirit*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Hellenic spirit is the animating character of Greek culture, taken as a living influence on later ages.

**In *The Renaissance*.** We know more of the Greeks than Botticelli did, "but for us long familiarity has taken off the edge of the lesson, and we are hardly conscious of what we owe to the Hellenic spirit" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines Hellenism as "An engagement with Greek culture and ideals", which "In Pater ... includes the later imaginative recovery of Greek art".

**A place to read.** BOT §8, with WIN §§3, 14.

## Meaning

The Greeks called themselves Hellenes, and "Hellenic" is their own name made English. "Spirit" in this phrase can be read in the sense Hegel had given the word, the inward principle of a people or an age that shows itself in all its works. To speak of the Hellenic spirit is to treat Greece as something that can be inherited, owed and recovered, and not only studied.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in three paragraphs, and each gives a different relation to the spirit. The first is debt without awareness. In the Botticelli essay Pater sets our knowledge against our feeling: "Of the Greeks as they really were, of their difference from ourselves, of the aspects of their outward life, we know far more than Botticelli, or his most learned contemporaries" (BOT §8), and the sentence ends on the debt quoted above. The debt is real and forgotten; the picture that follows records the "first impression" the same spirit made on minds that felt it fresh (BOT §8; see First impression).

The second and third come in the Winckelmann essay, which is the book's study of the spirit recovered. Winckelmann was "Destined to assert and interpret the charm of the Hellenic spirit", and "he served first a painful apprenticeship in the tarnished intellectual world of Germany in the earlier half of the eighteenth century" (WIN §3; see Interpreter of nature). Later, of his life in Rome and his friendships, Pater writes: "This repression, removed at last, gave force and glow to Winckelmann's native affinity to the Hellenic spirit" (WIN §14). Here the relation is affinity, native to the man, and its expression waits on a release.

The three uses can be read together as Pater's account of how the Greek spirit is had. We have it as an unconscious inheritance; Botticelli's age had it as aspiration; Winckelmann had it by nature. And each time pain stands at the gate. Botticelli's contemporaries turned back to Greece "in almost painful aspiration" (BOT §8); Winckelmann served "a painful apprenticeship", and his affinity glowed only when a "repression" was removed. The Hellenic spirit, in Pater, is serene in itself (see Hellenic ideal) but is never reached serenely. The book's Hellenism is less a doctrine about Greece than a history of the difficulty of approaching it, and the wan Venus and the long German apprenticeship are its two exemplary episodes. To make the debt conscious again is the book's purpose: the edge that familiarity has worn off is what its essays try to restore.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §8** We know more of the Greeks than Botticelli, but are hardly conscious of what we owe to the Hellenic spirit.

**WIN §3** Winckelmann, destined to interpret the charm of the Hellenic spirit, served a painful apprenticeship in Germany.

**WIN §14** Repression removed gave force and glow to Winckelmann's native affinity to the Hellenic spirit.

## In this edition

The Glossary defines Hellenism as "An engagement with Greek culture and ideals. In Pater it includes the later imaginative recovery of Greek art."

The Key Word on Hellenism says that "Pater's Greece comes to him through sculpture, copies, excavations, and later writers".

## See also

First impression; Greek spirit; Greek temper; Hellenic ideal; Hellenic world; Hellenism; Interpreter of nature.

### Hellenic world

*Hellenic world*

Attested: *Hellenic world* (FRE §1; WIN §§14, 22). The world of the ancient Greeks, who called themselves Hellenes. In the first essay it is the goal of a search that begins in the middle age: the taste for sweetness generated in pointed architecture, romantic love and Provençal poetry prompts the middle age "to seek after the springs of perfect sweetness in the Hellenic world" (FRE §1; see Revival of classical antiquity; Sweetness). In the essay on Winckelmann he reaches it. Enthusiasm, "in the broad Platonic sense of the Phaedrus, was the secret of his divinatory power over the Hellenic world" (WIN §14; see Enthusiasm), and "remote in time and place, he feels after the Hellenic world, divines those channels of ancient art, in which its life still circulates" (WIN §22; see Divination). The book can be read as framed by the phrase: the medieval Renaissance seeks the Hellenic world, Winckelmann divines it.

## See also

Divination; Enthusiasm; Hellenism; Medieval Renaissance; Revival of classical antiquity; Sweetness.

### Hellenism

*The Greek spirit as an ideal and a living tradition · The Renaissance*
*Hellenism*; *Hellenising*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Hellenism is the culture and spirit of the Greeks, and the love and imitation of them in later ages.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Preface calls Winckelmann's Hellenism "his life-long struggle to attain to the Greek spirit" (PRE §9). The Winckelmann essay calls Hellenism "the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light" (WIN §14) and calls it "a conscious tradition" in our intellectual life (WIN §22; see Conscious tradition). In Goethe it is married to the Romantic spirit (WIN §48).

**In this edition.** Hellenism is one of the Key Words and has a Glossary entry.

**A place to read.** WIN §22, from "This testimony to the authority of the Hellenic tradition" to the end.

## Meaning

The Greek *hellēnismos* meant both the imitation of Greek ways (2 Maccabees 4:13) and the use of pure Greek speech; a *hellēnistēs* was one who spoke Greek, as the Greek-speaking Jews of Acts 6:1. In nineteenth-century English, Hellenism meant the culture of ancient Greece and the devotion of later people to it. Matthew Arnold gave the word its widest currency in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), where the fourth chapter sets Hellenism against Hebraism as the two forces between which our world moves: "The governing idea of Hellenism is spontaneity of consciousness; that of Hebraism, strictness of conscience", and "The uppermost idea with Hellenism is to see things as they really are".[217] Pater's essay on Winckelmann, dated 1867 in the book, uses the word in the same years.

## Use in the book

The Preface introduces Hellenism as Winckelmann's quality and the reason for including him. He "really belongs in spirit to an earlier age", and by "his Hellenism, his life-long struggle to attain to the Greek spirit, he is in sympathy with the humanists of a previous century" (PRE §9; see Greek spirit; Humanist). Hellenism is a struggle and an attainment, not an inheritance.

The Winckelmann essay defines it by light. Dante, coming out of the Inferno, is filled "with a sharp and joyful sense of light"; so "Hellenism, which is the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light, (our modern culture may have more colour, the medieval spirit greater heat and profundity, but Hellenism is pre-eminent for light,) has always been most effectively conceived by those who have crept into it out of an intellectual world in which the sombre elements predominate" (WIN §14). Winckelmann had come out of such a world, and "That his affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in it, is proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men" (WIN §14). Pater's Hellenism is a matter of the body and the affections as well as of the mind.

It is also a tradition with a history of its own. Most "spiritual forces of the past" live on in later culture "with an absorbed, underground life", but the Hellenic element, the essay says, has from time to time "started to the surface", and is "a conscious tradition" (WIN §22; see Conscious tradition). Winckelmann, "like Scyles, the half-barbarous yet Hellenising king, in the

[217] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), chapter 4 (titled "Hebraism and Hellenism" in later editions).

beautiful story of Herodotus, is irresistibly attracted by it" (WIN §22); Scyles, in Herodotus (4.78–80), is the Scythian king who lived and worshipped as a Greek in secret and was put to death for it. The Renaissance itself can be read, in these terms, as one of the times when culture was drawn back to its Greek sources.

The essay ends with Hellenism in the modern world. Goethe illustrates a union of the Romantic spirit with Hellenism, "in its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty", in a marriage of Faust and Helena whose child is the art of the nineteenth century (WIN §48; see Marriage of Faust and Helena). And Goethe's Hellenism "was of another order" than the Greeks' own, the completeness and serenity of a watchful intellect (WIN §51; see Exigent intellectualism). The modern problem, Pater says, could no longer be solved "by perfection of bodily form, or any joyful union with the external world" (WIN §51); modern Hellenism is an achievement of culture.

Pater's Hellenism differs from Arnold's while sharing his terms; Arnold's formula for it, "to see things as they really are", is the formula Pater turns in his Preface (PRE §2; see To see the object as in itself it really is). Arnold's is a force of the intellect, seeing things as they really are, set against the force of conduct. Pater's takes in the senses, the body and the friendships of Winckelmann, and its opposite is less Hebraism than the world "in which the sombre elements predominate", out of which Winckelmann crept (WIN §14), and the "frozen world" in which the buried fire of ancient art rose up at the Renaissance (WIN §9; see Buried fire). The difference can be read as the Preface's criticism carried into history: Hellenism, too, is known by its effect on a temperament.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Hellenism" or "Hellenising" occurs, in the order of the book; "Hellenic" phrases have entries of their own.

**PRE §9** By his Hellenism, his struggle to attain the Greek spirit, Winckelmann is in sympathy with the humanists.

**WIN §14** Hellenism, the principle of intellectual light, is best conceived by those who come to it out of gloom; Winckelmann's affinity with it was not merely intellectual.

**WIN §22** Winckelmann, like the Hellenising king Scyles, is drawn to the Hellenic world; Hellenism is a conscious tradition in our intellectual life.

**WIN §48** Goethe unites the Romantic spirit with Hellenism, the marriage of Faust and Helena.

**WIN §51** Goethe's Hellenism is the completeness and serenity of a watchful, exigent intellectualism.

## Pater's sources

Pater's Hellenism is drawn from Winckelmann and Goethe, both of whom he quotes in the essay: Winckelmann's letters and writings, Goethe's essay on Winckelmann and the Helena of *Faust*. Hegel's account of Greek art as the perfect union of idea and sensuous form stands behind the essay's account of sculpture; Pater names him four times in the essay (WIN §§2, 32, 41, 46), and at WIN §41 quotes him on the Greek sense "for the consummate modelling of divine and human forms". Arnold's contrast of Hellenism and Hebraism, set out in *Culture and Anarchy*, belonged to the same public conversation.

## In this edition

Hellenism is one of the edition's Key Words: "In *Winckelmann*, Greek art offers a way to think about how human freedom and inward life can be expressed through outward form. Pater's Greece comes to him through sculpture, copies, excavations, and later writers. It is a subject of historical study and an ideal he uses to read later art." The Glossary has "An engagement with Greek culture and ideals. In Pater it includes the later imaginative recovery of Greek art."

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Buried fire; Conscious tradition; Exigent intellectualism; Greek spirit; Heiterkeit; Hellenic humanism; Hellenic ideal; Hellenic spirit; Humanist; Intellectual light; Marriage of Faust and Helena; Temperament; To see the object as in itself it really is.

# Higher culture

*Learning drawn from its sources, in their own tongues · The Renaissance*
*higher culture*; *high culture*, *highest culture*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The higher culture is learning of the finest kind, which goes to the sources of thought and knows them at first hand.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico differs from other mystical writers "by a genuine desire to know his authorities at first hand. He reads Plato in Greek, Moses in Hebrew, and by this his work really belongs to the higher culture" (PIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PIC §14.

## Meaning

"Culture", from the Latin *cultura*, tilling, came by the nineteenth century to mean the cultivation of the mind, and then the body of thought

and art in which a mind is cultivated. "Higher" ranks it: the higher culture is the culture of those who go farther and deeper than the common, as "higher criticism" was then the name for the historical study of the Bible. Matthew Arnold, in the Preface to *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), had defined culture as "a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world";[218] Pater's test in the Pico essay is narrower and more exact, to know the best at first hand.

## Use in the book

The phrase rests on a single test. Pico "differs from other mystical writers of his time by a genuine desire to know his authorities at first hand. He reads Plato in Greek, Moses in Hebrew, and by this his work really belongs to the higher culture" (PIC §14). The test is knowledge at first hand. It is the only point at which the essay grants Pico's learning a real worth, and it comes beside the praise of his "figured style" (PIC §14; see Figured style). The strange, confused learning of PIC §8 (see Erudition) is redeemed in this one respect: whatever he made of them, Pico read his authors in their own tongues.

The contrast is drawn within the essay. Ficino's Latin translation opened "the door of the mystical temple" "to all who could construe Latin" (PIC §6; see Construe; Mystical temple). Plato in Latin was open to all; Plato in Greek belonged to the few. The higher culture can be read as what the translation could not give.

The Winckelmann essay uses the adjective in the same sense. Winckelmann met in Dresden the painter Oeser, "who, uniting a high culture with the practical knowledge of art, was fitted to minister to Winckelmann's culture" (WIN §9). Of the Greek gods' faces Pater writes, "To all but the highest culture, the reserved faces of the gods will ever have something of insipidity" (WIN §38). The highest culture there can be read as the power to find meaning in reserve, as the higher culture in Pico's case is the power to go to the source. Both are rare, and both are what the critic of the Preface needs. His rule, in the edition's English of the Preface's French, is "To confine oneself to knowing beautiful things intimately" (PRE §3; see Humanist), and Pico, reading Plato in Greek, can be read as keeping a form of that rule in his learning.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which culture is called high, higher or highest, in the order of the book.

**PIC §14** Pico reads Plato in Greek and Moses in Hebrew, and so his work belongs to the higher culture.

[218] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), Preface.

**WIN §9** Oeser united a high culture with the practical knowledge of art.

**WIN §24** The eye fixed on the sharp, bright edge of high Hellenic culture loses sight of the sombre world across which it strikes.

**WIN §38** To all but the highest culture the reserved faces of the gods will have something of insipidity.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Construe; Erudition; Figured style; Humanist; Mystical temple.

# Homely art

*Great art brought into common things: Luca's pottery and the unity of the arts · The Renaissance*

*homely art*; *homely*, *homeliness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Homely is of the home: plain, familiar, domestic; a homely art is a craft of household use.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Luca wished to realise the spirit of his marble sculpture in a humbler material, "to unite its science, its exquisite and expressive system of low relief, to the homely art of pottery, to introduce those high qualities into common things, to adorn and cultivate daily household life" (ROB §12).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §12 says that "Pater's contrast emphasizes access and household use".

**A place to read.** ROB §12.

## Meaning

"Homely" is "home" with the suffix of likeness: what belongs to or befits the home. In older English the word was warm, meaning familiar, kindly, simple; the sense of plain-featured, which American English kept, is not Pater's. A homely art is a craft of the household, pottery, weaving, carpentry, made for daily use.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second sentence of the twelfth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, the turn in Luca's career. "After producing many works in marble for the Duomo and the Campanile of Florence, which place him among the foremost masters of the sculpture of his age, he became desirous to realise the spirit and manner of that sculpture, in a humbler material, to

unite its science, its exquisite and expressive system of low relief, to the homely art of pottery, to introduce those high qualities into common things, to adorn and cultivate daily household life. In this he is profoundly characteristic of the Florence of that century, of that in it which lay below its superficial vanity and caprice, a certain old-world modesty and seriousness and simplicity. People had not yet begun to think that what was good art for churches was not so good, or less fitted, for their own houses" (ROB §12).

The sentence moves from the cathedral to the house in four infinitives: to realise, to unite, to introduce, to adorn and cultivate. The last pair is the strongest. To adorn household life is decoration; to cultivate it is to make it better, as the soil is cultivated. Luca's pottery, on this account, does not simply bring pretty things into the home; it brings the "high qualities" of the great art, its "science" (see Science) and its low relief (see Low relief), into the place where most of life is lived. The last sentence names the condition: a time when no line had been drawn between art for churches and art for houses.

The claim joins a debate of Pater's own day. John Ruskin's chapter "The Nature of Gothic" (1853) had argued that the work of the common craftsman should carry the life of the man who made it, and William Morris's firm, founded in 1861, set out to make household things that were works of art; Morris's lectures on the lesser arts, from 1877, would call for the reunion of the great arts and the crafts. Pater's sentence can be read as giving that movement an ancestor in Luca della Robbia, whose pottery set out "to introduce those high qualities into common things" four centuries before.

The adjective elsewhere in the book has the same warmth. Below the higher Provençal lyric there was probably a literature reaching an audience "by lightness of form and comparative homeliness of interest" (FRE §20); a momentary hint of stormy light may invest "a homely or too familiar scene" with a character drawn from the imagination (GIO §6); Du Bellay became "a lover of his own homely native tongue" (BEL §12) and longed for the Loire with "its homely pointed roofs of grey slate" (BEL §12); and the Pleiad's country life has "a domesticity, a homeliness and simple goodness, by which the northern country gains upon the south" (BEL §18). In each place the homely is the familiar thing loved, and art's work is to give it a light.

The phrase can be read as a counterweight to the book's more exalted pages. The Renaissance of Pater's essays is a time of philosophers and great painters; the della Robbia essay finds it also in a potter's workshop, and says that the Florence of the century was most itself there, "below its superficial vanity and caprice".

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "homely" or "homeliness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §20** A lighter literature probably reached its audience by comparative homeliness of interest.

**ROB §12** Luca united the science of low relief to the homely art of pottery, to adorn and cultivate daily household life.

**GIO §6** A hint of stormy light may invest a homely scene with a character drawn from the imagination.

**BEL §12** Du Bellay became a lover of his own homely native tongue, and thought of the homely roofs of the Loire.

**BEL §18** The Pleiad's country life has a homeliness and simple goodness by which the north gains upon the south.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §12 says that "The lower cost of terracotta gave the workshop a wider range of uses, but forming, firing, and glazing the material called for considerable technical control. Pater's contrast emphasizes access and household use."

## See also

Earthenware; Frugality; Low relief; Oriental pottery; Science; Terra cotta; Unity of culture.

# House Beautiful

*House Beautiful*

Attested: *House Beautiful* (FRE §33). The phrase comes from John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), where Christian finds "a very stately palace before him, the name of which was Beautiful", and lodges there; in the Second Part (1684) it is "the house called Beautiful".[219] Pater makes it the house of culture. After the antinomian paragraph he turns: "But in the House Beautiful the saints too have their place" (FRE §33). Within the Renaissance there are no fixed parties and no exclusions, and the unity of culture reconciles all comely things (FRE §33; see Unity of culture; Whatsoever things are comely). Pater used the figure again in the Postscript to *Appreciations* (1889), "that House Beautiful, which the creative minds of all generations" build together, where oppositions cease, and whose "Interpreter" is "the true aesthetic critic".[220] The Interpreter, too, is one of Bunyan's figures.

[219] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), the First Part, Christian's arrival at the palace Beautiful; the Second Part (1684), the Interpreter's charge to Great-heart.

[220] Walter Pater, *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (1889), "Postscript".

## See also

Liberty of the heart; Unity of culture; Whatsoever things are comely.

# Humanism

*The belief that nothing that once interested men can wholly die · The Renaissance*

*humanism*; *humanistic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Humanism is the study of the ancient languages and literatures revived in the Renaissance, and the outlook that goes with it: the conviction that human things, past and present, are worth knowing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico "is a true humanist. For the essence of humanism is that belief of which he seems never to have doubted, that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality—no language they have spoken, nor oracle beside which they have hushed their voices, no dream which has once been entertained by actual human minds, nothing about which they have ever been passionate, or expended time and zeal" (PIC §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** PIC §16.

## Meaning

The scholars of fifteenth-century Italy were called *umanisti*, teachers of the *studia humanitatis*, the humane letters. The abstract noun is much later. It was coined in German by the educational reformer Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer in 1808, for a schooling founded on the classics;[221] the historian Georg Voigt applied it to the Italian revival in *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus* (1859).[222] When Pater wrote, "humanism" in English was still a new word for an old thing.

## Use in the book

Pater's definition comes in the essay's last sentence. Pico's actual work has passed away, but "he has a true place in that group of great Italians who fill the end of the fifteenth century with their names, he is a true humanist", and the definition quoted above follows (PIC §16; see Humanist). Humanism here is not a learning but a belief, and the belief is about the past: what has once mattered to human beings keeps some of its life.

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[221] Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer, *Der Streit des Philanthropinismus und Humanismus in der Theorie des Erziehungs-Unterrichts unsrer Zeit* (Jena, 1808).

[222] Georg Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus* (Berlin, 1859).

The definition repeats, almost word for word, the "generous belief" the essay found behind the allegorical method, that "nothing which had ever interested the human mind could wholly lose its vitality" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation). The repetition can be read as the hinge of the essay. The method was false and the belief behind it was true, and at the end the true part is given its name. The list in the definition widens what may keep its life: languages, oracles, dreams, passions, the things on which time and zeal were spent. The "dreams of a dead faith" (PIC §15), on which the philosophers of Pico's age spent so much care and thought, are among them.

The word comes twice more, in the Winckelmann essay, where it belongs to Greece. The art of Egypt waits, in Hegel's comparison, for "the humanistic spirit" of Greece (WIN §32; see Greek spirit; Humanistic spirit); and at the end "Sculpture corresponds to the unperplexed, emphatic outlines of Hellenic humanism" (WIN §52; see Correspondence; Hellenic humanism). Hellenic humanism is a vision of man, clear and bounded; Pico's humanism is a piety toward the past. Between them the book can be read as giving the word both its senses, the study of man and the sympathy with all that man has cared for.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "humanism" or "humanistic" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §16** Pico is a true humanist; the essence of humanism is the belief that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality.

**WIN §32** In Hegel's comparison, the art of Egypt waits for the day of the Greek spirit, the humanistic spirit.

**WIN §52** Sculpture corresponds to the unperplexed, emphatic outlines of Hellenic humanism.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the word.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Correspondence; Greek spirit; Hellenic humanism; Humanist; Humanistic spirit.

# Humanist

*The scholar of the Renaissance and the type of a free mind · The Renaissance*

*humanist*, *humanists*; *humanistes*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A humanist was a scholar of the *studia humanitatis*, the Latin and Greek letters revived in Renaissance Italy; by extension, one who holds that human things, past and present, are worth knowing for their own sake.

**In *The Renaissance*.** By his Hellenism Winckelmann is "in sympathy with the humanists of a previous century" (PRE §9). Abelard is "the true child of light, the humanist" (FRE §6), and Pico "a true humanist" (PIC §16). The Preface's rule for critics ends "en humanistes accomplis", in the edition's English "accomplished humanists" (PRE §3).

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §3 translates the French rule.

**A place to read.** PIC §16.

## Meaning

The word *umanista* (in Latin *humanista*) arose in late fifteenth-century Italy as university slang for a teacher of the humanities, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and moral philosophy, studied in the ancient authors. The noun "humanism" came later, in nineteenth-century German and then English, for the movement and its outlook. Pater uses the word in both senses: for the scholars of the fifteenth century, and for a temper of mind that can appear in other ages.

## Use in the book

The word first comes in French, in the rule the Preface takes from "a recent critic of Sainte-Beuve": the rule is "De se borner à connaître de près les belles choses, et à s'en nourrir en exquis amateurs, en humanistes accomplis", in the edition's English "To confine oneself to knowing beautiful things intimately and to nourishing oneself on them as discerning lovers of art and accomplished humanists" (PRE §3). The humanist here is the critic himself, one who knows beautiful things closely and lives on them.

The Preface ends with the humanists of history: Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the eighteenth-century German historian of ancient art, "really belongs in spirit to an earlier age", and by his Hellenism "is in sympathy with the humanists of a previous century" (PRE §9; see Hellenism). The first essay finds the type earlier still. The opposition of Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher, to the "hireling ministers" of the medieval system, "with their ignorant worship of system for its own sake", is the opposition of "the true child of light, the humanist, with reason and heart and senses quick, while theirs were almost dead" (FRE §6). The humanist is defined here by liveliness, all three faculties quick, against a system kept for its own sake.

The Pico essay gives the fullest account. Pico's learning is outdated and the solution his books propose "will satisfy us as little as perhaps it satisfied

him", yet "he is a true humanist" (PIC §16), and the essence of humanism, as Pater defines it there, is the belief that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality (PIC §16; see Humanism). The belief can be read as the book's own. A forgotten tale like Aucassin and Nicolette, a forgotten painter like Botticelli, a dead scholar like Pico are its subjects because they once interested living people and so cannot wholly lose their life.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "humanist" occurs, in English or French, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** The rule taken from a critic of Sainte-Beuve is to know beautiful things closely and live on them as accomplished humanists.

**PRE §9** By his Hellenism Winckelmann is in sympathy with the humanists of a previous century.

**FRE §6** Abelard is the true child of light, the humanist, against the hireling ministers of the medieval system.

**PIC §16** Pico is a true humanist, holding that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §3 translates the French rule as "To confine oneself to knowing beautiful things intimately and to nourishing oneself on them as discerning lovers of art and accomplished humanists", and explains that the words are "quoted from a writer discussing" Sainte-Beuve, the nineteenth-century French critic. The writer is not named in the book.

## See also

For their own sake; Hellenic humanism; Hellenism; Humanism; Humanistic spirit.

# Humanistic spirit

*The spirit of Greece as Pater names it in Hegel's comparison: the day for which the art of Egypt waited, when man's thought of himself found speech in human form · The Renaissance*

*the humanistic spirit*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The spirit that takes man as its measure and subject; in the essay, the spirit of Greek art.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The art of Egypt is "a Memnon waiting for the day, the day of the Greek spirit" (WIN §32).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §32 says that Hegel makes the story of Memnon "a figure for Egyptian architecture awaiting an art with the power of speech".

**A place to read.** WIN §§32–33.

## Meaning

"Humanistic" is an adjective of the nineteenth century, formed from "humanist". It can mean belonging to the humanists of the Renaissance, or more widely, as here, devoted to man as the measure and subject of thought. Pater uses it in a sentence that borrows a comparison from Hegel, for whom the spirit of classical art was the spirit that found in the human form its adequate expression.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the thirty-second paragraph, which ranges the arts in a series corresponding to the mind's growth. Architecture comes first, and Pater describes what it can and cannot say. It "can only express by vague hint or symbol, the spirit or mind of the artist. He closes his sadness over him, or wanders in the perplexed intricacies of things, or projects his purpose from him clean-cut and sincere, or bares himself to the sunlight. But these spiritualities, felt rather than seen, can but lurk about architectural form as volatile effects, to be gathered from it by reflexion. Their expression is, indeed, not really sensuous at all" (WIN §32). Architecture is the art of a mind that does not yet see itself: "As human form is not the subject with which it deals, architecture is the mode in which the artistic effort centres, when the thoughts of man concerning himself are still indistinct" (WIN §32). Then the image: "The art of Egypt, with its supreme architectural effects, is, according to Hegel's beautiful comparison, a Memnon waiting for the day, the day of the Greek spirit, the humanistic spirit, with its power of speech" (WIN §32).

The image makes Egypt mute and Greece articulate. The colossus waits for the sun to give it a voice (see Memnon waiting for the day); the humanistic spirit is the sunrise, and what it brings is speech, the power to say in visible form what man is. The next paragraph shows where that speech is spoken. Sculpture, unlike architecture, "deals immediately with man", and its material is the human form, "one entire medium of spiritual expression" (WIN §33; see Spiritual). The human body is the vocabulary of the humanistic spirit, and the statue its sentence.

The paragraph also marks the limit of that speech. Painting and music can refine "most delicately upon a single moment of passion, unravelling its subtlest threads" (WIN §33), and with poetry they are the special arts of the romantic and modern ages, when the mind has turned inward. The

humanistic spirit speaks clearly because it speaks of man as a whole, not of the moments of his inner life. The essay can be read as setting it between two other stages: before it, the indistinct thought of architecture; after it, the self-analysis of the romantic arts, which, Pater grants, show man "more directly" still (WIN §33). The comparison is Hegel's, for whom the Memnon colossi sounded only when the sun's ray touched them, as the inner life of the human form could not yet speak in Egypt (see Memnon waiting for the day); the words "the humanistic spirit", and the sense of a single dawn between two twilights, are Pater's own, and the second governs the whole essay's account of Greece.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which Pater sets the humanistic spirit of Greek art between architecture and the romantic arts, in the order of the book.

**WIN §32** Architecture expresses the mind only by vague hint; the art of Egypt is a Memnon waiting for the day of the humanistic spirit.

**WIN §33** Sculpture deals immediately with man, between architecture and the romantic arts of painting, music and poetry.

## See also

Architectural effect; Development; Greek spirit; Hellenic humanism; Memnon waiting for the day; Spiritual; Ultimate differences of the arts.

# Intellectual isolation

*intellectual isolation*; *isolation*

Attested: *intellectual isolation* (PRE §8); *isolation* (PRE §8; CON §3; C73 §3). The condition of a mind or a group working apart from others. The various forms of intellectual activity in an age usually move "by unconnected roads", and of their producers "each group is solitary, gaining what advantage or disadvantage there may be in intellectual isolation" (PRE §8); in the happier eras, like fifteenth-century Italy, they "do not live in isolation, but breathe a common air" (PRE §8; see Common air; General culture). The Conclusion makes isolation the condition of every mind: each impression is "the impression of the individual in his isolation" (CON §3; see Solitary prisoner). The book moves from an isolation that a great age can overcome to one that no age overcomes.

## See also

Common air; General culture; Impression; Solitary prisoner; Wall of personality.

## Knight-errant of philosophy

*knight-errant of philosophy*

Attested: *knight-errant of philosophy* (PIC §8). A wandering champion of ideas; the knight-errant of romance travelled in search of adventure and offered to fight all comers. After the principal schools of Italy and France, "At last he came to Rome. There, like some knight-errant of philosophy, he offered to defend nine hundred bold paradoxes, drawn from the most opposite sources, against all comers" (PIC §8; see Paradox; Disputation). The figure fits the event. The theses were printed in Rome in December 1486, with a notice that their author would pay the travelling expenses of any scholar who came to dispute them;[223] but the pontifical court suspected "the orthodoxy of some of these propositions", the Pope forbade the reading of the book, and, the edition's note at PIC §8 adds, "the disputation never took place" (PIC §8; see Orthodoxy; Brief). The knight can be read as one who never fought: his challenge survives as a book, and the oration for the tournament "still remains" (PIC §9; see Philosophical tournament).

### See also

Brief; Disputation; Orthodoxy; Paradox; Philosophical tournament.

## Leprosy

*leprosy*; *leper*, *lepers*

Attested: *leprosy* (FRE §§11, 14, 17); *lepers* (FRE §12); *leper* (FRE §16). The disease, feared and incurable in the middle ages, which shut its sufferers out of common life. It is the trial of the friendship of Amis and Amile: "After this it happened that a leprosy fell upon Amis, so that his wife would not approach him, and wrought to strangle him" (FRE §11). His servants carry him to Amile's gate and sound the lepers' rattles there (FRE §12; see Rattle). Amile's prayer, "didst heal the leper by Thy word!" (FRE §16; see Keep faith), recalls Christ's cleansing of a leper with the words "I will; be thou clean" (Matthew 8:3, in the King James Version), and the next paragraph opens, "Then Amis was cleansed of his leprosy" (FRE §17). The leprosy can be read as what makes the friendship absolute: Amile takes in the outcast whose own wife had tried to strangle him.

### See also

Comradeship; Inward similitude; Keep faith; Rattle.

[223] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 7 December 1486), the announcement at the end.

# Liberty of the intellect

*Abelard's freedom of thought, as his age understood it · The Renaissance liberty of the intellect*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Liberty of the intellect is freedom of thought: the mind's right to range over every subject and follow its own reasoning.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The name of Abelard "connects the expression of this liberty of heart with the free play of human intelligence around all subjects presented to it, with the liberty of the intellect, as that age understood it" (FRE §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at FRE §3 introduces Abelard and his *Historia calamitatum*.

**A place to read.** FRE §2, with FRE §§3–7 on Abelard.

## Meaning

"Liberty" is the Latin *libertas*; "intellect", the Latin *intellectus*, is the power of understanding. Pater limits it at once: "as that age understood it" warns the reader not to read a modern freedom of thought back into the twelfth century.

## Use in the book

The phrase is the second half of a pair. In the poetry of Provence the liberty of the heart makes itself felt, "and the name of Abelard, the great scholar and the great lover, connects the expression of this liberty of heart with the free play of human intelligence around all subjects presented to it, with the liberty of the intellect, as that age understood it" (FRE §2; see Liberty of the heart; Free play). The two liberties meet in one man, Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher and master of the Paris schools, who is both scholar and lover.

The next paragraphs show what the liberty was. The scholar who sat with Heloïse, the canon's niece and his pupil, "to refine a little further on the nature of abstract ideas" lived "in a world of something like shadows", and for one who could "assign its exact value to every abstract thought, those restraints which lie on the consciences of other men had been relaxed" (FRE §3). The intellect's freedom and the heart's are here one temptation. The historian Jules Michelet sees in Abelard's school "the whole body of scholastic philosophy" and, beyond it, "Arnold of Brescia—that is to say, the revolution" (FRE §4; see Scholastic philosophy). Arnold of Brescia, a preacher against the wealth and temporal power of the clergy, was executed at Rome in 1155. Abelard's treatises try "to find a ground of reality below the abstractions of philosophy, as one bent on trying all things by their congruity with human experience" (FRE §7; see Human experience). And

his conflict with authority sets "the true child of light, the humanist", against the hireling ministers of the system (FRE §6; see Humanist).

The phrase can be read as defining the intellect's liberty by its opponent. It is not a right won in law but a temper: one man's reason, heart and senses quick against a system whose ministers' faculties were almost dead (FRE §6; see Humanist). "As that age understood it" keeps the measure honest: Abelard's freedom was to question within the faith, and he died, Pater says, on his way to Rome, his relation to the beliefs of his age left "in this uncertain twilight" (FRE §6; see Uncertain twilight). The end of the essay names what the two liberties became together: "that sinister claim for liberty of heart and thought" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with every other paragraph that names Abelard except FRE §5, on Dante's silence about him.

**FRE §2** Abelard connects the liberty of the heart with the free play of the intelligence and the liberty of the intellect, as that age understood it.

**FRE §3** The scholar who refines on abstract ideas with Heloïse finds the restraints on other men's consciences relaxed.

**FRE §4** Michelet sees at Abelard's school the whole body of scholastic philosophy and, beyond it, the revolution.

**FRE §6** Abelard, the humanist, against the hireling ministers of the system; his relation to his age left in an uncertain twilight.

**FRE §7** Abelard tries all things by their congruity with human experience.

**FRE §32** The antinomian element is found in the history of Abelard; that sinister claim for liberty of heart and thought.

**FRE §33** The opposition of the defenders of a mere system to the play of mind and character was the secret of Abelard's struggle.

## Pater's sources

Abelard's freedom was a method as well as a temper. In his *Sic et non* he set the conflicting sayings of the church's authorities side by side, and wrote in its prologue that by doubting we come to inquiry, and by inquiry we perceive the truth; his teaching was condemned at the councils of Soissons (1121) and Sens (1141). Pater names none of this; his authorities for Abelard are the legend, the letters, Charles de Rémusat, whose *Abélard* (1845) he quotes on the songs (FRE §3; see Trouvère), and Michelet (FRE §4).[224]

[224] Abelard, *Sic et non*, prologue (ed. B. Boyer and R. McKeon, Chicago, 1976–77, pp. 103–104), *dubitando quippe ad inquisitionem venimus; inquirendo veritatem percipimus*; the

## In this edition

The note at FRE §3 identifies Peter Abelard as "a twelfth-century philosopher and theologian", whose account of the affair with Heloïse "survives in the Historia calamitatum", and says that Pater uses the lovers' history "as a point of entry into medieval intellectual and emotional life". The note at FRE §6 says that the French proverb of wheat and acorns "reduces resistance to new intellectual resources to a choice between two staple foods".

## See also

Antinomianism; Free play; Human experience; Humanist; Liberty of the heart; Scholastic philosophy; Trouvère; Uncertain twilight.

# Literary revolution

*literary revolution*; *revolution in poetry*; *revolution*; *revolutionary*

Attested: *literary revolution* (BEL §§7, 8); *revolution in poetry* (BEL §3); *revolution* (FRE §4); *French Revolution* (FRE §33); *revolutionary* (PIC §2). A revolution is a turning round, from the Latin *revolvere*; in politics an overthrow, and by extension any thorough change. Pater uses the phrase for the reform of French poetry by Ronsard and his friends. The softening of French literature "is the object of the revolution in poetry which is connected with Ronsard's name" (BEL §3; see Castigation); six other poets "threw in their lot with him in his literary revolution" (BEL §7; see Pleiad). "The first note of this literary revolution was struck by Joachim du Bellay in a little tract written at the early age of twenty-four, which coming to us through three centuries seems of yesterday, so full is it of those delicate critical distinctions which are sometimes supposed peculiar to modern writers" (BEL §8; see Illustrate). The word is strong for a change of taste, and the essay can be read as weighing it: the revolution softened and refined, and the paragraph that names it goes on to say that the Renaissance was "less conscious of combined action" even than the Reformation, though if it ever became conscious it was in this little book (BEL §8; see Combined action). The book's other revolutions are real ones. At the foot of the tower of Abelard's school Michelet sees in thought "Arnold of Brescia—that is to say, the revolution" (FRE §4), and the first essay sets the Renaissance beside "the Reformation, or the French Revolution" as an emancipation of the human mind (FRE §33). Set beside them, the Pleiad's revolution is a revolution of manner, and its first note is a critical book.

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councils are recounted in the *Historia calamitatum* (Soissons) and in the letters of Bernard of Clairvaux (Sens).

## See also

Castigation; Combined action; Illustrate; Pleiad.

# Many-sided intellectual culture

*The age's aim to fit all the mind's products into one culture · The Renaissance*

*one many-sided type of intellectual culture*; *many-sided*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A many-sided intellectual culture is one that takes in every kind of thought and art and fits them to one another, so that none is lost and all are held together.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To reconcile forms of sentiment which at first sight seem incompatible, to adjust the various products of the human mind to one another in one many-sided type of intellectual culture, to give humanity, for heart and imagination to feed upon, as much as it could possibly receive, belonged to the generous instincts of that age" (PIC §1).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §1 says that "Pico's project takes in many more traditions than this opening suggests, including Aristotle, Arabic philosophy, and Jewish Kabbalah".

**A place to read.** PIC §1, with PRE §8.

## Meaning

"Many-sided" was a word of nineteenth-century praise, for a mind or a man with interests in many directions; it answered the German *vielseitig*. "Intellectual culture" is the cultivation of the mind through thought and learning. A "type" is a model or pattern. The phrase names an ideal: a single pattern of mind wide enough to hold everything the human mind has made. The ideal had its classic statement in the German scholar and statesman Wilhelm von Humboldt, whose sentence John Stuart Mill quoted in *On Liberty* (1859): the end of man is "the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole".[225] Pater's phrase can be read as setting the same ideal back in fifteenth-century Italy.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the Pico essay, in the sentence quoted above, which states the age's aim in three parallel clauses (PIC §1). The verbs, reconcile, adjust, give, describe one work from three sides. The first is the essay's subject, the reconciliation of Christianity with the Greek religion (see Artistic reconciliation). The second makes it general: all the products of the

[225] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (London, 1859), chapter 3, quoting Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staats zu bestimmen* (written 1792).

mind, not two religions only, are to be fitted together. The third gives the motive, a generosity toward humanity, whose heart and imagination are to be fed as fully as they can be. "Generous instincts" is the essay's first judgement of Pico's age, and it is never withdrawn; it returns as "the generous hope, so often disabused, of reconciling the philosophers with one another" (PIC §8) and, at the end, in the humanist's belief that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality (PIC §16; see Humanism).

The phrase gathers up the Preface's account of the age. Fifteenth-century Italy is one of the "happier eras" in which "the many interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of general culture"; it is "an age productive in personalities, many-sided, centralised, complete" (PRE §8; see General culture). The first essay calls the whole Renaissance "a many-sided but yet united movement" (FRE §1; see Renaissance; Unity of culture). Many-sidedness in all three places is joined to unity: the sides belong to one type, one movement, one culture. Pico's attempt can be read as the same aim carried into philosophy, where it failed, while the artists achieved it.

The Winckelmann essay weighs the ideal against its opposite. Winckelmann had a "narrow, exclusive interest", where Goethe had a "universal culture" (WIN §10; see Unity of culture), and Pater states the aim directly: "There have been instances of culture developed by every high motive in turn, and yet intense at every point; and the aim of our culture should be to attain not only as intense but as complete a life as possible" (WIN §12), but often the higher life is possible only by a selection (WIN §12; see Higher life). Many-sidedness is the aim; the price of it, for most, is a choice. The Pico essay can be read as showing a mind that would not choose and so achieved little, the Winckelmann essay a mind that chose and achieved much. Pater admires both.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "many-sided" occurs, with the paragraph in which Pater sets the aim of a complete culture against the need to choose, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The Renaissance is a complex, many-sided movement.

**PRE §8** Fifteenth-century Italy is an age productive in personalities, many-sided, centralised, complete.

**FRE §1** For us the Renaissance is a many-sided but yet united movement.

**PIC §1** To adjust the products of the human mind in one many-sided type of intellectual culture belonged to the generous instincts of that age.

**WIN §12** The aim of our culture should be as complete a life as possible; but often the higher life needs the selection of one native motive.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §1 says that "Pico's project takes in many more traditions than this opening suggests, including Aristotle, Arabic philosophy, and Jewish Kabbalah", and that "Pater selects the encounter between Christian and pagan antiquity as a thread connecting his philosophical and visual examples".

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; General culture; Higher life; Humanism; Renaissance; Unity of culture.

# Medieval Renaissance

*A Renaissance within the middle age itself* · *The Renaissance medieval Renaissance*; *Renaissance within the limits of the middle age itself*; *Renaissance within the middle age*; *earlier Renaissance within the middle age itself*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A medieval Renaissance is a rebirth of art, thought and feeling that takes place inside the middle ages, before the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth century.

**In *The Renaissance*.** French writers have dwelt on "a Renaissance within the limits of the middle age itself—a brilliant, but in part abortive effort" (FRE §1). Pater adopts the theory, praises it for "healing that rupture between the middle age and the Renaissance which has so often been exaggerated" (FRE §2), and at the end of the essay refers back to it as "a medieval Renaissance" (FRE §32).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §2 says that Pater's choice of stained glass alongside sculpture "matters to that account of continuity across media"; the note at FRE §4 that he shares Michelet's "interest in finding an awakening of thought before the Italian Renaissance".

**A place to read.** FRE §§1–2.

## Meaning

"Renaissance" is the French for rebirth; by Pater's time it named the revival of letters and arts in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy and its spread north. "Medieval" sets that rebirth in the age it was supposed to have ended. The phrase is a deliberate paradox. It denies that the middle age was a single dark interval, and it widens the word Renaissance from a period to a

continuous movement of the mind, as the Preface had widened it, giving it "a much wider scope than was intended by those who originally used it" (PRE §6; see Renaissance).

## Use in the book

The Preface names the movement first: the outbreak of the human spirit "may be traced far into the middle age itself", with the care for physical beauty and the worship of the body among its motives (PRE §6; see Physical beauty; Worship of the body), and Pater takes two French stories "as an example of this movement, this earlier Renaissance within the middle age itself" (PRE §6). The first essay gives the theory its authors and its dates. French writers, "fond of connecting the creations of Italian genius with a French origin", have "often dwelt on this notion of a Renaissance in the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century, a Renaissance within the limits of the middle age itself—a brilliant, but in part abortive effort to do for human life and the human mind what was afterwards done in the fifteenth" (FRE §1). "In part abortive" can be read as Pater's reservation: the effort did only in part what "was afterwards done in the fifteenth" century. The theory is Pater's own from the first paragraph, where "this outbreak is rightly called a Renaissance, a revival" (FRE §1).

The second paragraph says why the theory deserves a hearing. "Theories which bring into connexion with each other modes of thought and feeling, periods of taste, forms of art and poetry, which the narrowness of men's minds constantly tends to oppose to each other, have a great stimulus for the intellect, and are almost always worth understanding" (FRE §2). This one "seeks to establish a continuity between the most characteristic work of that period, the sculpture of Chartres, the windows of Le Mans, and the work of the later Renaissance, the work of Jean Cousin and Germain Pilon, thus healing that rupture between the middle age and the Renaissance which has so often been exaggerated" (FRE §2). Jean Cousin and Germain Pilon are French artists of the sixteenth century, a painter and designer of glass and a sculptor. The theory, then, is praised as a reconciliation. Pater then narrows it: what the French writers have in view is "not so much the ecclesiastical art of the middle age" as "its profane poetry, the poetry of Provence", in which the liberty of the heart makes itself felt (FRE §2; see Profane poetry; Liberty of the heart).

At the end of the essay he refers back to the name. The antinomian spirit was "One of the strongest characteristics of that outbreak of the reason and the imagination, of that assertion of the liberty of the heart, in the middle age, which I have termed a medieval Renaissance" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The essay's last pages show the two faces of the movement, its rebellion in Aucassin and its harmony with the church in Amis and Amile (FRE §33; see Unity of culture), and the book's design follows from the phrase: a series of studies that begins in twelfth-century

France and ends in eighteenth-century Germany can hold together only if the Renaissance is a movement continuous with the middle age, not a period that happened once. On this reading the medieval Renaissance is the first proof of the book's method, and the Winckelmann essay states the method outright, that the Renaissance "was an uninterrupted effort of the middle age, that it was ever taking place" (WIN §47; see Renaissance); the Du Bellay essay says the same of the Renaissance in France (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater names a Renaissance within the middle age, or finds the Renaissance continuous with it, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The outbreak of the Renaissance may be traced far into the middle age, with its motives already clearly pronounced; two French stories stand as an example of this earlier Renaissance within the middle age itself.

**FRE §1** French writers have dwelt on a Renaissance within the limits of the middle age itself, a brilliant but in part abortive effort.

**FRE §2** The theory of a Renaissance within the middle age heals the exaggerated rupture between the middle age and the Renaissance; the French writers have in view chiefly the poetry of Provence.

**FRE §32** One of the strongest characteristics of what Pater has termed a medieval Renaissance was its antinomianism.

**BEL §1** What is called the Renaissance in France is rather the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself.

**WIN §47** Pagan and Christian art are continuous; the Renaissance may be said to have been an uninterrupted effort of the middle age.

## Later readings

The idea Pater took from the French writers became a standard historical term in the next century. The American medievalist Charles Homer Haskins called his study of the revival of Latin learning, law and science in the twelfth century *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (1927), and the phrase has since named a field. Haskins's renaissance is one of the schools and of Latin letters; Pater's is one of feeling, love and the vernacular, and the two differ as much as they agree.[226]

[226] Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), preface and chapter 1.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §2 says that Pater "places two French medieval cathedral arts in a continuous history with the work of Renaissance artists Jean Cousin and Germain Pilon", and that "His choice of stained glass alongside sculpture matters to that account of continuity across media". The note at FRE §4 says that Pater "shares his interest", Michelet's, "in finding an awakening of thought before the Italian Renaissance", and the note at PRE §6 that "Medieval French writing opens" the book. The Key Words entry on the Renaissance says that "The opening study in France and the closing study of Winckelmann show how far the term reaches in this book".

## See also

Antinomianism; Liberty of the heart; Physical beauty; Profane poetry; Renaissance; Saint Martin's summer; Unity of culture; Worship of the body.

# Medievalism

*The medieval habit of receiving an image or legend from tradition and adding only the last touches, which Michelangelo kept · The Renaissance medievalism*; *medieval mind*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The character of the middle age, or attachment to it: here, a medieval way of working that survives in a Renaissance artist.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is a sign of the medievalism of Michelangelo, that he thus receives from tradition his central conception, and does but add the last touches, in transferring it to the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel" (MIC §18).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §18.

## Meaning

"Medieval" is a word of the early nineteenth century, made from the Latin *medium aevum*, the middle age; "medievalism", a word of Pater's own century, named either the spirit of the middle age or the modern taste for it, the Gothic Revival, the Pre-Raphaelites, the Oxford Movement. Pater uses it in the first sense: a quality of the medieval mind found in a man who lived after it.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the last two sentences of the eighteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which follow the history of the

Creation of Man as a subject. Woven "into a hundred carved ornaments of capital or doorway", the subject had acquired a "pregnancy of expression" (MIC §18; see Pregnancy of expression), and then: "As with other artistic conceptions of the middle age, its treatment became almost conventional, handed on from artist to artist, with slight changes, till it came to have almost an independent and abstract existence of its own. It was characteristic of the medieval mind thus to give an independent traditional existence to a special pictorial conception, or to a legend, like that of Tristram or Tannhäuser, or even to the very thoughts and substance of a book, like the Imitation, so that no single workman could claim it as his own, and the book, the image, the legend, had itself a legend, and its fortunes, and a personal history; and it is a sign of the medievalism of Michelangelo, that he thus receives from tradition his central conception, and does but add the last touches, in transferring it to the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel" (MIC §18; see Conventionalism).

The passage defines medievalism by a practice. The medieval mind let a conception live independently of any single maker: an image passed from carver to carver, a legend from poet to poet, a book whose authorship blurred, as with the *Imitation of Christ*, generally given to Thomas à Kempis but long disputed, and read as the voice of a whole devotion. Such a work "had itself a legend, and its fortunes, and a personal history". One of the legends Pater names belongs to his first essay: Tannhäuser, the erring knight who goes to Rome for absolution (FRE §6; see Absolution); Tristram, the lover of Iseult, comes from the Arthurian cycle, which the book does not otherwise treat. Michelangelo's Creation of Adam belongs to this kind: a conception that "no single workman could claim", to which he adds "the last touches" (see Discipleship).

The word reverses the usual picture. Michelangelo is the master of the High Renaissance, the inventor of the grand manner; Pater calls him medieval, not because he looks back to Gothic forms, but because he works as the medieval craftsmen worked, inside a tradition that owns the image. The essay supports the claim at every turn: he is "the last of the Florentines" (MIC §17; see Tradition of sentiment), he inherits a tradition of the great Florentines, who "were preoccupied with death" (MIC §19; see Outre-tombe), and his poems repeat the courtly words of Dante (MIC §15; see Gentile).

The word can be read as a deliberate correction of the Renaissance that the book itself names. The first essay had placed "a Renaissance within the limits of the middle age itself" (FRE §1; see Medieval Renaissance); the Michelangelo essay finds the middle age within the Renaissance at its height. Together they make the two ends of one thesis: the line between the ages is not where the textbooks draw it, and the greatest Renaissance art carries the medieval mind into its last and finest form.

The medievalism of Pater's own day hangs over the word without being named. The Gothic Revivalists and the Pre-Raphaelites prized the medieval for its forms, its piety, its craft; Pater prizes in it a way of handling tradition, the anonymous growth of an image. His Michelangelo is medieval in the deepest sense he can give the word: an artist content to finish what many hands began.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**MIC §18** It is a sign of the medievalism of Michelangelo that he receives his central conception from tradition and adds only the last touches.

## See also

Absolution; Conventionalism; Discipleship; Gentile; Medieval Renaissance; Outre-tombe; Pregnancy of expression; Tradition of sentiment.

# Modern spirit

*The other half of the fifteenth century's movement, with its realism and its appeal to experience · The Renaissance*
*modern spirit*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The temper of modern times, which trusts experience and observation before authority.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The movement of the fifteenth century was twofold; partly the Renaissance, partly also the coming of what is called the 'modern spirit,' with its realism, its appeal to experience" (LEO §17).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §17.

## Meaning

"Modern" comes from the Late Latin *modernus*, from *modo*, just now: what belongs to the present as against the ancient. In the criticism of Pater's century "the modern" became a standard of judgement, and Matthew Arnold's lecture "On the Modern Element in Literature", given at Oxford in 1857 and printed in 1869, had asked what makes an age or a literature modern.[227] Pater's "what is called" marks the phrase as one in common use, and keeps a little distance from it.

[227] Matthew Arnold, "On the Modern Element in Literature", inaugural lecture at Oxford, 1857; printed in *Macmillan's Magazine*, February 1869.

## Use in the book

Pater uses the phrase to divide the century. "The movement of the fifteenth century was twofold; partly the Renaissance, partly also the coming of what is called the 'modern spirit,' with its realism, its appeal to experience" (LEO §17; see Realist). The Renaissance here is the narrower thing, the revival of the past; the modern spirit is the turn to the present world, known by observation. The next sentences divide the movement between a return to antiquity, which Raphael represents, and a return to nature, which Leonardo represents (LEO §17; see Return to antiquity; Return to nature). Leonardo is the modern spirit's man, and the paragraph lists his science: the friendship of a mathematician and an anatomist, thirteen volumes of observations, and "rapid intuition" of "the later ideas of science" (LEO §17; see Rapid intuition).

The essay qualifies the claim as soon as it makes it. Leonardo's modernity is half dream. Michelet and others thought he had "anticipated modern ideas" (LEO §2; see Unsanctified and secret wisdom); later writers see in his projects "an anticipation of modern mechanics", but in him "they were rather dreams" (LEO §10; see Natural magic). The science of his age was "all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas" (LEO §13; see Divination), and "much of the spirit of the older alchemy still hangs about" his philosophy (LEO §13; see Alchemy). In Leonardo the modern spirit seems a direction, not an achievement: he turns to nature and experience, but by the old roads.

The essay returns to the word in another form. La Gioconda is "the symbol of the modern idea", the idea of humanity "as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life). The phrase of the seventeenth paragraph names an age's method, the appeal to experience; the phrase of the thirty-first names the idea of humanity that modern philosophy has conceived. The book's own Conclusion speaks for that later modern spirit, for which "the tendency of modern thought" is to regard all things "as inconstant modes or fashions" (CON §2), and the Leonardo essay can be read as tracing its beginning in a painter who was not yet wholly of it.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §17** The movement of the fifteenth century was partly the Renaissance, partly the coming of the "modern spirit", with its realism, its appeal to experience.

## See also

Alchemy; Divination; Homo minister et interpres naturæ; Natural magic; Perpetual life; Rapid intuition; Realist; Return to antiquity; Return to nature; Unsanctified and secret wisdom.

## National and modern

*national and modern*; *national*

Attested: *national and modern* (BEL §12); *national* in three further paragraphs (FRE §20; GIO §17; WIN §22). National is of one's own people and country; modern is of the present age. Pater joins them in his account of how Du Bellay's education failed him into greatness. His studies of the Greek and Latin poets came too late to make him a trifler in Greek and Latin verse, and made him instead "a lover of his own homely native tongue" (BEL §12; see Dead words). "It was through this fortunate shortcoming in his education that he became national and modern; and he learned afterwards to look back on that wild garden of his youth with only a half-regret" (BEL §12). The pairing is the essay's argument in two words: to write in one's own tongue is to belong to one's nation and to one's time. The "wild garden of his youth" answers Du Bellay's own image, quoted in the same paragraph, of a youth lost "like the flower which no shower waters, and no hand cultivates" (BEL §12); the uncultivated garden, it can be read, grew the poet. The other "national" in the book that is not part of a name is the Winckelmann essay's, where in the countries of the classical tradition "national pride might sometimes light up anew an enthusiasm for it" (WIN §22; see Classical tradition), the classical made national in its own lands as Du Bellay made French poetry national in his.

### See also

Classical tradition; Dead words; Homely art; Mother-tongue.

## Natural right

*Man's dignity claimed by nature, not by grace · The Renaissance*

*natural right*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A natural right is what belongs to a person by nature, before and apart from any grant, law or gift of grace.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The high dignity of man in Pico's theory "was supposed to belong to him, not as renewed by a religious system, but by his own natural right" (PIC §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PIC §10.

## Meaning

The Roman jurist Ulpian defined *ius naturale*, natural right or law, as what nature has taught all animals;[228] the scholastics made natural law the share of eternal law that reason can know;[229] and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries spoke of the natural rights of man, which the French Declaration of 1789 called "natural and imprescriptible".[230] Pater's phrase uses none of these doctrines exactly. It sets nature against grace: a right that a man has because he is a man, not one restored to him by a church.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the sentence where Pater turns from the falsehood of Pico's theory to its use. The theory of man's dignity was "A commonplace of the schools", and its basis was false, but it served, in the sentence quoted above (PIC §10; see Dignity of human nature). "Renewed" is the theologian's word. In Christian teaching fallen human nature is made new by grace, by a bath of new birth and a making new by the Holy Spirit, in the Letter to Titus.[231] Pater's sentence takes the dignity out of that system and gives it to nature. "Was supposed" keeps the claim at a distance: it is what the theory held, and Pater does not vouch for it. What he vouches for is the effect: the proclamation answered the medieval tendency "to depreciate man's nature" and helped toward the rehabilitation of human nature "which the Renaissance fulfils" (PIC §10; see Rehabilitation of human nature).

The phrase can be read as carrying a later, almost political, ring into the fifteenth century. Natural right was the language of the revolutions of Pater's grandparents' time, and to say that Pico claimed man's dignity "by his own natural right" is to make the Renaissance the first claimant of what the eighteenth century would call the rights of man. The essay prepares the claim. "Natural" in the Pico essay is what grows without a revelation: "the natural charm of pagan story" reasserts itself over minds emerging from barbarism (PIC §1; see Pagan story); a modern scholar may regard all religions "as natural products" (PIC §3; see Natural product); Pico's piety toward the older gods is "natural piety" (PIC §13; see Natural piety). Nature, in the essay, is the ground on which the ages can be reconciled without a church, and man's right is grounded there too.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

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[228] Ulpian, in Justinian's *Digest* 1.1.1.3: "ius naturale est, quod natura omnia animalia docuit".

[229] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I–II, q. 91, a. 2, and q. 94.

[230] *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* (1789), article 2: "droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme".

[231] Titus 3:5.

**PIC §10** Man's high dignity was supposed to belong to him not as renewed by a religious system but by his own natural right.

## See also

Dignity of human nature; Natural piety; Natural product; Pagan story; Rehabilitation of human nature.

# Naturalism

*The faithful copying of nature, a stage the visionary passes through · The Renaissance*

*naturalism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Naturalism, in painting, is the close imitation of natural appearances for their own sake.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli left behind "the simple naturalism which had grown out of" the religion of Giotto's followers, "a thing of birds and flowers only" (BOT §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** BOT §1, with BOT §4 and GIO §12.

## Meaning

The word is built on *natura*. In philosophy it named the view that explains everything by nature, without appeal to the supernatural; in the criticism of painting, the effort to set down birds, plants, rocks and faces as they appear. In Pater's own lifetime it would soon become the name of a school of French fiction. In the book it keeps its painter's sense and acquires a historian's: it is a phase of Italian art.

## Use in the book

The word occurs twice, and Pater gives it a place in a sequence each time. In the Botticelli essay it follows religion. Botticelli left "the simple religion which had occupied the followers of Giotto for a century, and the simple naturalism which had grown out of it, a thing of birds and flowers only" (BOT §1; see Original sentiment). "Simple" is applied to both, and "only" limits the second: a naturalism of birds and flowers is a naturalism of details, without a mind to unite them. "Grown out of it" makes it the child of the older piety, and it can be read as the devout attention to God's creatures turned into an attention to the creatures alone.

Three paragraphs later Pater grants what Botticelli took from it. He "might have been a mere naturalist" among the naturalists of his generation, and his work keeps "that alert sense of outward things" which fills the lawns of that period's pictures with living creatures (BOT §4; see Naturalist). The

alert sense remains; what changes is its use. The visionary "usurps the data" that the naturalist records (BOT §4; see Data), and the birds and reeds can be read as becoming the exponent of a mood (see Exponent).

The Giorgione essay puts the word in another sequence, as one of the burdens of Florentine art. Of the Venetian school Pater writes: "Unassisted, and therefore unperplexed, by naturalism, religious mysticism, philosophical theories, it had no Giotto, no Angelico, no Botticelli" (GIO §12). "Unassisted" and "unperplexed" give naturalism both values at once: it helped the Florentines and it troubled them, and the Venetians, without it, "seem never for a moment to have been so much as tempted" to forget that painting "must be before all things decorative" (GIO §12).

The two passages can be read as one judgement. Naturalism is a means that tempts to become an end. It is necessary, since the visionary needs data, and it is insufficient, since data are not meaning. Pater's account places Botticelli at the point where the means was mastered and refused as an end. The same judgement governs the book's account of Leonardo, whose pictures use their ostensible subject as "the starting-point of a train of sentiment" (LEO §25; see Ostensible subject), and its contrast with Wordsworth's "life in natural things" (PRE §5; see Life in natural things), where nature is never mere birds and flowers because a spirit is felt in it.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which "naturalism" occurs, with the paragraph on Botticelli's generation of naturalists, in the order of the book.

**BOT §1** Botticelli left the simple naturalism that had grown out of the religion of Giotto's followers, a thing of birds and flowers only.

**BOT §4** Botticelli lived in a generation of naturalists and might have been a mere naturalist among them.

**GIO §12** Venetian painting, unassisted and unperplexed by naturalism, had no Giotto, no Angelico, no Botticelli.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the word.

## See also

Data; Exponent; Life in natural things; Naturalist; Original sentiment; Ostensible subject; Visionary painter.

# Naturalist

*naturalist*, *naturalists*

Attested: *naturalists* and *naturalist* (BOT §4). A painter who sets down natural things as they appear; the word was also, in Pater's day, the name of the student of plants and animals. Pater opens the paragraph on the visionary painter with it: "Botticelli lived in a generation of naturalists, and he might have been a mere naturalist among them. There are traces enough in his work of that alert sense of outward things, which, in the pictures of that period, fills the lawns with delicate living creatures, and the hillsides with pools of water, and the pools of water with flowering reeds" (BOT §4). The sentence about filling is itself an inventory, lawns, creatures, hillsides, pools, reeds, and its chain of repetitions ("pools of water, and the pools of water") can be read as mimicking the naturalist's patient adding. "Mere" judges it, and "But this was not enough for him" (BOT §4; see Visionary painter) turns away. The "alert sense" can be read as the ground of vision: on this reading the visionary is a naturalist who has gone further, not one who never looked.

## See also

Naturalism; Outward image; Visionary painter.

## Neo-catholic

*neo-catholic*

Attested: *neo-catholic* (MIC §10). A Catholic of a new, reforming kind. Pater uses the word of Vittoria Colonna: "Vittoria herself, an ardent neo-catholic, vowed to perpetual widowhood since the news had reached her, seventeen years before, that her husband, the youthful and princely Marquess of Pescara, lay dead of the wounds he had received in the battle of Pavia, was then no longer an object of great passion" (MIC §10). Ferrante Francesco d'Avalos, Marquess of Pescara, was one of the imperial commanders at Pavia in February 1525, and died at Milan that December; Vittoria wrote her early poems in his memory. From the late 1530s she belonged to the *spirituali*, Catholics who hoped to renew the Church from within; in Rome she was close to the cardinals Gasparo Contarini and the Englishman Reginald Pole, and from 1541 to 1544 she lived at Viterbo in Pole's circle. Her poems turned to religious subjects.[232] The word sets her beside the "new catholicism" of the sixteenth paragraph (MIC §16; see New catholicism), and the two may be taken as the two faces of the Catholic revival: the hopeful piety of Vittoria's circle in the 1540s, and the fixed orthodoxy that followed, to which Michelangelo was a stranger (see Frozen orthodoxy). The same paragraph glimpses her with Michelangelo in an empty church, discussing "the writings of Saint Paul" (MIC §10).

[232] Abigail Brundin, *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics of the Italian Reformation* (2008).

## See also

Frozen orthodoxy; New catholicism.

## New catholicism

*The Catholic revival of the sixteenth century, which took the place of the Renaissance and opposed art more than the Reformation did · The Renaissance*

*new catholicism*; *Catholic revival*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The renewed Catholicism of the later sixteenth century: the reform and revival of the Church in answer to the Protestant Reformation.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The 'new catholicism' had taken the place of the Renaissance" (MIC §16).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §16 says that "The circle of Filippo Neri met in Rome in Michelangelo's later years. The Congregation of the Oratory received formal papal approval in 1575, after the artist's death."

**A place to read.** MIC §16.

## Meaning

Historians call the movement the Catholic Reformation or the Counter-Reformation: the reform of the Church's discipline, the founding of new orders, the Jesuits in 1540, Filippo Neri's Oratory in Rome, and the definition of doctrine at the Council of Trent (1545–1563). Its spirit was devout, ascetic and, in matters of art, watchful: the council's decree on images, in its last session, required that sacred pictures avoid anything profane or indecent.[233]

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the middle of the sixteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which describes the world of his old age: "The world had changed around him. The 'new catholicism' had taken the place of the Renaissance. The spirit of the Roman Church had changed: in the vast world's cathedral which his skill had helped to raise for it, it looked stronger than ever. Some of the first members of the Oratory were among his intimate associates. They were of a spirit as unlike as possible from that of Lorenzo, or Savonarola even. The opposition of the Reformation to art has been often enlarged upon; far greater was that of the Catholic revival" (MIC §16).

Pater's quotation marks mark "new catholicism" as a current phrase, not his own. The passage is built on contrasts. The new Catholicism "had taken

[233] Council of Trent, session XXV (3–4 December 1563), *On the Invocation, Veneration and Relics of Saints, and on Sacred Images*.

the place of the Renaissance": the two are rivals, and the second has won. The cathedral is the sharpest irony: St Peter's, whose dome Michelangelo designed, made the Church look "stronger than ever", and the strength was turned against the spirit of the art that built it. Some of the first Oratorians, Neri's companions, were "among his intimate associates", and yet of a spirit unlike Lorenzo's humanism and even Savonarola's reforming fire. The last sentence makes the claim that gives the passage its force: Protestant iconoclasm is the familiar enemy of art, but the opposition of the Catholic revival was "far greater".

The claim can be read in the light of the Council's decree on images and of the censures that followed: in January 1564, a month before Michelangelo's death, some of the nudes of the Last Judgment were ordered covered, and the draperies were painted afterwards by his friend Daniele da Volterra.[234] Pater does not tell the story, but his sentence holds it: the art of the unveiled human form had no place in the new piety.

The next sentences give the consequence. fixed "in a frozen orthodoxy", the Roman Church "had passed beyond him" (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy); he had fallen back on a divine ideal above the creeds (see Divine ideal), and lingered on as "a revenant" (see Revenant). Vittoria Colonna, "an ardent neo-catholic" (MIC §10; see Neo-catholic), had belonged to the hopeful beginning of the movement; Michelangelo outlived its hope.

The two revivals frame Pater's Renaissance: the "revival" of the twelfth century with which the book opens (FRE §1; see Revival of classical antiquity), and the Catholic revival, at the latest point of its Italian story, that undid much of what the first had made.

## Places to read

Both phrases occur in one paragraph.

**MIC §16** The new catholicism had taken the place of the Renaissance; the opposition of the Catholic revival to art was greater than that of the Reformation.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §16 says: "The circle of Filippo Neri met in Rome in Michelangelo's later years. The Congregation of the Oratory received formal papal approval in 1575, after the artist's death. Pater is writing about its early associates."

## See also

Divine ideal; Frozen orthodoxy; Neo-catholic; Revenant; Revival of classical antiquity; Unveiled human form.

[234] Vatican Museums, *The Last Judgement*; the decision is dated 21 January 1564.

## Nuncio

*the papal nuncio*; *the nuncio*

Attested: *nuncio* (WIN §11, twice). A nuncio, from the Italian *nunzio* and the Latin *nuntius*, a messenger, is an ambassador of the pope to a foreign court. Pater uses the word in his account of Winckelmann's conversion. "In 1751, the papal nuncio, Archinto, was one of the visitors at Nöthenitz. He suggested Rome as the fitting stage for Winckelmann's accomplishments, and held out the hope of a place in the pope's library" (WIN §11). The nuncio was Alberico Archinto (1698–1758), nuncio to Poland from 1746 to 1754, whose king, Augustus III, was also Elector of Saxony and kept his court at Dresden; he was made a cardinal in 1756; the Saxon court was Roman Catholic, though the country was Protestant, and "the way to favour at Dresden was through Roman ecclesiastics" (WIN §11). Pater does not soften what followed: "Winckelmann accepted the bribe, and visited the nuncio at Dresden" (WIN §11), and in July 1754 he joined the Roman Church. The nuncio stands at the essay's moral crisis: the offer of Rome in exchange for a profession of faith, which the next paragraph judges by the measure of the higher life (WIN §12; see Higher life). Beside him stands Cardinal Domenico Passionei (1682–1761), a collector and scholar who became Librarian of the Vatican, ready "to play the part of Mæcenas" (WIN §11; see Mæcenas).

### See also

Higher life; Mæcenas.

## Pageant

*pageants*

Attested: *pageants* (LEO §15). In late medieval English a pageant was both a scene of a mystery play and the wheeled stage it was played on, from the Medieval Latin *pagina*; then any show, procession or spectacle. Pater uses the word once, in his account of Milan under Ludovico Sforza: "It was a life of brilliant sins and exquisite amusements: Leonardo became a celebrated designer of pageants" (LEO §15). Leonardo's court festivals included the *Festa del Paradiso* (Feast of Paradise) of January 1490, written by the court poet Bernardo Bellincioni for the marriage of the young Duke Gian Galeazzo Sforza, Ludovico's nephew, with a Paradise of the seven planets devised by Leonardo.[235] Pater's sentence sets the pageants beside the "brilliant sins and exquisite amusements" without blame: the colon makes them part of the life of the city. The next clause says that it suited the quality of his genius, "composed, in almost equal parts, of curiosity and the

[235] Bernardo Bellincioni, *Rime* (Milan, 1493), the *Festa del Paradiso*.

desire of beauty, to take things as they came" (LEO §15; see Curiosity). The pageants can be read as the court's version of the impossible feats of his youth: transient wonders, made for an evening and then gone.

## See also

Curiosity; Love of the impossible.

## Papal sovereignty

*papal sovereignty*

Attested: *papal sovereignty* (MIC §16). The pope's rule, both spiritual and temporal: in the Renaissance the popes were princes of the States of the Church as well as heads of Christendom. Pater uses the phrase in the sixteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, among the causes Michelangelo might have taken up when the Church's beliefs were still "in a fluid state": "He might have been for spiritualising the papal sovereignty, like Savonarola; or for adjusting the dreams of Plato and Homer with the words of Christ, like Pico of Mirandola" (MIC §16; see Spiritualise; Artistic reconciliation). To spiritualise the papal sovereignty was Savonarola's programme: a papacy stripped of its worldliness and made again a spiritual power. The Dominican preached against the corruption of Rome under Alexander VI, was excommunicated in 1497, and was hanged and burned in the Piazza della Signoria in May 1498. Michelangelo had heard him preach in his youth, and the essay calls him "a reformer with Savonarola" (MIC §8). Pater's next sentence closes the possibility: such adjustments were "no longer possible" (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy).

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Frozen orthodoxy; Spiritualise.

## Paradox

*Pico's nine hundred theses, against all common opinion · The Renaissance paradoxes*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A paradox is a statement against received opinion, which seems absurd and may yet be true.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Rome Pico offered to defend "nine hundred bold paradoxes, drawn from the most opposite sources" (PIC §8; see Knight-errant of philosophy).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §8 says that "The 900 Conclusions appeared in 1486 ahead of a proposed public disputation in Rome", that

"Innocent VIII's commission investigated thirteen theses", and that "the disputation never took place".

**A place to read.** PIC §8.

## Meaning

The Greek *paradoxos* is "beyond opinion", *para doxan*, contrary to what is commonly believed. Cicero's *Paradoxa Stoicorum* gave the classic examples: Stoic sayings, such as that only the wise man is free, which are "marvellous and contrary to the opinion of all".[236] In Pater's sentence the word does not mean a self-contradiction or a logical puzzle: a paradox is a bold opinion offered for defence.

## Use in the book

Pater calls all nine hundred of Pico's theses "paradoxes", and the word does the work of the romance around it, in the sentence quoted above (PIC §8; see Knight-errant of philosophy). "Bold" and "most opposite" give the theses their character. They were bold because they went against common opinion, and they came from the most opposite sources because Pico meant to show those sources agreeing. The paradox of the reconciler can be read in this: to make all the philosophers agree, Pico had to contradict what all of them were commonly thought to say. The court of Rome suspected heresy in some of them. It "was led to suspect the orthodoxy of some of these propositions", and the reading of the book was forbidden (PIC §8; see Orthodoxy; Pontifical court).

Pico himself used the word more narrowly, and in two senses, in the headings of the Conclusions. Some of his conclusions were paradoxical because they reconciled thinkers who seemed most to disagree; others because they brought "new doctrines" into philosophy. The first kind is the essay's subject, the reconciling of the philosophers (PIC §8; see Reconciliation; Many-sided intellectual culture). The second is the knight's boldness. Pater's single word holds both.

The word comes nowhere else in the book, but the book has paradoxes of its own in Cicero's sense. "Failure is to form habits" (C73 §6), softened in the later text to "In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits" (CON §5; see Relative), is a sentence against all common opinion, offered for defence. Pater's account of Pico can be read as sympathetic to the paradox-maker for that reason.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**PIC §8** In Rome Pico offered to defend nine hundred paradoxes against all comers.

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[236] Cicero, *Paradoxa Stoicorum* (46 BC), preface 4: "admirabilia contraque opinionem omnium".

## Pater's sources

The Conclusions of 1486 name two of their sets "paradoxical". Seventeen conclusions according to Pico's own opinion "reconcile the sayings first of Aristotle and Plato, then of other learned men who seem most to disagree" (*dicta primum Aristotelis et Platonis, deinde aliorum doctorum conciliantes, qui maxime discordare videntur*); seventy-one, also his own, "bring new doctrines into philosophy" (*nova in philosophia dogmata inducentes*).[237] The whole work was printed in Rome by Eucharius Silber on 7 December 1486 (see Knight-errant of philosophy).

## In this edition

The note at PIC §8 says that "The 900 Conclusions appeared in 1486 ahead of a proposed public disputation in Rome", that "Innocent VIII's commission investigated thirteen theses, and the disputation never took place", and that "Alexander VI absolved Pico in 1493".

## See also

Knight-errant of philosophy; Many-sided intellectual culture; Orthodoxy; Pontifical court; Reconciliation; Relative.

# Philosophical tournament

*philosophical tournament*

Attested: *philosophical tournament* (PIC §9); *tournament* (FRE §11). A contest of arguments, pictured as a knightly joust. "The oration which Pico composed for the opening of this philosophical tournament still remains; its subject is the dignity of human nature, the greatness of man" (PIC §9; see Dignity of human nature). The figure continues the "knight-errant of philosophy" of the paragraph before, who offered to defend his paradoxes "against all comers" (PIC §8; see Knight-errant of philosophy). The tournament was announced for Rome after the feast of the Epiphany in 1487, and never held.[238] The book's other tournament is a real one: in the story of Amis and Amile, "Amis takes the place of Amile in a tournament for life or death" (FRE §11; see Traditional friendship). The two can be read against each other. In the medieval tale the tournament is fought, and friendship is proved by it; in the Renaissance one only the opening speech survives, and the speech has outlived the theses it was meant to introduce.

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[237] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 1486), the headings of the seventeen and of the seventy-one paradoxical conclusions according to his own opinion.

[238] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 1486), the announcement at the end.

## See also

Dignity of human nature; Knight-errant of philosophy; Traditional friendship.

### Physiognomy

*physiognomy*

Attested: *physiognomy* (BEL §18). Physiognomy is the face as an expression of character, and the art of reading character from the face, from the Greek *physiognōmonia*, judging of nature. Pater uses it of an age: "But the poetry of the Pleiad is true not only to the physiognomy of its age, but also to its country, ce pays du Vendomois, the names and scenery of which so often recur in it:—the great Loire, with its long spaces of white sand; the little river Loir; the heathy, upland country, with its scattered pools of water and waste roadsides, and retired manors, with their crazy old feudal defences half fallen into decay" (BEL §18; see Domesticity). The note at BEL §18 says that the Vendômois "is the country around Vendôme on the Loir, distinct from the larger Loire". The age has a face, as a person has, and the poetry is true to it as a portrait is true; the essay has drawn that face over five paragraphs, its courtly refinement, its pedantry, its love of music, its trifling with death (BEL §§13–17). Physiognomy was a fashionable science in the eighteenth century, and Lavater, who made it so, appears in the Winckelmann essay reading Winckelmann's countenance (WIN §10). The phrase can be read as Pater's figure for his own method: an age, like a man, is known by its expression.

## See also

Domesticity; Pleiad; Style.

### Platonic academy

*Cosimo's circle at Careggi, and the bust with its lamp · The Renaissance*
*Platonic academy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Platonic academy is the name given to the circle of scholars around Marsilio Ficino in Medici Florence, who read and discussed Plato.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To increase this knowledge, Cosmo had founded the Platonic academy, with periodical discussions at the Villa Careggi" (PIC §6).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §6 says that "The phrase has long been used for the network around Ficino and his Medici patrons", and that "The

formality of the group and its resemblance to an organized school are matters of historical debate".

**A place to read.** PIC §6.

## Meaning

Plato taught in the grove of the hero Academus outside Athens, and his school took the name of the place, the Academy. Every later "academy" descends from it. In fifteenth-century Florence the word was used, loosely, of Ficino's teaching and of the friends who gathered around it. Ficino himself, in a letter to Cosimo of 1462, speaks of devoting himself to the "Academy" Cosimo had provided for him and his circle on the estate at Careggi, and Cosimo gave him a house there in 1463.[239] The phrase "Platonic academy", for an institution with members and meetings, became fixed in the histories of later centuries.

## Use in the book

Pater's sentence makes the academy the instrument of a purpose. Ficino's translation of Plato had been undertaken at the wish of Cosimo de' Medici, the banker who ruled Florence from 1434 until his death in 1464, "in furtherance of his desire to resuscitate the knowledge of Plato among his fellow-citizens" (PIC §6). Cosimo founded the academy, in the sentence quoted above, "To increase this knowledge" (PIC §6). The academy stands in the paragraph between two causes, one from the city's character, Florence's "affinity for the mystic and dreamy philosophy of Plato" (PIC §6; see Mystic), and one from history: "The fall of Constantinople in 1453, and the council in 1438 for the reconciliation of the Greek and Latin Churches, had brought to Florence many a needy Greek scholar" (PIC §6; see Reconciliation).

The scene that follows gives the academy its tone: in Ficino's study a lamp burned before the bust of Plato as before a saint, and the finished translation opens "the door of the mystical temple" (PIC §6; see Mystical temple). The academy in Pater's picture can be read as half school and half church: a place of discussion, and a cult of Plato with its relic and its lamp. Into it walks the young Pico, beautiful as the archangel Raphael, on the day the work is finished (PIC §7; see Co-operation of the stars). The essay makes the academy the threshold of its hero's story.

The word returns twice: once as the name of a gallery, the Academy at Venice (GIO §16), and once for another academy. A few of Michelangelo's sonnets "circulated widely in manuscript, and became almost within Michelangelo's own lifetime a subject of academical discourses" (MIC §9). The Florentine Academy, founded under Duke Cosimo I in the next century, heard the Florentine humanist and historian Benedetto Varchi

[239] Christopher S. Celenza, "Marsilio Ficino", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, section 1, on Ficino's letter of September 1462 and Cosimo's gift of 1463.

lecture on a sonnet of Michelangelo's in 1547.[240] Where Ficino's circle had been private, the academy of the sixteenth century was a public institution of the duchy, and it could take a Platonic sonnet of Michelangelo's as its text.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the one other paragraph on academic discussion, in the order of the book.

**PIC §6** Cosimo founded the Platonic academy, with periodical discussions at the Villa Careggi; a lamp burned before the bust of Plato in Ficino's study.

**MIC §9** A few of Michelangelo's sonnets became almost within his lifetime a subject of academical discourses.

## Later readings

The academy Pater describes is the one the nineteenth century believed in. The historian James Hankins argued in "The Myth of the Platonic Academy of Florence" (1991) that there was no formal academy at all: Ficino's "academy" was a school and a circle of friends, and the institution with members and meetings was a creation of later historians.[241] Pater's "periodical discussions at the Villa Careggi" belong to the older picture.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §6 says that "The phrase has long been used for the network around Ficino and his Medici patrons", and that "The formality of the group and its resemblance to an organized school are matters of historical debate". A further note dates the council: it "opened at Ferrara in 1438 and moved to Florence in 1439".

## See also

Co-operation of the stars; Mystic; Mystical temple; Reconciliation.

# Political indifferentism

*political indifferentism*

Attested: *political indifferentism* (LEO §34). "Indifferentism" was a word of the theologians of Pater's century, for the doctrine that one religion is as good as another, and Pope Gregory XVI had condemned it by name in

[240] Benedetto Varchi, *Due lezzioni* (Florence, 1549/1550), the first lecture, on the sonnet "Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto", given at the Accademia Fiorentina in March 1547 (1546 in the Florentine reckoning).

[241] James Hankins, "The Myth of the Platonic Academy of Florence", *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (1991), 429–475.

1832.[242] Pater carries it into politics. At Rome in 1514 the hesitation that had made Leonardo "like one under a spell" was upon him "with double force", and "No one had ever carried political indifferentism further; it had always been his philosophy to 'fly before the storm'; he is for the Sforzas, or against them, as the tide of their fortune turns" (LEO §34). The essay has shown him changing masters before: he served Ludovico Sforza, and then Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI, as his "chief engineer" (LEO §32). The indifference was not safe: "in the political society of Rome, he came to be suspected of secret French sympathies. It paralysed him to find himself among enemies; and he turned wholly to France, which had long courted him" (LEO §34). The word can be read beside the "high indifference" of the essay's second paragraph (LEO §2; see High indifference), where his "intolerance of the common forms of things" made the world suspect him of unbelief. In both, Leonardo's detachment is mistaken for a side.

## See also

High indifference.

## Pontifical court

*the pontifical court*

Attested: *the pontifical court* (PIC §8). The papal curia, the Pope's court and government at Rome. "But the pontifical court was led to suspect the orthodoxy of some of these propositions, and even the reading of the book which contained them was forbidden by the Pope" (PIC §8; see Orthodoxy). The Pope was Innocent VIII. The edition's note at PIC §8 gives the course of events: "Innocent VIII's commission investigated thirteen theses, and the disputation never took place", and "Alexander VI absolved Pico in 1493" (see Brief). "Was led to suspect" puts the court in the passive: it was led, by others or by the theses themselves, and Pater does not say who led it. The court that forbade the book is the same that, six years later under another Pope, absolved its author. The word "pontifical" comes from the Roman *pontifex*, a priest of the old religion, and the Popes took the title of the chief of those priests, *pontifex maximus*: the court that judged Pico's reconciliation of paganism and Christianity can be read as bearing a pagan name.

## See also

Brief; Orthodoxy; Paradox.

[242] Gregory XVI, encyclical *Mirari vos* (1832), section 13.

## Projected reflex

*projected reflex*

Attested: *projected reflex* (GIO §18). A reflex, from the Latin *reflexus*, bent back, is a reflected image, the light a surface throws back; "projected" is thrown forward, as a lantern throws a picture on a screen. Pater uses the phrase in his account of what Giorgione became in men's minds: he "thus becomes a sort of impersonation of Venice itself, its projected reflex or ideal" (GIO §18; see Impersonation). The image is optical, and its direction is the reverse of the essay's other use of the verb. In the second paragraph the painter projects: drawing is "the design projected from that peculiar pictorial temperament" (GIO §2; see Drawing). In the eighteenth the city projects, and the painter is the image it throws. The phrase can be read as the final turn of the essay's argument about authorship. The man who projected designs becomes himself a design projected by Venice, and the Giorgionesque is the light of the city returned to it from his name.

### See also

Drawing; Giorgionesque; Impersonation.

## Rattle

*rattles*

Attested: *rattles* (FRE §12). The rattle or clapper that medieval lepers sounded, to warn the healthy of their approach and to ask for alms; here it brings alms. Amis, a leper, is carried by his servants to Amile's house, "and they began to sound their rattles before the court of Amile's house, as lepers are accustomed to do" (FRE §12; see Leprosy). The rattle announces an outcast, and Amile's charity answers it: he sends meat, bread and wine in his own cup, and the cup brings the friends together (FRE §12; see Inward similitude). The note at FRE §12 says that the rattles "announce the strangers' arrival and are legible to the household as a sign of illness", and that "the rattle marks an outsider, while the matched cups reveal a friend".

### See also

Inward similitude; Leprosy.

## Rehabilitation of human nature

*Body, senses, heart and intelligence restored to their rights · The Renaissance*

*rehabilitation of human nature*; *rehabilitated*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To rehabilitate is to restore a person to a rank or rights once lost; the rehabilitation of human nature is the restoring of man's whole nature, body and mind, to honour.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The theory of man's dignity "helped man onward to that reassertion of himself, that rehabilitation of human nature, the body, the senses, the heart, the intelligence, which the Renaissance fulfils" (PIC §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PIC §10.

## Meaning

Medieval Latin *rehabilitare* was a lawyer's word: to restore to a former capacity, as when a condemned man's sentence is annulled and his rights given back. The most famous rehabilitation was a trial: in 1456 the court that reviewed Joan of Arc's condemnation annulled it. In the nineteenth century the word passed into the language of the French reformers who followed Saint-Simon, who called for the "rehabilitation of the flesh" against the Christian contempt of the body; Heine, whose *Gods in Exile* Pater quotes at the start of the Pico essay, made it the "rehabilitation of matter" in his history of religion and philosophy in Germany (1834), and said that the Saint-Simonians had understood and wanted something of the kind.[243]

## Use in the book

The phrase completes Pater's account of the use of Pico's theory. The proclamation of man's dignity was a counterpoise to "the increasing tendency of medieval religion to depreciate man's nature" (PIC §10; see Dignity of human nature). It helped man onward to the rehabilitation of "the body, the senses, the heart, the intelligence" (PIC §10). The list is the point. Human nature is not the soul alone; it is four things, and the body comes first. What the middle age had condemned in man is restored, not merely forgiven: rehabilitation gives back rights.

The word comes three times in the book, and each time something condemned is restored. In the first paragraph "the older gods had rehabilitated themselves, and men's allegiance was divided" (PIC §1): the gods of Greece, once taken for demons (see Religion of darkness), regain their place in men's imagination by their own beauty. Then human nature is rehabilitated (PIC §10). And criticism "has cleared away much of the gossip which Vasari accumulated, has touched the legend of Lippo and Lucrezia, and rehabilitated the character of Andrea del Castagno" (BOT §2): a painter's name, blackened by legend, restored by research. The three

[243] Heinrich Heine, *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland* (1834), book 2, on the "Rehabilitation der Materie".

can be read as one movement in three spheres: religion, anthropology, criticism. Pater's book takes part in the third. Its essays restore Botticelli, an Abelard read for his songs, a Pico whose work has passed away.

The Renaissance "fulfils" the rehabilitation, Pater says, and the verb can be read as looking back to the first essay. There the medieval Renaissance already had "its care for physical beauty, its worship of the body" (FRE §4; see Worship of the body), and the Preface counts "the care for physical beauty, the worship of the body" among its motives (PRE §6). The rehabilitation of human nature is the book's name for what those motives sought. The Saint-Simonian slogan can be read behind it, softened from a programme into a history.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "rehabilitation" or the verb occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §1** The older gods had rehabilitated themselves, and men's allegiance was divided.

**PIC §10** The theory of man's dignity helped man onward to the rehabilitation of human nature, the body, the senses, the heart, the intelligence.

**BOT §2** Criticism has rehabilitated the character of Andrea del Castagno.

## See also

Dignity of human nature; Natural right; Religion of darkness; Renaissance; Worship of the body.

# Renaissance

*A movement of the human spirit wider than its period · The Renaissance Renaissance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Renaissance is French for rebirth. Historians of the mid-nineteenth century made it the name of the period in which Europe recovered classical antiquity, above all in fifteenth-century Italy.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater gives the word "a much wider scope than was intended by those who originally used it" (PRE §6). It names "a many-sided but yet united movement", marked by "the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake" (FRE §1). It begins in France at the end of the twelfth century, centres on fifteenth-century Italy, ends in the French poetry of the sixteenth century, and has its "last fruit" in Winckelmann (PRE §§6–7, 9; FRE §1; BEL §1). Late in the Winckelmann

essay there is "a sense in which it may be said that the Renaissance was an uninterrupted effort of the middle age, that it was ever taking place" (WIN §47).

**In this edition.** Renaissance is one of the Key Words; the Introduction tells how the book's title changed between 1873 and 1877.

**A place to read.** FRE §1, Pater's definition, read with PRE §6.

## Meaning

The French *renaissance*, from *renaître*, to be born again, had long been used of a revival of letters or the arts. The French historian Jules Michelet gave the name to a period when he called the seventh volume of his *History of France* (1855) *Renaissance*, and the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt fixed it in *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860), where the period is the birth of the modern individual.[244] By 1873 the word was the usual English name for the age and its art. Pater uses it for both, and for something more, a recurring movement of the spirit.

## Use in the book

The Preface sets out the scope at once. The first essay will explain the word, "giving it a much wider scope than was intended by those who originally used it" for the revival of classical antiquity (PRE §6; see Revival of classical antiquity), and the same excitement produced "what, as Christian art, is often falsely opposed to the Renaissance" (PRE §6; see Christian art). "This outbreak of the human spirit may be traced far into the middle age itself", its motives already clear in the care for physical beauty and the worship of the body (PRE §6; see Physical beauty; Worship of the body). The book is therefore shaped like the movement: an "earlier Renaissance within the middle age itself" in France (PRE §6), the centre "in Italy, in the fifteenth century" (PRE §7), and an end again in France, "an aftermath, a wonderful later growth" (PRE §6; see Aftermath). Winckelmann, coming in the eighteenth century, "is the last fruit of the Renaissance" (PRE §9).

The first essay gives the definition. "For us the Renaissance is the name of a many-sided but yet united movement, in which the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake, the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life, make themselves felt, urging those who experience this desire to search out first one and then another means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment, and directing them not only to the discovery of old and forgotten sources of this enjoyment, but to the divination of fresh sources thereof—new experiences, new subjects of poetry, new forms of art" (FRE §1; see For their own sake). The definition is by desire, not by date or by the classics. At the end of the twelfth century

[244] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France*, vol. 7, *Renaissance* (Paris, 1855); Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien* (Basel, 1860).

and the beginning of the thirteenth, "in pointed architecture, in the doctrines of romantic love, in the poetry of Provence, the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness", and after the "dark age" in which these sources had disappeared, "this outbreak is rightly called a Renaissance, a revival" (FRE §1; see Medieval Renaissance). Peter Abelard, the twelfth-century philosopher, prefigures it, the movement "in which, in various ways, the human mind wins for itself a new kingdom of feeling and sensation and thought, not opposed to but only beyond and independent of the spiritual system then actually realised" (FRE §6).

The essays give it several faces, under Pater's own warning that "because we have a single name for it we may sometimes fancy that there was more unity in the thing itself than there really was" (BEL §8). It has the sweetness "which it derives from the classical world", and also the "curious strength" of the true middle age (FRE §19; see Strength; Sweetness). In fifteenth-century Italy it "was, in many things, great rather by what it designed than by what it achieved", its proper share being "the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea" (PIC §3). The movement of the fifteenth century was "partly also the coming of what is called the 'modern spirit'" (LEO §17; see Modern spirit). In France it was "the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself" (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer).

The Winckelmann essay closes the circle. Winckelmann, coming upon Greek sculpture, "reproduces for us the earlier sentiment of the Renaissance. On a sudden the imagination feels itself free" (WIN §9). And Pater states the view the book has argued: "Pagan and Christian art are sometimes harshly opposed, and the Renaissance is represented as a fashion which set in at a definite period. That is the superficial view: the deeper view is that which preserves the identity of European culture. The two are really continuous; and there is a sense in which it may be said that the Renaissance was an uninterrupted effort of the middle age, that it was ever taking place" (WIN §47). The book's title names a period; its argument makes the Renaissance a disposition of the mind that can recur.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The word is given a wider scope than its first use for the revival of antiquity; the outbreak is traced into the middle age; it ends in France in an aftermath.

**PRE §7** The interest of the Renaissance lies mainly in fifteenth-century Italy.

**PRE §8** The unity of a common spirit gives unity to all the products of the Renaissance.

**PRE §9** Winckelmann is the last fruit of the Renaissance.

**FRE §1** The Renaissance began in France as well as ended there; Pater's definition of a many-sided but united movement; the twelfth-century outbreak is rightly called a Renaissance.

**FRE §2** The theory of a Renaissance within the middle age heals the supposed rupture between the middle age and the Renaissance.

**FRE §4** Michelet sees in Abelard's school the Renaissance and the revolution to come.

**FRE §6** Abelard prefigures the Renaissance, in which the mind wins a new kingdom beyond the spiritual system of its age.

**FRE §19** The Renaissance has the sweetness of the classical world and the strength of the true middle age.

**FRE §32** The medieval Renaissance had its antinomianism, its revolt against the moral and religious ideas of its time.

**FRE §33** In the House Beautiful of the Renaissance there are no fixed parties and no exclusions.

**PIC §1** No account of the Renaissance is complete without the attempt to reconcile Christianity with the religion of ancient Greece.

**PIC §3** The Renaissance of the fifteenth century was great rather by what it designed than by what it achieved.

**PIC §10** Pico's proclamation of man's dignity helped man onward to the rehabilitation of human nature which the Renaissance fulfils.

**PIC §15** The mythology of the Italian Renaissance grew from the mixture of sacred and profane.

**BOT §10** Botticelli has the freshness of the earlier Renaissance, perhaps the most interesting period in the history of the mind.

**MIC §16** The "new catholicism" had taken the place of the Renaissance in Michelangelo's old age.

**LEO §17** The movement of the fifteenth century was partly the Renaissance, partly the coming of the modern spirit.

**BEL §1** The Renaissance in France was less a new taste from Italy than the subtlest phase of the middle age itself.

**BEL §3** Ronsard, seeking to refine and save the character of French literature, accepted the influx of Renaissance taste.

**BEL §8** A single name may make us fancy more unity in the Renaissance than there was; if anywhere it became conscious, it is in Du Bellay's little book.

**BEL §12** Rome was full of the curiosities of the Renaissance when Du Bellay lived there.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann before Greek sculpture reproduces the earlier sentiment of the Renaissance.

**WIN §12** Rome had reconciled itself to the Renaissance, while Protestant Germany was cut off from the tradition of beauty.

**WIN §14** In the ages of the Renaissance, as for Winckelmann, Hellenism was most effectively conceived by those who came to it out of gloom.

**WIN §22** Raphael's fresco groups the classical and Renaissance poets around Apollo.

**WIN §47** The deeper view: the Renaissance was an uninterrupted effort of the middle age, ever taking place.

## In this edition

Renaissance is one of the edition's Key Words: "The word means rebirth. Pater applies it to revivals and new freedoms beyond the familiar period of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy. The opening study in France and the closing study of Winckelmann show how far the term reaches in this book." The Introduction records that the book appeared in 1873 as *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* and took its present title, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, in 1877; the change drops the word "History". The note at PRE §6 says that Pater's periodization "drives the sequence of the book", from medieval French writing through fifteenth-century Italy to Du Bellay and Winckelmann.

## See also

Aftermath; Christian art; For their own sake; Medieval Renaissance; Modern spirit; Physical beauty; Revival of classical antiquity; Saint Martin's summer; Strength; Sweetness; The ages are all equal; Worship of the body.

# Renaissance in France

*Where the book's Renaissance begins and ends: a late phase of the middle age, gilded by Italy · The Renaissance*

*Renaissance in France*; *the Renaissance ends in France*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Renaissance as it took place in France, in the sixteenth century above all.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Renaissance in France is less an import from Italy than the last and finest phase of the middle age (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §1 says that the Loire châteaux "bring Italian-derived ornament and planning into a French tradition of towers, roofs and emphatic vertical lines".

**A place to read.** FRE §1, with BEL §1.

## Meaning

The phrase is plain geography, and Pater gives it an argument. The Renaissance in France can be described as an import, the taste of Italy brought north by the French kings after their wars in Italy; Pater makes it an outgrowth: the native middle age, in its last phase, taking on an Italian surface.

## Use in the book

France frames the book. The first essay opens with it: "The history of the Renaissance ends in France, and carries us away from Italy to the beautiful cities of the country of the Loire. But it was in France also, in a very important sense, that the Renaissance had begun" (FRE §1). The Renaissance began in France as "a Renaissance within the limits of the middle age itself" (FRE §1), in the poetry of Provence and its "magnificent after-growth" in Italy and France (FRE §2; see Medieval Renaissance; After-growth), and it ends there, as the Preface says, "in French poetry, in a phase of which the writings of Joachim du Bellay are in many ways the most perfect illustration" (PRE §6; see Aftermath). The book's order of essays can be read as following the movement out of France into Italy and back.

The Du Bellay essay says what the return was. "In this way there was produced, chiefly in France, a new and peculiar phase of taste" (BEL §1; see Gothic manner), Italian ornament on northern outlines, and the paragraph draws its conclusion: the Renaissance in France is "not so much the introduction of a wholly new taste ready-made from Italy" as "the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself" (BEL §1; see Renaissance; Saint Martin's summer). The sentence can be read as the book's thesis about the Renaissance applied to a single country. There is a sense, the Winckelmann essay says, in which "it may be said that the Renaissance was an uninterrupted effort of the middle age" (WIN §47; see Renaissance), and in France the effort is seen at its end, in its last and finest phase.

The third paragraph measures the depth of the Italian influence and finds it slight. Renaissance taste left the buildings, the language, the art and the poetry of France "at bottom, what they were, old French Gothic still", gilding their surfaces with a foreign aspect (BEL §3; see Gothic manner; Pure effect). The eighth paragraph finds the moment of self-knowledge: if anywhere the Renaissance became conscious, it is in Du Bellay's little book (BEL §8; see Illustrate).

The Leonardo essay shows the other side, Italy coming to France. "France was about to become an Italy more Italian than Italy itself" (LEO

§35), and Francis the First, attracted by "the finesse of Leonardo's work", offered the old painter the little Château de Clou, just outside Amboise; the letter heading, *A Monsieur Lyonard, peinteur du Roy pour Amboyse*, "opens a prospect, one of the most interesting in the history of art, where, in a peculiarly blent atmosphere, Italian art dies away as a French exotic" (LEO §35; see Exotic; Finesse). Set beside the Du Bellay essay, the two pictures can be read as meeting: Italian art dying away in France as an exotic, and French art taking from Italy only a surface. The blend that results has "qualities and a charm of its own" (BEL §1), and the Du Bellay essay is its portrait.

Pater's account can be read as answering the view of Michelet, whose volume on the Renaissance in his *Histoire de France* (1855) made the period "the discovery of the world, the discovery of man" and dated it from the French expeditions into Italy.[245] Pater keeps the discovery but moves its source: what France found in Italy was a manner, and what it already had was the middle age, ripe and ready to take one.

## Places to read

The chief paragraphs in which Pater places the beginning and end of the Renaissance in France and speaks of Italian art and taste there, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The Renaissance ends in France, in French poetry, and put forth there an aftermath, a wonderful later growth.

**FRE §1** The history of the Renaissance ends in France; but in France also it had begun.

**FRE §2** The poetry of Provence had a magnificent after-growth in Italy and France.

**LEO §35** France was about to become an Italy more Italian than Italy, and Italian art dies away there as a French exotic.

**BEL §1** The Renaissance in France is not a new taste from Italy but the finest phase of the middle age itself.

**BEL §3** Renaissance taste left the art and poetry of France old French Gothic still, gilding their surfaces.

**BEL §8** If anywhere the Renaissance became conscious, it is in Du Bellay's little book.

**BEL §18** The west wind spares not this new Italy in France.

## See also

After-growth; Aftermath; Exotic; Finesse; Gothic manner; Illustrate; Medieval Renaissance; Pure effect; Renaissance; Saint Martin's summer.

[245] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France au seizième siècle: Renaissance* (Paris, 1855), introduction: *la découverte du monde, la découverte de l'homme*.

*One half of the twofold movement of the fifteenth century, represented by Raphael as Leonardo represents the other · The Renaissance*
*return to antiquity*; *antiquity*, *antiquities*; *Antiquités*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A going back to the art, letters and temper of Greece and Rome.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The movement of the fifteenth century "comprehended a return to antiquity, and a return to nature. Raphael represents the return to antiquity, and Leonardo the return to nature" (LEO §17).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §17, with BEL §22.

## Meaning

"Antiquity" is the Latin *antiquitas*, the quality of being old, and so the old world itself, Greece and Rome before the fall of the Empire; its remains are "antiquities", the statues, coins and inscriptions of the collectors. Where the Preface and the first essay speak of a "revival of classical antiquity" (see Revival of classical antiquity), the Leonardo essay speaks of a return. A revival brings the past back to life in the present; a return goes back to it.

Historians before Pater had divided the Renaissance in a similar way. Michelet, whose name Pater gives in the Leonardo essay's second paragraph, had claimed for the age, above all earlier ones, "the discovery of the world, the discovery of man" in 1855, and Burckhardt had given one part of *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860) to "The Revival of Antiquity" and the next to "The Discovery of the World and of Man".[246] Pater's pair can be set beside Burckhardt's: the return to antiquity is his revival, the return to nature his discovery of the world.

## Use in the book

Pater introduces the pair just before his account of Leonardo's science. The movement of the fifteenth century was twofold, partly the Renaissance and partly the coming of the "modern spirit" (LEO §17; see Modern spirit). "It comprehended a return to antiquity, and a return to nature. Raphael represents the return to antiquity, and Leonardo the return to nature" (LEO §17). The essay goes on with Leonardo and leaves Raphael at the edge of the picture, born in 1483 (LEO §14), painting the Last Supper after him "with all the mystical unreality of the school of Perugino" (LEO §27; see Conventional associations), watching Leonardo and Michelangelo at work

[246] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France*, vol. 7, *Renaissance* (1855), introduction, §1; Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860), parts 3 and 4.

on their battle cartoons (LEO §33). Leonardo's women "are not of the Christian family, or of Raphael's" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias).

Pater's Raphael of antiquity is in the Winckelmann essay. In the Vatican, beside the fresco of the Church's tradition, is the Parnassus, where Raphael commemorates "the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22; see Classical tradition; Orthodoxy); and the young Raphael could "infuse that Heiterkeit, that pagan blitheness, into religious works" (WIN §46; see Blitheness). Pater's return to antiquity, then, is less a copying of antique forms than a recovery of their temper, and the Winckelmann essay names it in the words of Madame de Staël: before Winckelmann there had been learned men who could be consulted like books, but "no one had, if I may say so, made himself a pagan for the purpose of penetrating antiquity" (WIN §14). Winckelmann's own nature was "like a relic of classical antiquity, laid open by accident to our alien, modern atmosphere" (WIN §42).

The book's other returns are those of the gods. In the medieval Renaissance of the French essay, love become "a strange rival religion" was "the return of that ancient Venus, not dead, but only hidden for a time in the caves of the Venusberg" (FRE §32; see Venusberg), and La Gioconda's face carries "the return of the Pagan world" among the thoughts and experience of the ages (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). The Du Bellay essay adds a modern feeling: the feeling for antiquity, "the sentiment of ruins", is even more often called modern than the feeling for landscape (BEL §22; see Sentiment of ruins). The sentence can be read as joining the two returns of the Leonardo essay, to nature (here landscape) and to antiquity, and as making both modern sentiments rather than programmes. Du Bellay among the ruins of Rome does not restore antiquity; the duration of things is "a grief to him", and the ruins console him "by the thought that all must one day end" (BEL §22; see La grandeur du rien). The book's return to antiquity can be read as moving between these poles: the workshop of the fifteenth century, where "fragments of antiquity, then but lately discovered", lay beside the reliquaries (LEO §5; see Reliquary), and the modern mind for which antiquity is a feeling, a ruin, and a temper to be recovered.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "antiquity", "antiquities" or *Antiquités* occurs, with the return of Venus at FRE §32, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The word Renaissance first denoted the revival of classical antiquity in the fifteenth century.

**FRE §1** The revival of classical antiquity was but one element of a complex movement.

**FRE §32** Love become a strange rival religion was the return of the ancient Venus, hidden for a time in the Venusberg.

**PIC §3** The question of the reconciliation of the religion of antiquity with the religion of Christ.

**LEO §5** Fragments of antiquity, then lately discovered, lay in Verrocchio's workshop.

**LEO §17** The movement comprehended a return to antiquity, which Raphael represents, and a return to nature.

**LEO §31** Beside La Gioconda the women of antiquity would be troubled; her face holds the return of the Pagan world.

**BEL §21** Sainte-Beuve found intimate poetry in the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets*.

**BEL §22** The feeling for antiquity, the sentiment of ruins, is a modern one, and Du Bellay has it.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann visits the collection of antiquities at Dresden.

**WIN §14** Madame de Staël: no one before Winckelmann made himself a pagan to penetrate antiquity.

**WIN §20** Cardinal Albani's collection of antiquities.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann's nature was like a relic of classical antiquity.

## See also

Beauty wrought from within; Blitheness; Classical tradition; Conventional associations; Daughters of Herodias; La grandeur du rien; Modern spirit; Orthodoxy; Reliquary; Return to nature; Revival of classical antiquity; Sentiment of ruins; Venusberg.

# Revenant

*Michelangelo in old age as a ghost out of another age, lingering in a world too coarse for him · The Renaissance*

*revenant*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, "one who comes back": a ghost, a spirit returned from the dead.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "So he lingers on; a revenant, as the French say, a ghost out of another age" (MIC §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §16.

## Meaning

*Revenant* is the present participle of the French *revenir*, to come back, used as a noun for one who returns from the dead. English borrowed it in

the early nineteenth century. Its sense is narrower than "ghost": a revenant is someone known in life who reappears, a figure out of place in time.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the last sentence of the sixteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which ends the account of his old age: "So he lingers on; a revenant, as the French say, a ghost out of another age, in a world too coarse to touch his faint sensibilities very closely" (MIC §16).

"As the French say" marks the word as foreign and exact: English "ghost" would say less. Michelangelo is not dead; he "lingers on". But he belongs to an age that is, and he moves through the world of the Catholic revival as one returned from it. The paragraph has prepared the image. The world "had changed around him"; the Church "had passed beyond him, and he was a stranger to it" (MIC §16; see New catholicism; Frozen orthodoxy). The revenant is the stranger seen from the other side: not the man left behind, but the past haunting the present.

The sentence's second half gives the ghost a world and a dream (MIC §16; see Primitive form; Theatricality). The world is "too coarse to touch his faint sensibilities", a world "theatrical" three times over, in life, art and devotion. The dream is of beginnings: "the morning of the world's history", "the primitive form of man". The old man in a worn-out society dreams of the youth of the world, and the contrast is the sentence's meaning: the revenant's faintness is the faintness of one whose senses are tuned to something earlier and finer than what surrounds him.

The next paragraph says why the essay has dwelt on him "as thus lingering beyond his time in a world not his own": he must be approached "not through his followers, but through his predecessors" (MIC §17; see Tradition of sentiment). The revenant is a figure of method. To understand him one must look back to the age he comes from, not forward to the age he haunts.

The book has other figures of survival. The Pico essay retells Heine's tale of the pagan gods in exile, living on in disguise among the Christians (PIC §2; see Ambrosia); the Leonardo essay sees the Mona Lisa as one who "has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave" (LEO §31). Pater's history is full of revenants: forms and feelings that outlive their age and return in another. Michelangelo, on this reading, is the greatest of them, the Florentine fifteenth century walking in the Rome of the Council of Trent.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**MIC §16** Michelangelo lingers on, a revenant, a ghost out of another age, in a world too coarse for his faint sensibilities.

## See also

Ambrosia; Exile; Frozen orthodoxy; New catholicism; Primitive form; Theatricality; Tradition of sentiment.

# Revival of classical antiquity

*The narrower Renaissance, one result among many · The Renaissance revival of classical antiquity*; *revival*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The revival of classical antiquity is the recovery of Greek and Roman letters, thought and art in fifteenth-century Italy, the first and narrowest sense of the word Renaissance.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater names it to set it in its place: the word Renaissance was first used "to denote that revival of classical antiquity in the fifteenth century which was only one of many results of a general excitement and enlightening of the human mind" (PRE §6). In the twelfth century "the taste for sweetness" becomes "the seed of the classical revival" (FRE §1). What belongs to the fifteenth-century revival is "but the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea" (PIC §3).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at PRE §6 on the book's periods is given under Renaissance.

**A place to read.** FRE §1.

## Meaning

A revival is a coming back to life. The phrase "revival of learning" or "revival of letters" was the older English name for what came to be called the Renaissance, and meant chiefly the recovery of ancient texts and of the Greek language by the scholars of fifteenth-century Italy. Pater uses "revival" for this, for the outbreak of the twelfth century ("a Renaissance, a revival", FRE §1), and once for a different return, the "Catholic revival" of Michelangelo's old age (MIC §16).

## Use in the book

Pater takes the phrase up twice in order to set it inside a larger movement. In the Preface the revival of classical antiquity is "only one of many results of a general excitement and enlightening of the human mind", and Christian art is another (PRE §6; see Renaissance; Christian art; Enlightenment). In the first essay: "The word Renaissance, indeed, is now generally used to denote not merely the revival of classical antiquity which took place in the fifteenth century, and to which the word was first applied, but a whole complex movement, of which that revival of classical antiquity was but one element or symptom" (FRE §1; see Renaissance). The classics

are a symptom; the cause is a desire, the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake.

The same paragraph reverses the usual order of cause and effect: the taste for sweetness the middle age had acquired becomes "the seed of the classical revival" (FRE §1; see Sweetness). And after the long "dark age", "this outbreak is rightly called a Renaissance, a revival" (FRE §1).

The Pico essay measures the fifteenth-century revival. Much that it aimed at was done better in the eighteenth century or in Pater's own, "and what really belongs to the revival of the fifteenth century is but the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea" (PIC §3; see Initiatory idea). Its example is the reconciliation of the ancient religion with Christ's. In the Michelangelo essay the word is turned the other way: the opposition of "the Catholic revival" to art was greater than that of the Reformation (MIC §16; see New catholicism). Revivals, in Pater, are not always of antiquity, and not always friendly to art.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "revival" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The word Renaissance first denoted the revival of classical antiquity, only one result of a general enlightening of the mind.

**FRE §1** The revival of classical antiquity is one element or symptom of a complex movement; the taste for sweetness is the seed of the classical revival; the twelfth-century outbreak is rightly called a revival.

**PIC §3** What belongs to the revival of the fifteenth century is the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea.

**MIC §16** The Catholic revival opposed art more than the Reformation did.

## See also

Christian art; Enlightenment; Initiatory idea; New catholicism; Renaissance; Sweetness.

# Romantic school

*Romantic school*; *Romanticists*

Attested: *Romantic school* (FRE §32); *Romanticists* (BEL §13). The French Romantic movement of the 1820s and 1830s, led by Victor Hugo, which turned from classical rule to the middle ages, to passion and to local colour. The antinomian element in the middle age, for the most part ignored by the writers who treated the middle age as the "Age of Faith", is what has made "the delineation of the middle age by the writers of the Romantic school in France, by Victor Hugo for instance in Notre-Dame de

Paris, so suggestive and exciting" (FRE §32; see Age of Faith; Antinomianism). Hugo's novel (1831) set its story of passion and outcasts round the cathedral of Paris. The Romanticists return in the Du Bellay essay: "in their eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery", they "went back to the works of the middle age" and took up the Pleiad with the rest (BEL §13). Pater's own account of the medieval Renaissance can be read as taking up their picture of it.

## See also

Age of Faith; Antinomianism; Romantic love.

# Romantic spirit

*The modern temper of adventure, variety and subjectivity, whose marriage with Hellenism Goethe illustrates and Winckelmann prepared · The Renaissance*

*the Romantic spirit*; *romantic*; *Romanticists*; *the romantic temper*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The temper of the modern world, as against the classical: inward, restless, drawn to the strange and the remote.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Goethe illustrates "a union of the Romantic spirit, in its adventure, its variety, its profound subjectivity of soul, with Hellenism" (WIN §48).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §48 says that Pater uses the episode of Euphorion "to imagine a modern art born from both Romantic restlessness and Greek form".

**A place to read.** BEL §13; WIN §§33, 45, 48.

## Meaning

*Romantic* first meant "like a romance", the medieval tale of chivalry and wonder written in the Romance tongues, and in the eighteenth century it came to describe wild landscape and the feelings it stirs. Around 1800 the German critics of Jena made it the name of an age and a principle. For them the romantic was the art of the Christian and modern world, as the classical was the art of antiquity, and G. W. F. Hegel's lectures on aesthetics gave the pair a history: the classical art form, in which spirit and sensuous shape are in balance, is followed by the romantic, in which inwardness outruns every shape (see Romantic arts). Goethe, who had worked on both sides, kept the distinction and judged it. "I call the classical the healthy, and the romantic the sick," he told Eckermann in 1829.[247] Pater uses the word in all these senses, and he gives it a capital for the French school and its writers (FRE

[247] Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens* (Leipzig, 1836), 2 April 1829: *Das Klassische nenne ich das Gesunde, und das Romantische das Kranke*.

§32; BEL §13) and for the spirit that Goethe married to Hellenism (WIN §48).

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the forty-eighth paragraph, where Pater sets Winckelmann in his place. "The aim of a right criticism is to place Winckelmann in an intellectual perspective, of which Goethe is the foreground. For, after all, he is infinitely less than Goethe; and it is chiefly because at certain points he comes in contact with Goethe, that criticism entertains consideration of him" (WIN §48). Winckelmann's relation to modern culture is "a peculiar one". "He is not of the modern world; nor is he wholly of the eighteenth century, although so much of his outer life is characteristic of it. But that note of revolt against the eighteenth century, which we detect in Goethe, was struck by Winckelmann" (WIN §48). Then Goethe's achievement: "a union of the Romantic spirit, in its adventure, its variety, its profound subjectivity of soul, with Hellenism, in its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty", the marriage of Faust and Helena (WIN §48; see Marriage of Faust and Helena). The two lists answer each other term for term: adventure against transparency, variety against rationality, subjectivity of soul against the desire of beauty.

Winckelmann's part in the marriage is a paradox the paragraph does not hide. He struck the note of revolt against the eighteenth century, which can be read as the first note of the Romantic spirit, but what he gave Goethe was the other partner, "the Hellenic element", "in its true essence" (WIN §48; see Marriage of Faust and Helena). The revolt was romantic; its object was Greek. The paragraph can be read as describing the Romantic movement itself, which in Germany began, with Winckelmann, as a turn toward Greece.

The rest of the book gives the Romantic spirit its features. The romantic arts of painting, music and poetry translate every delicacy of "a consciousness brooding with delight over itself" (WIN §33; see Brooding spirit of life; Romantic arts), and sculpture is set against them as "not self-analytical" (WIN §33; see Self-analytical). The French Romanticists of the nineteenth century, "in their eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery", went back to the middle age and took up the Pleiad with it (BEL §13; see Pleiad). Winckelmann's own longing is "not a vague, romantic longing" (WIN §10; see Intellectual integrity). Even Greece has the romantic in it: Theocritus strikes "a note of romantic sadness" (WIN §44; see Blithe poise), and within the Greek ideal there is "a sort of preparation for the romantic temper", which Winckelmann failed to see (WIN §45; see Hellenic ideal).

The phrase can be read as the essay's answer to the opposition it inherited. For the Jena critics classical and romantic were two ages; for Goethe in his late judgement, health and sickness. Pater makes them two

elements that can be married, and finds each in the other's country: the romantic in the mournful mysteries of Greek religion (WIN §45; see Mournful mysteries), the classical in "the clear ring of a central motive" in a poem of Browning's (WIN §36; see Creative act). The book as a whole can be read in the same way: its subject, the Renaissance, is an earlier marriage of the two (see Romantic love).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "romantic" or "Romanticists" occurs, except those on romantic love (FRE §1), on a romantic circumstance in a tale (FRE §10) and on the romantic landscape of Castelfranco (GIO §17), in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** The writers of the Romantic school in France have delineated the middle age.

**BEL §13** The Romanticists, in their eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery, went back to the middle age and accepted the Pleiad.

**WIN §10** Winckelmann's longing is not a vague, romantic longing: he knows what he wills.

**WIN §14** Winckelmann's romantic, fervent friendships with young men prove that temperament was inwoven in his Hellenism.

**WIN §33** Painting, music and poetry are the special arts of the romantic and modern ages.

**WIN §44** Theocritus strikes often a note of romantic sadness.

**WIN §45** A preparation for the romantic temper is noticeable within the limits of the Greek ideal itself.

**WIN §48** Goethe illustrates a union of the Romantic spirit with Hellenism.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater returned to the subject in the essay "Romanticism" (1876), reprinted as the "Postscript" to *Appreciations* (1889), where the romantic is not an age but a temper present in every age. "The essential elements, then, of the romantic spirit are curiosity and the love of beauty", he writes there, and the romantic character in art is the addition of strangeness to beauty (see Strangeness).[248]

## See also

Blithe poise; Brooding spirit of life; Creative act; Hellenic ideal; Hellenism; Intellectual integrity; Marriage of Faust and Helena; Mournful

[248] Walter Pater, "Romanticism", *Macmillan's Magazine* (November 1876); as "Postscript" in *Appreciations* (London, 1889); Library Edition (London, 1910), pp. 246–248.

mysteries; Pleiad; Romantic arts; Romantic love; Romantic school; Self-analytical; Spiritual sickness; Strangeness.

## Scholastic philosophy

*scholastic philosophy*; *scholastic*

Attested: *scholastic philosophy* (FRE §4); *scholastic* (PIC §§11, 13; BEL §11). The philosophy of the medieval schools, which joined Aristotle's logic to Christian theology and argued by question and objection; Abelard was among its founders. At the foot of the early Gothic tower that the next generation raised by Abelard's school on the Mountain of Saint Geneviève, the historian Jules Michelet sees "a terrible assembly; not the hearers of Abelard alone, fifty bishops, twenty cardinals, two popes, the whole body of scholastic philosophy" (FRE §4; see Liberty of the intellect). Elsewhere the adjective is mostly dismissive. Pico's lost love-songs would have relieved "the scholastic prolixity of his Latin writings" (PIC §11; see Vulgar tongue); Pico, whose writings try to reconcile Christianity with paganism, "in spite of the scholastic character of those writings, is really interesting" (PIC §13); Du Bellay pleads "for no merely scholastic interest, but for freedom, impulse, reality" (BEL §11). The note at FRE §4 calls Michelet's scene "an imaginative prospect of later movements and institutions".

### See also

Liberty of the intellect; Vulgar tongue.

## Secular spirit

*a secular, a rebellious spirit*

Attested: *a secular, a rebellious spirit* (FRE §2). The Latin *saecularis*, of the age, came to mean of the world as against the church. What the French writers have in view when they speak of the medieval Renaissance is chiefly profane poetry, not "so much the ecclesiastical art of the middle age, its sculpture and painting—work certainly done in a great measure for pleasure's sake, in which even a secular, a rebellious spirit often betrays itself" (FRE §2; see Profane poetry). The parenthesis gives the church's art its due. Even work made for cathedrals was made in great measure for pleasure, and a worldly spirit "betrays itself" in it, as if against the makers' will. The pairing of "secular" with "rebellious" anticipates the antinomian paragraph at the end of the essay (FRE §32; see Antinomianism), and can be read as Pater's way of finding the medieval Renaissance inside the church as well as outside it.

## See also

Antinomianism; Medieval Renaissance; Profane poetry.

# Sentiment of ruins

*The feeling for antiquity as ruin, which Pater calls modern and finds already in Du Bellay at Rome · The Renaissance*
*the sentiment of ruins*; *ruins*; *ruined*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The feeling that ruins awake: melancholy, wonder and thought at the remains of the past.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The feeling for antiquity, "the sentiment of ruins", is still more often called modern than the feeling for landscape, and Du Bellay has it (BEL §22).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §22 says that Pater "takes Du Bellay's feeling for Roman ruins as something stronger than regret for lost grandeur".

**A place to read.** BEL §22.

## Meaning

A sentiment is a feeling with thought in it, more settled than an emotion; the sentiment of ruins is the feeling that the remains of the past awake, and the thought they give rise to, of time, loss and the end of things. The feeling had its vogue in the eighteenth century, when ruins became a favourite subject of painting, and Pater uses the phrase as the name of a modern feeling.

## Use in the book

The twenty-second paragraph opens with a claim about history and turns it on Du Bellay. "The feeling for landscape is often described as a modern one; still more so is that for antiquity, the sentiment of ruins" (BEL §22). Pater reports the common view, "often described", and then corrects its chronology in one short sentence: "Du Bellay has this sentiment" (BEL §22). The poet of the sixteenth century has a feeling that is commonly called modern. The essay has already reported Sainte-Beuve's ranking of the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets* as *poésie intime*, "that intensely modern sort of poetry" (BEL §21; see Poésie intime), and the sentiment of ruins is a second modernity in the same poet.

What the sentiment is in him the next sentence says, and it is not what the reader expects. The ruins do not make Du Bellay mourn the greatness of Rome; the "duration of the hard, sharp outlines of things" grieves him, and he is consoled "by the thought that all must one day end" (BEL §22; see La grandeur du rien). The sentiment of ruins is in him a longing for the end,

and it goes so far as the thought that the great whole "ought itself sometimes to perish and pass away" (BEL §22; see Le grand tout). It is the sentiment of a weary man, "passing his wearisome days among the ruins of ancient Rome" (BEL §22; see La grandeur du rien), and it can be read as the sentiment of ruins turned inside out: not grief that things pass, but grief that they last.

Pater does not mention it, but the French critic Denis Diderot, in his account of the paintings of ruins by the French painter Hubert Robert at the Salon of 1767, had given the modern sentiment its classic form: the ideas that ruins wake in him are great; everything is annihilated, everything perishes, everything passes; only the world remains, only time endures.[249] Diderot's ruins teach that the world outlasts its works; Du Bellay's, as Pater reads them, make him think that the great whole itself ought sometimes to perish. The comparison shows how far Pater's Du Bellay goes beyond the sentiment that the eighteenth century made fashionable, and why Pater calls his mysticism "far-off" (BEL §22; see Mysticism).

The book's other ruins are smaller and nearer to romance. *Aucassin and Nicolette* keeps the eye on pleasant objects, "a garden, a ruined tower" (FRE §23; see Eye of the fancy), and Nicolette, escaping, comes to "a chink of the tower, which was old and ruined" and hears Aucassin weeping within (FRE §28). There the ruin is a setting for a story of love; in Rome it is the world's history and the poet's weariness at once. The Du Bellay essay can be read as giving the book's one account of ruins as a sentiment, and as making that sentiment modern by finding it, already complete, in the sixteenth century.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ruins" or "ruined" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §23** The story of Aucassin and Nicolette keeps the eye on pleasant objects, a garden, a ruined tower.

**FRE §28** Nicolette, at a chink of the old and ruined tower, hears Aucassin weeping.

**BEL §22** Du Bellay has the sentiment of ruins, and among the ruins of Rome is consoled by the thought that all must end.

## See also

Eye of the fancy; La grandeur du rien; Le grand tout; Mysticism; Poésie intime; Return to antiquity.

[249] Denis Diderot, *Salon de 1767*, on Hubert Robert: *Les idées que les ruines réveillent en moi sont grandes. Tout s'anéantit, tout périt, tout passe. Il n'y a que le monde qui reste. Il n'y a que le temps qui dure.*

*The reconciliation of all comely things in the Renaissance · The Renaissance*
*unity of culture*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Unity of culture is a state of mind and society in which the various goods of human life, religion and art, thought and pleasure, are held together rather than set against each other.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Within the Renaissance "there are no fixed parties, no exclusions: all breathes of that unity of culture in which 'whatsoever things are comely' are reconciled, for the elevation and adorning of our spirits" (FRE §33). The Preface had already said that the unity of the Renaissance spirit "gives unity to all the various products of the Renaissance" (PRE §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §33, the first half of the paragraph.

## Meaning

"Culture", the Latin *cultura*, tilling, came in the nineteenth century to mean the cultivation of the mind and the body of works it produces; Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) had made it a watchword for the pursuit of "perfection".[250] "Unity" asks that its many parts be one. Pater's phrase claims that the Renaissance at its best held its parts together, and that the opposition of sacred and profane, faith and pleasure, is not essential to them.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the turn of the first essay, after the antinomian paragraph. "But in the House Beautiful the saints too have their place" (FRE §33; see House Beautiful), and the student of the Renaissance has an advantage over the student of the Reformation or the French Revolution: he "is not beset at every turn by the inflexibilities and antagonisms of some well-recognised controversy, with rigidly defined opposites, exhausting the intelligence and limiting one's sympathies" (FRE §33). Pater grants the opposition of "the professional defenders of a mere system" to "that more sincere and generous play of the forces of human mind and character" (FRE §33; see Free play). "But the incompatibility with one another of souls really 'fair' is not essential; and within the enchanted region of the Renaissance, one needs not be for ever on one's guard. Here there are no fixed parties, no exclusions: all breathes of that unity of culture in which 'whatsoever things

[250] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), preface: culture is "a pursuit of our total perfection".

are comely' are reconciled, for the elevation and adorning of our spirits" (FRE §33; see Whatsoever things are comely).

Pater then makes the unity a measure. "Just in proportion as those who took part in the Renaissance become centrally representative of it, just so much the more is this condition realised in them" (FRE §33). The wicked popes and loveless tyrants "lend themselves easily to disputations", but "the painter of the Last Supper, with his kindred, lives in a land where controversy has no breathing-place. They refuse to be classified" (FRE §33). Leonardo is the type of the unity, and the essay ends with Amis and Amile, a saints' life about an earthly friendship, "in which the harmony of human interests is still entire" (FRE §33; see Traditional friendship).

The idea is the Preface's. In fifteenth-century Italy the interests of the intellectual world combine in one type of general culture, and artists, philosophers and men of action breathe a common air (PRE §8; see General culture; Common air): in a spirit of general elevation "all alike communicate" (PRE §8; see Enlightenment), and "the unity of this spirit gives unity to all the various products of the Renaissance" (PRE §8; see Alliance with mind). The Du Bellay essay supplies the check: "because we have a single name for it we may sometimes fancy that there was more unity in the thing itself than there really was" (BEL §8). The book can be read as holding both: the unity of culture is not a fact of history, which was full of fixed parties, but a condition realised in the representative spirits, Leonardo, Pico, Winckelmann. The Winckelmann essay names the same ideal for the individual, "the eternal problem of culture—balance, unity with one's self, consummate Greek modelling" (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraphs where Pater speaks of the unity of the Renaissance and of culture.

**PRE §8** The unity of the spirit of general elevation and enlightenment gives unity to all the products of the Renaissance.

**FRE §1** For us the Renaissance is a many-sided but yet united movement.

**FRE §33** Within the Renaissance there are no fixed parties, no exclusions; all breathes of that unity of culture in which whatsoever things are comely are reconciled.

**BEL §8** Because we have a single name for it, we may fancy that there was more unity in the Renaissance than there really was.

**WIN §10** Goethe names the secret of Winckelmann's influence: wholeness, unity with one's self, intellectual integrity.

**WIN §42** The leading motive of Winckelmann's culture maintained the well-rounded unity of his life.

**WIN §44** The Hellenic ideal is one in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world.

**WIN §50** Winckelmann defines for Goethe the eternal problem of culture: balance, unity with one's self, Greek modelling.

## See also

Alliance with mind; Common air; Enlightenment; Free play; General culture; House Beautiful; Traditional friendship; Unity with one's self; Whatsoever things are comely.

# Venetian school

*The painters of Venice from the Bellini to Titian, whose instinctive grasp of the limits of painting Giorgione sums up · The Renaissance*

*Venetian school*; *school of Venice*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The painters of Venice and its mainland from the later fifteenth century, Bellini, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Titian, joined by a common tradition of colour and light.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "By no school of painters have the necessary limitations of the art of painting been so unerringly though instinctively apprehended, and the essence of what is pictorial in a picture so justly conceived, as by the school of Venice" (GIO §11).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §12 says that Pater "has the Byzantine inheritance of the Venetian lagoon in view".

**A place to read.** GIO §§11–13.

## Meaning

A school, in the history of painting, is a group of painters bound by place, training and manner: the masters, their pupils, and the tradition that passes between them. The Venetian school is the painting of Venice from Giovanni Bellini, the master of Titian and, by tradition, of Giorgione, to Titian and beyond, known above all for its colour, the *colorito* that Florentine criticism set against its own *disegno* (see Colouring).

## Use in the book

The eleventh paragraph is the hinge of the Giorgione essay, the point at which the theory of the first ten paragraphs is given a history. "By no school of painters have the necessary limitations of the art of painting been so unerringly though instinctively apprehended, and the essence of what is pictorial in a picture so justly conceived, as by the school of Venice; and the train of thought suggested in what has been now said is, perhaps, a not unfitting introduction to a few pages about Giorgione, who, though much

has been taken by recent criticism from what was reputed to be his work, yet, more entirely than any other painter, sums up, in what we know of himself and his art, the spirit of the Venetian school" (GIO §11). "Unerringly though instinctively" gives the school its distinction. The Venetians did not argue their way to the limits of painting, as the essay has; they knew them by instinct, and the essay's theory is offered as an account of what they did.

The twelfth paragraph tells their history, from the Byzantine walls of Murano and Saint Mark's (GIO §12; see Byzantine decoration) to painters who seem never to have been tempted to forget that painting "must be before all things decorative" (GIO §12; see Decorative). Then, "at last", "comes Giorgione", with "somewhat more than 'a spark of the divine fire' to his share" (GIO §12; see Genre; Il fuoco Giorgionesco). The thirteenth sets him beside Titian. "Born so near to Titian, though a little before him, that these two companion pupils of the aged Giovanni Bellini may almost be called contemporaries, Giorgione stands to Titian in something like the relationship of Sordello to Dante, in Browning's poem" (GIO §13). "Titian, when he leaves Bellini, becomes, in turn, the pupil of Giorgione" (GIO §13); he works for more than sixty years after Giorgione's death, while Giorgione, with his so limited product, "yet expresses, in elementary motive and principle, that spirit—itself the final acquisition of all the long endeavours of Venetian art—which Titian spreads over his whole life's activity" (GIO §13).

The contrast can be read as the essay's account of what a school is. A school's spirit can be spread over a long career or concentrated in a short one, and Pater values the concentration: Giorgione is to Titian as a principle to its applications. The school's setting completes the account. "On that background of the silence of Venice, so impressive to the modern visitor, the world of Italian music was then forming" (GIO §21). A silent city of water, where music was coming into being, is the place where painting came nearest to music, and the Venetian school's landscapes, with their "modulated unison of landscape and persons" (GIO §24; see Modulated unison), are the school's last word in the essay.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Venetian school" or "school of Venice" occurs, with GIO §13, in the order of the book.

**GIO §6** The masters of the Venetian school are little burdened by the hard material conditions of their landscape.

**GIO §11** No school apprehended the limitations of painting so unerringly as the school of Venice, and Giorgione sums up its spirit.

**GIO §12** Always subordinate to architectural effect, the work of the Venetian school never escaped from its beginnings.

**GIO §13** Giorgione expresses in elementary motive and principle the spirit of Venetian art that Titian spreads over his life.

**GIO §24** The modulated unison of landscape and persons is characteristic of the Venetian school.

## In this edition

The note at GIO §13 says that Browning's *Sordello* (1840) "is about a medieval poet", and that the comparison "imagines the shorter or less accessible career as a concentrated anticipation of what the better-known figure unfolds at length".

## See also

Abstracted elements; Byzantine decoration; Colouring; Decorative; Genre; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; Modulated unison; Partial alienation; Pictorial quality.

# Votary

*votary*

Attested: *votary* (WIN §5). A votary is one bound by a vow, from the Latin *votum*: in the first place a monk or nun, then anyone devoted to a cause, a pursuit or a god. Pater uses the word once, of Winckelmann at the University of Halle, where, Pater says, he went at twenty-one to study theology and became instead the translator of Herodotus (WIN §5). His teachers saw nothing in him; one of them called him *Homo vagus et inconstans*, and the edition's note gives the English, "A wandering and inconstant man" (WIN §5). "When professional education confers nothing but irritation on a Schiller, no one ought to be surprised; for Schiller, and such as he, are primarily spiritual adventurers. But that Winckelmann, the votary of the gravest of intellectual traditions, should get nothing but an attempt at suppression from the professional guardians of learning, is what may well surprise us" (WIN §5). The word is set against two others. Against "adventurers": the adventurer wanders, the votary keeps his vow, and the teacher spoke "of the future pilgrim to Rome, unaware on which side his irony was whetted" (WIN §5); Winckelmann's wandering can be read as itself his vow. Against "professional": the professional guardians of learning are paid to keep a tradition, the votary is vowed to it. The edition's note says that Pater makes the same traits that the teacher disparaged "part of an intellectual vocation". The religious word prepares the essay's later and harder question, whether a man vowed to Greece could make a profession of the Roman faith (WIN §11; see Profession).

## See also

Classical tradition; Higher life; Profession.

# Abstract colour

*Colour with no subject at all, the first rung of Pater's ladder from Japanese fan-painting to Titian · The Renaissance*
*abstract colour*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Colour by itself, before it represents anything: colour as pattern and pleasure.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "And this primary and essential condition fulfilled, we may trace the coming of poetry into painting, by fine gradations upwards; from Japanese fan-painting, for instance, where we get, first, only abstract colour; then, just a little interfused sense of the poetry of flowers; then, sometimes, perfect flower-painting; and so, onwards, until in Titian we have, as his poetry in the Ariadne, so actually a touch of true childlike humour in the diminutive, quaint figure with its silk gown, which ascends the temple stairs, in his picture of the Presentation of the Virgin, at Venice" (GIO §2).

**In this edition.** The notes at GIO §2 identify the two Titians: the *Bacchus and Ariadne*, made for Alfonso d'Este, and the *Presentation of the Virgin*, whose small figure on the steps "is the Virgin as a child".

**A place to read.** GIO §2.

## Meaning

"Abstract" is the Latin *abstractus*, drawn away (see Abstract). Abstract colour is colour drawn away from things: not the red of a cloak or the blue of a sky but red and blue as such, filling a surface. The phrase names the lowest term of a scale, the point at which a picture is nothing but its means. Pater uses it once, and the whole weight of the Giorgione essay's argument rests on the fact that this lowest term is not nothing. Abstract colour already delights the sense, and it is the ground from which all the poetry of painting rises.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the end of Pater's long paragraph on the "true pictorial quality" (GIO §2). The paragraph has argued that a picture's first appeal is to the eye: the essential pictorial qualities "must first of all delight the sense" (GIO §2; see Colouring), and a great picture, in its primary aspect, is no more than a play of light (GIO §2; see Abstract painting). Then comes the ladder. With "this primary and essential condition fulfilled", one can trace "the coming of poetry into painting, by fine gradations upwards".

The first rung is Japanese fan-painting, "where we get, first, only abstract colour"; the next, "just a little interfused sense of the poetry of flowers"; then "perfect flower-painting"; and at the top Titian, with the poetry of the Ariadne and the "touch of true childlike humour" in the little Virgin of the Presentation (GIO §2).

The order of the scale is the argument. Poetry comes "into" painting from below, as an addition to colour, and never replaces it; each rung keeps the one beneath. The poetry of the Ariadne is still colour, and the humour of the small figure "with its silk gown" is a matter of scale and costume, of what the eye sees. The word "interfused" marks the way the next stage enters: a sense of the poetry of flowers is mixed into the colour, not laid over it (see Interfusion of beauty and terror). The ladder thus reverses the "popular criticism" with which the essay began, which treats colour, sound and rhythm as "certain technical qualities" added to "one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought" (GIO §1; see Art-casuistry). For Pater the colour comes first and the thought is what it can be made to carry.

Japanese fan-painting looks like a pointed choice. In the 1860s and 1870s Japanese prints, fans and screens were the newest taste of the London and Paris studios, and the decorative flatness that the academies dismissed was what painters such as the American James McNeill Whistler took from them.[251] Pater sets the newest object of that taste at the bottom of a scale that ends in Titian, and the placing may be taken as a compliment to both: the fan is already art, and Titian is the fan's colour carried to its height. The same paragraph compares a great picture to "a space of such fallen light, caught as the colours are in an Eastern carpet, but refined upon" (GIO §2; see Colour), and the Venetian school's first rule is that painting "must be before all things decorative, a thing for the eye, a space of colour on the wall" (GIO §12; see Decorative). Abstract colour is that space at its simplest.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "abstract colour" occurs, with the paragraph on the Venetian space of colour, in the order of the book.

**GIO §2** From Japanese fan-painting, where we get only abstract colour, poetry comes into painting by fine gradations up to Titian.

**GIO §12** Painting must be before all things decorative, a space of colour on the wall.

## See also

Abstract; Abstract painting; Art-casuistry; Colour; Colouring; Decorative; Interfusion of beauty and terror; Sensuousness.

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[251] James McNeill Whistler, *Caprice in Purple and Gold: The Golden Screen* (1864), Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, shows a woman in Japanese dress looking at prints by the Japanese printmaker Utagawa Hiroshige before a gold painted screen.

*The beauty of pure outline in Leonardo's drawings, the part of them that belongs to art alone · The Renaissance*
*abstract grace*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Grace that belongs to line itself, drawn away from the thing the line describes.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This curious beauty is seen above all in his drawings, and in these chiefly in the abstract grace of the bounding lines" (LEO §22).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §22.

## Meaning

"Grace" comes from the Latin *gratia*, favour, thanks, charm; in the language of art it is the ease and charm that cannot be taught by rule. Vasari made it the mark of the art of his own century, which had found, beyond rule, order and measure, "a grace that exceeds measure".[252] "Abstract", from the Latin *abstrahere*, to draw away, is what has been separated from the particular case (see Abstract). An abstract grace is a grace drawn away from its occasion: the charm of a curve as a curve, whatever it bounds.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the twenty-second paragraph of the Leonardo essay, where Pater turns from Leonardo's life at Milan to his drawings: "Let us take some of these drawings, and pause over them awhile". "This curious beauty" looks back to the essay's account of his genius, in which curiosity and the desire of beauty, in union, generate "a type of subtle and curious grace" (LEO §16; see Desire of beauty; Subtle and curious grace). The drawings show that grace "above all", and in them it lives "chiefly" in the outline.

The paragraph then describes four drawings by their subjects and feelings: the heads of a mother and child, set side by side, with "much pathos" in the likeness of the young face to the worn one; a young man seated with his face in his hands, "as in sorrow"; a slave resting "in some brief interval of rest"; a small Madonna and Child startled by a griffin swooping on a wild beast near them (LEO §22; see Griffin). Then it sets all that aside: "But note in these, as that which especially belongs to art, the contour of the young man's hair, the poise of the slave's arm above his head, and the curves of the head of the child, following the little skull within, thin

[252] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (1568), preface to the third part.

and fine as some sea-shell worn by the wind" (LEO §22). The sorrow and the terror belong to the subject; the contour belongs to art. Abstract grace is what remains when the pathos has been noted and put aside.

"Bounding lines" are lines that enclose a form, and Pater's examples are all of that kind: the edge of hair, the curve of a raised arm, the outline of a child's head. Yet the last example draws the line back into the form it bounds. The curve follows "the little skull within", so that the abstract line is also the most exact account of the body's structure. On this reading the grace is abstract in being free of the subject's feeling, not in being free of nature. The comparison that closes the sentence, the sea-shell "worn by the wind", finds the same grace in a thing that nature has shaped without any subject at all.

The phrase can be set beside the Giorgione essay's doctrine that the sensuous qualities of a picture must first of all delight the sense, as in "the arabesque traced in the air by Tintoret's flying figures" (GIO §2; see Arabesque), and beside the abstract lines that remain in the dead face "in a great indifference" (MIC §19; see Abstract line). In each case a line is valued for itself. In the Leonardo essay it can be read as valued in the one place where Leonardo's curiosity does not trouble his beauty: the drawing, where the line can be at once exact and graceful.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once; "grace", which occurs in twenty-one paragraphs, is not listed.

**LEO §22** The curious beauty of Leonardo is seen above all in his drawings, and chiefly in the abstract grace of their bounding lines.

## Later readings

Pater's separation of what "especially belongs to art" from the feeling of the subject can be read beside the formalist criticism of the next generation, which Pater did not live to see. The English critic Clive Bell's "significant form" made the relations of lines and colours the one quality common to all works of visual art.[253]

## See also

Abstract; Abstract line; Arabesque; Desire of beauty; Griffin; Subtle and curious grace.

[253] Clive Bell, *Art* (1914), part I, chapter 1, "The Aesthetic Hypothesis".

*The lines of a face that remain when all that is slight and passing has gone: the dignity of the dead · The Renaissance*
*abstract line*; *abstract lines*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A line drawn off from the particular: in a face, the essential structure left when expression and accident are removed.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "After death, it is said, the traces of slighter and more superficial dispositions disappear; the lines become more simple and dignified; only the abstract lines remain, in a great indifference" (MIC §19).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §19, with BOT §7.

## Meaning

"Abstract", from the Latin *abstrahere*, to draw away, is what has been drawn off from the particular (see Abstract). An abstract line is thus a line without accidents: in a drawing, the bare contour; in a face, the shape of bone and brow that underlies the play of feeling. Pater uses the phrase for what remains when a face is no longer animated.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the fourteenth sentence of the nineteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, at the turn from the morbid northern art of death to the Florentine (see Danse Macabre). The Florentine masters, saved by their culture and their pity, must often, Pater supposes, have leaned over the dead (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction), and the next sentence tells what they saw: "After death, it is said, the traces of slighter and more superficial dispositions disappear; the lines become more simple and dignified; only the abstract lines remain, in a great indifference" (MIC §19).

The passage can be read as describing a natural sculpture. Death does to the face what the Greek sculptor did to the body, purging "all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit), and leaving only "what is structural and permanent". The "slighter and more superficial dispositions", the passing moods that lived in the face, vanish; the lines "become more simple and dignified". On this reading the Florentines learned from the dead the abstraction that the Greeks had reached by art. "In a great indifference" adds the cost: the dignity of the abstract lines is the dignity of something that no longer cares.

"It is said" is a hedge, and an important one. Pater does not claim the observation as his, nor as a fact of anatomy; it is what is said, a belief of those who watch by the dead, and the Florentines are imagined as acting on it. The paragraph is full of such imaginings: they "must often" have leaned

over the dead, they came "thus" to see death in its distinction, and "perhaps" they followed it one stage further (MIC §19).

The phrase occurs once more, and with the opposite value. Of Botticelli's Madonnas, "At first, contrasting them with those, you may have thought that there was something in them mean or abject even, for the abstract lines of the face have little nobleness, and the colour is wan" (BOT §7; see Abject). There the abstract lines are the structure of a living face, and they have little nobleness; the charm of Botticelli's Madonnas lies elsewhere, in their sentiment. Of Leonardo, Pater praises in the drawings "the abstract grace of the bounding lines" (LEO §22; see Abstract grace). The three uses can be read together: the abstract line is the bare structure of a figure, and it may be graceless in Botticelli, graceful in Leonardo, and dignified in the dead.

Read so, the phrase joins two of the book's preoccupations, abstraction in art and the meaning of death. The Medici tombs, which the next paragraph treats, are, on this reading, the work of a sculptor who had learned from the Florentines to see in the dead face the dignity of abstraction, and Pater's account of them speaks of "those too rigid, or too formless faces" (MIC §20; see Formlessness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "abstract lines" occurs, with the "abstract grace" of Leonardo's lines, in the order of the book.

**BOT §7** The abstract lines of the faces of Botticelli's Madonnas have little nobleness.

**MIC §19** After death, it is said, only the abstract lines remain, in a great indifference.

**LEO §22** Leonardo's curious beauty is seen above all in his drawings, and in these chiefly in the abstract grace of the bounding lines.

## See also

Abject; Abstract; Abstract grace; Allgemeinheit; Danse Macabre; Death in its distinction; Formlessness.

# Abstract painting

*Painting considered in its own means, line and colour, apart from story · The Renaissance*

*abstract painting*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Abstract painting, in Pater's sense, is painting considered in its own proper means, line and colour, abstracted from the story it tells.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli blends the charms of poetry with "the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting" (BOT §3; see Poetical painter).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that "A paraphrase of a subject therefore leaves something specific to its medium behind".

**A place to read.** BOT §3, with GIO §§1–2.

## Meaning

To abstract is to draw away, from the Latin *abstrahere*. Abstract painting, in 1873, did not mean painting without recognisable objects; that sense came forty years later, with the Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky's essay on the spiritual in art and the first pictures that dispensed with objects altogether.[254] Pater means painting drawn away from what it shares with poetry, and so reduced to what it has of its own: lines on a surface and colours laid beside one another. The phrase is close to the book's "abstractness" (see Abstractness), the separation of a quality from its adjuncts.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the sentence, quoted above, that defines Botticelli as "before all things a poetical painter" (BOT §3; see Poetical painter). The sentence is built as a balance. Each art has a charm and a medium; Botticelli takes one from each and blends them. "Abstract painting" names what is left of painting when poetry is taken out of it, and the sentence treats that remainder as an art in its own right, with its own charm (see Line and colour).

The Giorgione essay turns the remainder into a doctrine. Criticism is to note in a picture the true pictorial charm, which is neither poetical thought nor communicable skill (GIO §1; see Pictorial charm). And it goes further: "In its primary aspect, a great picture has no more definite message for us than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow for a few moments on the wall or floor: is itself, in truth, a space of such fallen light, caught as the colours are in an Eastern carpet, but refined upon, and dealt with more subtly and exquisitely than by nature itself" (GIO §2). Here abstract painting is no longer one half of Botticelli's blend; it is the "primary aspect" of every great picture.

The two passages can be read as a development. In the Botticelli essay the poetical and the abstract are equal partners, and the painter's distinction is to hold them together. In the Giorgione essay the abstract comes first and the poetical must be absorbed into it, as all art "aspires" toward music, where matter and form cannot be told apart (see Anders-streben; Matter and form). Botticelli, who is "before all things a poetical painter", belongs on the earlier side of that development, and the Giorgione essay can be read

[254] Wassily Kandinsky, *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (Munich, 1912).

as the correction of the Botticelli essay's balance in favour of the picture's own means.

The Giorgione sentences can be read as an anticipation of the critics who later defended art without subjects. Pater would not have followed them to the end. His abstract painting is always the medium of something, and his finest pages are about pictures whose story he could not leave alone.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the two paragraphs of the Giorgione essay on the picture's own charm, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli blends the charm of story and sentiment with the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting.

**GIO §1** Criticism must note in a picture the true pictorial charm, neither a mere poetical thought nor mere technical skill.

**GIO §2** In its primary aspect a great picture is a space of fallen light, caught as the colours are in an Eastern carpet.

## Later readings

When the English critic Clive Bell argued in 1914 that what moves us in a picture is "significant form", lines and colours combined in a particular way, he can be read as saying in his own terms something close to Pater's "space of such fallen light".[255]

## In this edition

The note at GIO §1 says that "Pater opens with a theory he rejects. Color, sound and rhythm are part of the work's meaning and pleasure. A paraphrase of a subject therefore leaves something specific to its medium behind."

## See also

Abstractness; Anders-streben; Colour; Line and colour; Matter and form; Pictorial charm; Poetical painter.

# Abstracted elements

*abstracted elements*; *abstracted*

Attested: *abstracted elements* (GIO §6); *abstracted* (WIN §45). The phrase belongs to Pater's account of how the Venetian painters used their country. "The Venetian landscape, on the other hand, has in its material conditions much which is hard, or harshly definite; but the masters of the Venetian school have shown themselves little burdened by them. Of its Alpine background they retain certain abstracted elements only, of cool

[255] Clive Bell, *Art* (London, 1914), part I, chapter 1.

colour and tranquillising line" (GIO §6). What they kept of the mountains is what can be drawn off from them, colour and line, and they use the landscape's actual details, "the brown windy turrets, the straw-coloured fields, the forest arabesques", only "as the notes of a music which duly accompanies the presence of their men and women" (GIO §6; see Arabesque). The landscape that results is "the spirit or essence only of a certain sort of landscape—a country of the pure reason or half-imaginative memory" (GIO §6; see Essence). The phrase can be read as giving in small the method of the whole essay: the matter is reduced until only what serves the form remains (see Matter and form). The adjective returns in the Winckelmann essay as a danger: in "Those abstracted gods" the "supreme and colourless abstraction" of the divine forms is "a premonition of the fleshless, consumptive refinements of the pale, medieval artists" (WIN §45; see Abstract). The Venetian abstraction keeps colour; the Greek one loses it.

## See also

Abstract; Arabesque; Essence; Gold thread; Matter and form.

## Adorante

*the adorante of the museum of Berlin*

Attested: *adorante* (WIN §40). Italian, "the one who adores", the worshipper; the name given to the bronze statue of a naked youth with lifted arms, known in German as the *Betender Knabe*, the Praying Boy. The note at WIN §40 says that Berlin catalogues it as a young man, "the so-called Praying Boy", that the museum "identifies the arms as modern additions", and that the pose from which Pater draws his account "is thus partly a later reconstruction". Pater makes the statue the sum of his account of Greek sculpture. After the directionless eyes, the bodies "as if suspended between growth and completion" and the riders of the Panathenaic frieze (WIN §40; see Interpenetration), he writes: "All these effects are united in a single instance—the adorante of the museum of Berlin, a youth who has gained the wrestler's prize, with hands lifted and open, in praise for the victory. Fresh, unperplexed, it is the image of man as he springs first from the sleep of nature, his white light taking no colour from any one-sided experience" (WIN §40). The statue is thus read twice: as an athlete giving thanks, and as man waking from nature (see Inspired sleep). It is also "characterless, so far as character involves subjection to the accidental influences of life" (WIN §40; see Accident). The bronze, cast about 300 BC, had been bought by Frederick the Great, king of Prussia, who set it before his library at Sanssouci; in the nineteenth century it passed to the royal museum at

Berlin.[256] That Pater's chosen instance owes its gesture to a restorer can be read as a small irony of the essay's subject, who saw Greece, as Pater says of Winckelmann, "through copies, imitations, and later Roman art itself" (WIN §20).

## See also

Accident; Character; Inspired sleep; Interpenetration.

## After-thought

*after-thoughts*

Attested: *after-thoughts* (LEO §26). An after-thought is a thought that comes after the act: a second idea, a correction, an addition. Pater uses the word of the technique of the Last Supper. Leonardo painted it "not in fresco, where all must be impromptu, but in oils, the new method which he had been one of the first to welcome, because it allowed of so many after-thoughts, so refined a working-out of perfection" (LEO §26; see Fresco). In true fresco the colour is laid into wet plaster, a patch at a time, and cannot be changed once the plaster has dried; a medium that dries slowly can be gone over again and again. The after-thoughts suit the Leonardo of the essay, with "his endless re-touchings" (LEO §20) and his waiting for the moment of invention, to which other moments are "but a preparation, or after-taste of it" (LEO §21; see Bien-être; Invention). The same choice ruined the picture: "It turned out that on a plastered wall no process could have been less durable. Within fifty years it had fallen into decay" (LEO §26). The note at LEO §26 reports the Cenacolo museum's description of the painting as executed "on dry wall preparation, a method that permitted changes over time and was vulnerable to deterioration", and says that "the phrase 'in oils' simplifies the technique".

## See also

Bien-être; Fresco; Invention.

## Altar-piece

*altar-piece*

Attested: *altar-piece* (GIO §17). An altar-piece is the painting set above and behind an altar, the image toward which the Mass is said. Pater uses the word of the picture still in Giorgione's home town. When the son of the condottiere Tuzio Costanzo died young, Giorgione adorned a chapel in his memory in the church of Castelfranco, "painting on this occasion, perhaps,

[256] Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung, Sk 2, the so-called *Betender Knabe* ("Praying Boy"), bought by Frederick II in 1747 and in the Berlin museum since 1830.

the altar-piece, foremost among his authentic works, still to be seen there, with the figure of the warrior-saint, Liberale" (GIO §17; see Condottiére). "Perhaps" is Pater's caution, and "foremost among his authentic works" places the altar-piece beside the Concert as the core of what criticism had left. The note at GIO §17 says that the saint's identity "has also been given as Nicasio or George", and that the painting was made for the Costanzo family, "whose arms appear on the pedestal". The essay's subject is the opposite of the altar-piece: Giorgione is "the inventor of genre", of easily movable pictures that serve no use of devotion (GIO §12; see Genre; Devotion). The altar-piece stays fixed in its chapel; the Giorgionesque picture can be carried away.

## See also

Condottiére; Devotion; Genre.

## Ambry

*ambries*

Attested: *ambries* (LEO §5). An ambry, or aumbry, is a cupboard or closed recess; in a church it is the wall-cupboard in which sacred vessels, books and holy oils are kept. The word came through the Old French *armarie* from the Latin *armarium*, a chest for tools or arms. Pater lists it among the things that Verrocchio designed, "not of pictures only, but of all things for sacred or household use, drinking-vessels, ambries, instruments of music, making them all fair to look upon, filling the common ways of life with the reflexion of some far-off brightness" (LEO §5). The word serves both halves of "sacred or household": an ambry may hold the oils of the sacrament or the linen of a house. Pater's Verrocchio was "carver, painter, and worker in metals, in one" (LEO §5), and the list can be read as the essay's picture of the earlier Florentine workshop, where no object was too humble to be made beautiful. Leonardo's later art keeps that love of "beautiful toys" (LEO §8; see Hieratic preciseness).

## See also

Chasing; Cope; Hieratic preciseness.

## Anders-streben

*The striving of each art toward the condition of another, and of all toward music · The Renaissance*

*Anders-streben*

## At a Glance

**The word.** German, "a striving toward the other": the tendency of an art to pass beyond its own limits toward another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Each art "may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art, by what German critics term an Anders-streben—a partial alienation from its own limitations, through which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces" (GIO §3).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §3 renders it "A striving toward something other" and says that "Pater uses the compound for the way an art strains toward the conditions of another while continuing to work through its own material".

**A place to read.** GIO §§3–4.

## Meaning

The German *anders* is "otherwise, different", and *Streben* is striving, effort, aspiration. *Anders-streben* is a striving to be other. Pater gives the word to "German critics" and does not name them, and his hyphen marks it as a compound he is presenting rather than a common word. He defines it at once: "a partial alienation from its own limitations". "Partial" matters. The arts do not exchange places or "supply the place of each other"; each remains itself and borrows from another a force it could not reach alone.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the essay's third paragraph, as a correction of its first two. Those paragraphs have insisted that "each art has thus its own specific order of impressions, and an untranslatable charm" (GIO §3; see Special limitation). The new paragraph turns: "yet it is noticeable that, in its special mode of handling its given material, each art may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art, by what German critics term an Anders-streben" (GIO §3). The argument has two halves, and Pater needs both. The arts are distinct, and so criticism must know their limits; the arts reach across their limits, and so criticism must know what they borrow.

The fourth paragraph gives the examples. "Some of the most delightful music seems to be always approaching to figure, to pictorial definition." Architecture "sometimes aims at fulfilling the conditions of a picture, as in the Arena chapel; or of sculpture, as in the flawless unity of Giotto's tower at Florence", and finds "a true poetry" in the twisted staircases of the châteaux of the Loire (GIO §4; see Theatricality). Sculpture "aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form towards colour, or its equivalent" (GIO §4; see Equivalent of colour; Pure form). Poetry finds guidance in the other arts: the analogy "between a Greek tragedy and a work of Greek sculpture, between a sonnet and a relief, of French poetry generally with the art of engraving", is "more than mere figures of speech" (GIO §4). Some of the

examples reach back into the book. The della Robbia essay had set sculpture the task of getting "not colour, but the equivalent of colour" (ROB §6; see Equivalent of colour), and had found that Michelangelo's incompleteness is his "equivalent for colour in sculpture" (ROB §10).

Then the paragraph turns the scattered strivings into one: "and all the arts in common aspiring towards the principle of music; music being the typical, or ideally consummate art, the object of the great Anders-streben of all art, of all that is artistic, or partakes of artistic qualities" (GIO §4; see Consummate art). The word that began as a name for many local borrowings becomes the name of one great direction. The next paragraph opens with the essay's most famous sentence, on "the condition of music" (GIO §5; see Condition of music). The *Anders-streben* is the motion; the condition of music is its goal.

The two halves of the argument can be read as Pater's answer to Lessing's *Laokoon* (GIO §2; see Art-casuistry), with its hard lines between the arts of space and the arts of time. Pater accepts that "a just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of æsthetic criticism" (GIO §3) and then shows the arts leaning over them. The phrase "partial alienation" holds the balance: an art never leaves its own material, but its best work is done at the edge of it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Anders-streben" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §3** Each art may pass into the condition of some other art by an Anders-streben, a partial alienation from its own limitations.

**GIO §4** Music approaches figure, architecture the picture, sculpture colour; music is the object of the great Anders-streben of all art.

## See also

Art-casuistry; Condition of music; Consummate art; Equivalent of colour; Pure form; Special limitation; Theatricality.

# Animated presence

*animated presence*; *animated*

Attested: *animated presence* (GIO §12); *animated* (LEO §7; GIO §20). "Animated" is the Latin *animatus*, filled with breath or soul. Pater uses the phrase for the new kind of picture that Giorgione made, a framed canvas that its owner could carry about. Giorgione detaches "those spaces of more cunningly blent colour" from the wall and has them framed, "so that people may move them readily and take with them where they go, as one might a poem in manuscript, or a musical instrument, to be used, at will, as a means

of self-education, stimulus or solace, coming like an animated presence, into one's cabinet, to enrich the air as with some choice aroma, and, like persons, live with us, for a day or a lifetime" (GIO §12; see Genre). The picture becomes a companion: it comes into the room "like an animated presence" and lives with its owner "like persons". The similes, a poem in manuscript, a musical instrument, an aroma, make the picture a presence felt rather than an object seen. The adjective returns in the essay's account of dramatic poetry, whose "profoundly significant and animated instants" Giorgione's school selects (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). In the Leonardo essay it is the "bright animated angel of Leonardo's hand" that Verrocchio turned from as one stunned (LEO §7).

## See also

Genre; Ideal instant; Intimate presence.

# Animation

*Life returning or quickening: the Sistine Adam's waking, and the excitement of discovery · The Renaissance*

*animation*; *animated*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of being alive or lively; also the act of giving life.

**In *The Renaissance*.** With Michelangelo "the beginning of life has all the characteristics of resurrection; it is like the recovery of suspended health or animation" (MIC §3).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §3, with GIO §20.

## Meaning

The Latin *anima* is breath and soul, and *animare* is to fill with breath, to give life. "Animation" in English meant first the act of giving life, then liveliness. "Suspended animation", a phrase of the physicians of the late eighteenth century, named the state of a person apparently dead, as by drowning, who could be revived; the Royal Humane Society was founded in London in 1774 for the recovery of such persons.[257] Pater's "recovery of suspended health or animation" draws on that sense.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the fourth sentence of the third paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which describes how Michelangelo conceives the

[257] The Society for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Drowned was founded in London in 1774 by William Hawes and Thomas Cogan, and later took the name of the Royal Humane Society.

making of man. For him it is not the last act of a series but "the first and unique act", done "in the cold and lifeless stone" (MIC §3; see Creation of life). Then: "With him the beginning of life has all the characteristics of resurrection; it is like the recovery of suspended health or animation, with its gratitude, its effusion, and eloquence" (MIC §3; see Resurrection).

The image reverses the expected order. Creation is the first coming of life; resurrection is its return. Michelangelo paints the first as if it were the second: Adam does not begin but recovers, as a drowned man brought back to breath recovers, with the gratitude and effusion of one who has been near death. The three nouns that close the sentence are the signs of that recovery, a gratitude for life given back, a pouring out of feeling, an eloquence. The next paragraph makes the principle general: "This creation of life—life coming always as relief or recovery" (MIC §4; see Relief or recovery). In Michelangelo life is always animation regained.

The adjective gives the word its other value, liveliness at its height. Leonardo's angel in Verrocchio's Baptism is "the bright animated angel of Leonardo's hand", from which the master "turned away as one stunned" (LEO §7). Giorgione's little pictures come "like an animated presence, into one's cabinet" (GIO §12). The highest dramatic poetry presents "profoundly significant and animated instants" (GIO §20; see Ideality of expression). And Du Bellay's *Deffense* cannot be read "without feeling the excitement, the animation, of change, of discovery" (BEL §8; see Illustrate).

The uses can be read as one idea seen from two sides. The Michelangelo passage gives animation as an event, the return of breath to a body that seemed dead; the others give it as a quality, the liveliness of a figure, a moment or a book. Both belong to the book's governing interest in life as it shows itself in art: the Leonardo angel, the Giorgione instant and the Pleiad's manifesto are animated as Michelangelo's Adam is animated, by a quickening that the spectator feels. The Michelangelo essay adds the depth: animation is most moving when it is recovery, and the sweetness of Michelangelo lies in "this penetrative suggestion of life" (MIC §5; see Brooding spirit of life).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "animation" or "animated" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §3** With Michelangelo the beginning of life is like the recovery of suspended health or animation.

**LEO §7** Verrocchio turned away from the bright animated angel of Leonardo's hand.

**GIO §12** Giorgione's little pictures come like an animated presence into one's cabinet.

**GIO §20** The highest dramatic poetry presents profoundly significant and animated instants.

**BEL §8** Du Bellay's little book cannot be read without feeling the excitement, the animation, of change.

## See also

Brooding spirit of life; Creation of life; Ideality of expression; Illustrate; Relief or recovery; Resurrection.

## Arabesque

*arabesques*, *arabesque*

Attested: *arabesques* (LEO §28; GIO §6; BEL §16); *arabesque* (GIO §2). The word came through French from the Italian *arabesco*, "in the Arab manner", and names ornament of interlacing stems, leaves and scrolls, such as Islamic art uses in place of figures; it came to mean any free and flowing pattern of line. In the Giorgione essay it is pure pictorial line. The drawing of a great picture, "the arabesque traced in the air by Tintoret's flying figures, by Titian's forest branches", must "first of all delight the sense" (GIO §2; see Abstract grace), and the masters of the Venetian school use the details of their Alpine background, "the brown windy turrets, the straw-coloured fields, the forest arabesques, but as the notes of a music" (GIO §6). In the Du Bellay essay ornament plays with death: the architecture of the age "wantons in its graceful arabesques with the images of old age and death" (BEL §16). In the Leonardo essay the arabesques are a prisoner's. Ludovico Sforza, who ended his days a captive in France, was allowed, it is said, a room in the great tower of Loches, "its walls covered with strange painted arabesques, ascribed by tradition to his hand, amused a little, in this way, through the tedious years" (LEO §28; see Wistful speculation). The word moves between ornament without a subject (GIO §§2, 6) and ornament filled with one: the images of death in the Du Bellay essay, and at Loches the motto *Infelix Sum*, "I am unhappy".

## See also

Abstract grace; Wistful speculation.

## Archaic immobility

*the archaic immobility*

Attested: *archaic immobility* (WIN §39). Archaic is ancient, from the Greek *archaios*; in the archaeology of Pater's century it had begun to name the Greek sculpture before the classical age, the stiff, frontal figures of the sixth century BC with their fixed smile. Immobility is their stillness, the weight set evenly on both legs, the arms at the sides. Pater uses the phrase to mark the step from that stillness to the classical: in the best Greek sculpture

"the archaic immobility has been stirred", but the motion is kept in reserve (WIN §39; see Reserve). The verb "stirred" makes the change an awakening, and the essay's later image of "a child's sleep just disturbed" (WIN §40; see Inspired sleep) can be read as the same idea: Greek sculpture at its best is the archaic figure in the first moment of waking. For the actions the best sculpture permits are "simple and few", binding on a sandal or preparing for the bath (WIN §39), and the Laocoon, with its violent struggle, "marks a period in which sculpture has begun to aim at effects legitimate, because delightful, only in painting" (WIN §39). Archaic stillness and Hellenistic violence are the two limits, and the classical lies between them. Pater returned to the archaic in "The Marbles of Aegina" (1880), on the pediment figures of the temple on Aegina (his "temple of Athene", now known to be Aphaia's), in the Glyptothek at Munich, which he read as the first full expression of Greek humanism, the archaic smile still on figures that already have "a true expression of life".[258]

## See also

Inspired sleep; Reserve.

## Architectural effect

*architectural effect*, *architectural effects*; *architecture*, *architectural*

Attested: *architectural effect* (GIO §12); *architectural effects* (WIN §32); *architecture* (FRE §1; GIO §4; BEL §§13, 16, 17; WIN §§32, 33, 34); *architectural* (GIO §12; WIN §32). Pater uses the phrase to define the Venetian school by what it served. Venetian painting began as "a little more of human expression" brought into the marble and gold of Byzantine walls, and "throughout the course of its later development, always subordinate to architectural effect, the work of the Venetian school never escaped from the influence of its beginnings" (GIO §12; see Byzantine decoration). Painting in Venice was part of a building, and its first duty was to the wall it covered; Giorgione's achievement is to detach those spaces of colour, "obediently filling their places, hitherto, in a mere architectural scheme", and frame them (GIO §12; see Animated presence). The same paragraph says that the earlier Venetian painters, exempt from "the stress of thought and sentiment" that taxed the Florentines, never forgot that painting "must be before all things decorative" (GIO §12; see Decorative). Architecture in the book has its own *Anders-streben*: it "sometimes aims at fulfilling the conditions of a picture" (GIO §4; see Anders-streben). In the Winckelmann essay architecture stands first in the series of the arts, and "can only express by vague hint or symbol, the spirit or mind of the artist"; the art of Egypt,

[258] Walter Pater, "The Marbles of Aegina", *Fortnightly Review* (April 1880); reprinted in *Greek Studies* (London, 1895).

"with its supreme architectural effects", is in Hegel's comparison "a Memnon waiting for the day" (WIN §32; see Memnon waiting for the day).

## See also

Anders-streben; Animated presence; Byzantine decoration; Decorative; Memnon waiting for the day.

# Art for its own sake

*Art loved for what it is and gives, not for any use or lesson: the Conclusion's last word, softened in the revision from "art for art's sake" · The Renaissance*

*the love of art for its own sake*; *art for art's sake*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The doctrine that art is its own end, and is to be valued for the experience it gives and not for any moral, religious or practical purpose.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Of such wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most" (CON §6).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §6 says that the first edition "has the more slogan-like phrase 'the love of art for art's sake'", and that in either version what art gives "is a quality of experience while the moment is passing".

**A place to read.** CON §6.

## Meaning

"Art for art's sake" is the English of the French *l'art pour l'art*, a phrase that passed from early talk of Kant's aesthetics into the polemics of the 1830s. The Swiss-born writer Benjamin Constant noted it in his journal at Weimar in 1804, after a conversation on Kant's aesthetics with the English student Henry Crabb Robinson: art for art's sake, without purpose, for every purpose perverts art; "but art attains a purpose that it does not have".[259] Théophile Gautier made it a manifesto in the preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835), where nothing is truly beautiful but what is useless, and everything useful is ugly.[260] In English Algernon Charles Swinburne wrote in 1868: "Art for art's sake first of all, and afterwards we may suppose all the rest shall be added to her".[261] Pater's review of William Morris, from which the Conclusion was taken, appeared in October of the same year.

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[259] Benjamin Constant, *Journal intime*, February 1804: *L'art pour l'art, sans but, car tout but dénature l'art. Mais l'art atteint un but qu'il n'a pas.*

[260] Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (Paris, 1835), Preface: *Il n'y a de vraiment beau que ce qui ne peut servir à rien; tout ce qui est utile est laid.*

[261] Algernon Charles Swinburne, *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (London, 1868).

## Use in the book

The phrase is the Conclusion's last term. Pater has ranked the passions by their wisdom, the power to give "a quickened, multiplied consciousness" (CON §6; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness). "Of such wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most" (CON §6). The last sentence gives the reason, and it is the last sentence of the book: "For art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake" (CON §6). Art is loved for its own sake because it asks to be loved for nothing else. Its frankness is the point. Other passions promise something beyond themselves, a person, a cause, a salvation; art promises only the quality of the moment, and keeps its promise.

The sentence turns the phrase. "For its own sake" becomes "for those moments' sake" (see For their own sake): the end of art is not art as an object but the moments of the one who has it. Art for its own sake, in Pater's sense, is art for the sake of experience, and the formula of the 1830s, which meant that art should serve no master, is turned into a claim about what art does to time. The phrase gathers the whole book. The Preface had said that the critic regards the works of art as "powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations" (PRE §3; see Powers or forces), and asked what each gives; the Conclusion answers that what all of them give is quality of experience, which is the one thing worth having in the interval.

The earlier essays use "for their own sake" of the Renaissance itself. The love of the things of the intellect and the imagination "for their own sake" is named in Pater's definition of the movement (FRE §1; see For their own sake), and of Winckelmann's enthusiasm for them (PRE §9); the artists of the fifteenth century valued the old myths "for their own sake" (PIC §15). Leonardo used incidents of sacred story "not for their own sake", but "as a cryptic language for fancies all his own" (LEO §29). The Conclusion can be read as making the Renaissance's love of things for their own sake the rule of a life.

The revision changed "the love of art for art's sake" (C73 §7) to "the love of art for its own sake". By then the English slogan had become the motto of a movement and a target of satire. In *The New Republic* (1877), a satire by the English writer W. H. Mallock, Mr Rose, a portrait of Pater, praises those who "follow art for the sake of art, beauty for the sake of beauty, love for the sake of love, life for the sake of life".[262] Pater's change can be read as withdrawing his sentence from the slogan without withdrawing the doctrine. The words "for its own sake" had come once before, of the hireling ministers' "ignorant worship of system for its own sake" (FRE §6), and "for their own sake" is the phrase of the earlier essays. Both ask for love

[262] W. H. Mallock, *The New Republic; or, Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House* (London, 1877), Book IV, chapter 1.

of art as a thing, where the slogan seemed to ask for art about nothing but itself.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraphs in which "for its own sake" or "for their own sake" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §9** Winckelmann's enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake puts him in sympathy with the humanists.

**FRE §1** The love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake makes itself felt in the movement Pater calls the Renaissance.

**FRE §6** The hireling ministers of the medieval system have an ignorant worship of system for its own sake.

**PIC §15** The old myths were valued and cultivated by artists for their own sake.

**LEO §29** Leonardo used incidents of sacred story not for their own sake but as a cryptic language for fancies all his own.

**CON §6** The love of art for its own sake has most of wisdom; art gives nothing but the highest quality to our moments, for those moments' sake.

**C73 §7** In 1873: "the love of art for art's sake".

## Elsewhere in Pater

The essay "Wordsworth" (1874) gives the doctrine its moral form. "To treat life in the spirit of art, is to make life a thing in which means and ends are identified", and to encourage such treatment is the true moral significance of art and poetry.[263]

## Later readings

Wilde's preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) ends with the sentence "All art is quite useless", the slogan in its last form.[264]

## See also

Desire of beauty; End in itself; For their own sake; Poetic passion; Powers or forces; Quality; Quickened, multiplied consciousness.

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[263] Walter Pater, "On Wordsworth", *Fortnightly Review* (April 1874); as "Wordsworth" in *Appreciations* (London, 1889); Library Edition (London, 1910), p. 62.

[264] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (London, 1891), Preface.

## Articulated story

*articulated story*

Attested: *articulated story* (GIO §20). "Articulated" is jointed, from the Latin *articulus*, a small joint: an articulated story is told in distinct parts, one after another, with its joints showing. Pater uses the phrase for what Giorgione's pictures do without. Giorgione's school, a school of genre, chooses the matter that lends itself most readily to pictorial form (GIO §20; see Genre). "For although its productions are painted poems, they belong to a sort of poetry which tells itself without an articulated story" (GIO §20). The phrase can be read as Pater's answer to Lessing's division of the arts. A story unfolds in time, and painting, which shows one moment, can tell one only by implication, through the moment it chooses;[265] Giorgione's pictures choose a kind of poetry that needs no joints, the poetry of a mood or a pause (see Ideal instant). The Concert, where a monk touches the keys and a singer "seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord), tells no story but holds a moment before one.

### See also

Art-casuistry; Genre; Harpsichord; Ideal instant; Lyrical poetry.

## Artistic ideal

*The perfect identification of matter and form, which music realises and to which the other arts aspire · The Renaissance*

*artistic ideal*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The perfect state that an art aims at, the standard by which its works are measured.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is the art of music which most completely realises this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form" (GIO §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** GIO §§9–10, with GIO §19.

### Meaning

"Ideal" is the Late Latin *idealis*, belonging to an idea, and in Plato's sense the idea is the perfect form of which particular things are copies. An ideal, in the criticism of art, is the perfect form a work aims at: the ideal beauty of the academies, the "Greek ideal" of Winckelmann. Pater's phrase is precise about which ideal he means. The artistic ideal is not a type of beauty but a

[265] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon* (1766), chapters 16 and 18.

relation, the "perfect identification of matter and form", in which nothing in the work is subject alone or handling alone.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the tenth paragraph of the Giorgione essay and gives the argument its standard. The ninth has said what art strives for: to be "independent of the mere intelligence", the ideal examples of poetry and painting being those in which "form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect" to the imaginative reason (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason). The tenth names the art that reaches it: "It is the art of music which most completely realises this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form. In its consummate moments, the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression; they inhere in and completely saturate each other; and to it, therefore, to the condition of its perfect moments, all the arts may be supposed constantly to tend and aspire" (GIO §10; see Condition of music; Matter and form). "Consummate moments" and "perfect moments" are careful. Music realises the ideal not always but at its best, and the other arts "may be supposed" to aspire to it: the claim is offered as a way of seeing.

The phrase returns when Pater turns from theory to Giorgione. In the famous pictures at Florence, Dresden and Paris with which the school is still identified, "A certain artistic ideal is there defined for us", a "peculiar aim and procedure in art" that "we may understand as the Giorgionesque" (GIO §19; see Giorgionesque). The singular has changed its sense a little. In the tenth paragraph the artistic ideal is the universal goal of art; in the nineteenth it is "a certain" ideal, the particular "aim and procedure" of a school. The movement can be read as the essay's whole shape: from the general law to the school that obeys it most completely, and from music, which realises the ideal, to the painting that comes nearest to it (see Interpenetration).

The Winckelmann essay uses the phrase of Greece. "It was the privilege of Greek religion to be able to transform itself into an artistic ideal" (WIN §26), and Greek art, "in which the thought does not outstrip or lie beyond the proper range of its sensible embodiment", rested on a delicate pause in Greek reflexion and on "the perfect animal nature of the Greeks": "Here are the two conditions of an artistic ideal" (WIN §29). The two uses of the book can be set side by side. In Winckelmann's Greece the ideal is sculpture, where the thought does not outstrip the visible form; in the Giorgione essay it is music, where form and matter cannot be told apart. Both ideals ask the same thing. The book's change of model, from the Greek statue to music, can be read as its own movement from Winckelmann's century to Pater's.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "artistic ideal" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §10** Music most completely realises the artistic ideal, the perfect identification of matter and form.

**GIO §19** A certain artistic ideal, the Giorgionesque, is defined for us in the school of Giorgione.

**WIN §26** Greek religion could transform itself into an artistic ideal.

**WIN §29** A pause in Greek reflexion and the Greek animal nature are the two conditions of an artistic ideal.

## See also

Condition of music; Giorgionesque; Imaginative reason; Interpenetration; Matter and form.

# Attemper

*attempered*

Attested: *attempered* (BEL §1). To attemper is to temper, moderate or bring to a proper mixture, from the Old French *atemprer* and the Latin *attemperare*, to fit or adjust. Pater uses it of the painters who came to France from Italy: "In painting, there came from Italy workmen like Maître Roux and the masters of the school of Fontainebleau, to have their later Italian voluptuousness attempered by the naïve and silvery qualities of the native style" (BEL §1; see Sensuous material), Maître Roux being the Florentine painter Rosso Fiorentino, so called in France, and the masters of Fontainebleau the Italians who decorated the palace of Francis I, Primaticcio after Rosso, as the note at BEL §1 says. The word belongs to the old language of temperaments and mixtures, in which a quality is corrected by its contrary; here the Italian excess is corrected by French simplicity, and the verb's agent is the native style, not the visitors. The same paragraph calls the French Renaissance a "temperate Saint Martin's summer" (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer), and the Pleiad's sweetness is "tranquil, temperate" (BEL §17). Attempering may be taken as the essay's figure for the whole French Renaissance: a foreign heat brought down to the temperature of a northern autumn.

## See also

Le naïf; Saint Martin's summer; Sensuous material; Silveriness.

## Basilica

*the form of the basilica*

Attested: *basilica* (WIN §46). A basilica is a long hall with aisles and an apse, from the Greek *basilikē*, royal, short for a royal stoa or portico. In Rome it was a public building for the law courts and business, and when the emperor Constantine and his successors built churches in the fourth century they took its form, so that Old Saint Peter's and the Lateran were basilicas, and the word came to name a church of that plan, and later a church of special rank. Pater uses it in his account of how Christian art depended on pagan models. "Gradually, as the world came into the church, an artistic interest, native in the human soul, reasserted its claims. But Christian art was still dependent on pagan examples, building the shafts of pagan temples into its churches, perpetuating the form of the basilica, in later times working the disused amphitheatres as stone-quarries" (WIN §46). The three examples are three kinds of use: columns taken whole from temples and set in churches, a pagan building type continued, and pagan buildings broken up for stone, as the Colosseum was for the palaces and churches of Rome. The sentence can be read as the essay's history of the Renaissance in one image. Christianity kept the pagan world alive by using it, and the paragraph ends with "that lost antique art, some relics of which Christian art had buried in itself, ready to work wonders when their day came" (WIN §46; see Christian art). The column in the church wall is such a relic.

### See also

Christian art; Relic.

## Bulla

*bulla*

Attested: *bulla* (LEO §23). The Latin *bulla* is a bubble, then anything round and swelling: a boss, a seal, and above all the amulet in a round case that freeborn Roman boys wore at the neck until they came of age. The seals of papal letters gave the word its other descendant, the papal "bull". Pater's bulla is the Roman ornament. In a drawing that "might pass for the same face in childhood" as the red-chalk head of doubtful sex, there is "much sweetness in the loose, short-waisted childish dress, with necklace and bulla, and in the daintily bound hair" (LEO §23; see Doubtful sex). The child keeps the faintness of the series: the lips are "parched and feverish". The Latin word adds a touch of antiquity to a Renaissance child, as the antique fragments kept "odd company" with medieval fancy-work in Verrocchio's studio (LEO §5), and it can be read as one more sign that these

faces are "not of the Christian family" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias).

## See also

Daughters of Herodias; Doubtful sex.

## Calumnia

*Calumnia*

Attested: *Calumnia* (BOT §9). Latin, "Calumny" or "Slander": Pater's name for Botticelli's *Calumny of Apelles* in the Uffizi. The Greek satirist Lucian of Samosata described a lost allegorical painting by Apelles, the most famous painter of antiquity, in which Slander drags her victim before a judge with long ears, led by Envy and attended by Treachery and Deceit, while Repentance turns to look at the approaching Truth;[266] the humanist Leon Battista Alberti recommended the description to painters,[267] and Botticelli recreated it, making Truth naked. The edition's note says that "Truth stands at the far left", and that "Her nude figure and upward gesture are visible points of comparison with Pater's account of Venus". Pater mentions the picture only for that figure, who appears "as Veritas, in the allegorical picture of Calumnia" (BOT §9; see Veritas), where an "accident" gives Truth the person of Venus. An allegory of injustice is named for what it shows of a face, and the face is the goddess of pleasure's (see Goddess of pleasure).

## See also

Goddess of pleasure; Veritas.

## Cameo

*cameos*

Attested: *cameos* (LEO §8). A cameo is a small relief carved in gem or shell, usually in a stone of two layers, so that a pale figure stands out against a darker ground; the word came through Italian and French from a Medieval Latin *cammaeus*, of unknown origin. Pater uses it among the things in which Leonardo, "to the last", recalls Verrocchio's studio: the love of "beautiful toys", and "of reliefs, like those cameos which in the Virgin of the Balances hang all round the girdle of Saint Michael" (LEO §8; see Hieratic preciseness). The Virgin of the Balances is the Louvre picture in which, Pater later says, "a hand, rough enough by contrast", worked "upon some fine hint or sketch of his" (LEO §25), so the cameos he points to may

[266] Lucian, *On Slander* (*Calumniae non temere credendum*) 5.

[267] Leon Battista Alberti, *De pictura* (1435), book III.

be a pupil's, and Pater's sentence takes them as Leonardo's inheritance. The cameo is relief at its smallest, the gem-engraver's form of sculpture (see Low relief), and the word belongs with the chasing and the jewels through which the essay shows the craftsman in the painter (see Chasing).

## See also

Chasing; Hieratic preciseness; Low relief.

# Caricature

*Feeling fixed in stone until it hardens into exaggeration: the danger every style of sculpture must escape · The Renaissance*

*caricature*, *caricatures*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A likeness that exaggerates its subject's features, usually for comic or satirical effect.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo avoided "a too heavy realism, that tendency to harden into caricature which the representation of feeling in sculpture is apt to display" (ROB §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §§6, 10, 11.

## Meaning

The Italian *caricatura* is a loading or overloading, from *caricare*, to load. The Italian word was used in English from the late seventeenth century, and "caricature" from the mid-eighteenth, for the drawn portrait that overloads a face with its own peculiarities, and it soon meant any exaggeration that makes its subject ridiculous. Pater uses it in a sense closer to the root: not a comic drawing but the overloading of a form with expression, until the expression becomes a grimace.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the first sentence of the tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which turns to Michelangelo's solution: "And so, in a way quite personal and peculiar to himself, which often is, and always seems, the effect of accident, he secured for his work individuality and intensity of expression, while he avoided a too heavy realism, that tendency to harden into caricature which the representation of feeling in sculpture is apt to display" (ROB §10; see Accident).

The essay names caricature three times, and each time with a verb of fixing. Sculpture's limitation includes "an individuality of expression pushed to caricature" (ROB §6; see Hard realism); feeling in sculpture tends "to harden into caricature" (ROB §10); the studied incompleteness the

Tuscans share with Michelangelo relieves "that sense of intensity, passion, energy, which might otherwise have stiffened into caricature" (ROB §11; see Pure form). Pushed, harden, stiffened: caricature in sculpture is not a choice of the artist but a tendency of the material. A feeling is a passing thing; carved in stone it stays, and a feeling that stays becomes an exaggeration of itself. The seventh paragraph had said the same of the Greek case in other words: whatever "endures but for a moment" is "apt to look like a frozen thing if one arrests it" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit). Caricature is the frozen moment seen in the face.

The essay's three styles are three ways of escaping it. The Greeks leave the passing feeling out (see Abstraction); Michelangelo leaves the form unfinished, so that the feeling never quite sets (see Incompleteness); the Tuscan sculptors keep the feeling but soften the form, by low relief and convention (see Conventionalism; Low relief). Each sacrifices something to keep expression from becoming grimace.

Older criticism had made the same point with a story. Lessing, in the second chapter of his *Laokoon* (1766), recalls a law of Thebes, reported by Aelian, a Roman who wrote in Greek, which bade artists imitate their subjects toward the more beautiful and punished imitation toward the uglier; and he argued that the Greek sculptor softened the extremes of passion because beauty was his first law.[268] Lessing's next chapter adds the reason Pater gives: whatever by its nature breaks out suddenly and vanishes takes on, when art prolongs it, so unnatural a look that the painted laugh of a philosopher, looked at often, becomes a grin.[269] Pater's "frozen thing" can be read as that argument in a phrase, with the appeal to beauty left out.

The other use is in the Leonardo essay, and there caricature is the comic kind. In Leonardo's grotesque drawings there is "an element of mockery also; so that, whether in sorrow or scorn, he caricatures Dante even" (LEO §11). The word can be read as making the essays' two subjects meet: Leonardo draws caricatures on purpose, out of a curiosity that lingers over the strange, and the sculptor of the della Robbia essay must take every care not to make one by accident.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "caricature" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** Sculpture tends to an individuality of expression pushed to caricature.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo avoided the tendency of feeling in sculpture to harden into caricature.

**ROB §11** The studied incompleteness the Tuscans share relieves an intensity that might otherwise have stiffened into caricature.

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[268] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon* (Berlin, 1766), chapter 2; Aelian, *Varia Historia* 4.4.

[269] Lessing, *Laokoon* (1766), chapter 3.

**LEO §11** Whether in sorrow or scorn, Leonardo caricatures Dante even.

## See also

Abstraction; Accident; Allgemeinheit; Conventionalism; Grotesque; Hard realism; Incompleteness; Low relief; Pure form.

## Cartoon

*cartoon*

Attested: *cartoon* (LEO §§8, 29; LEO §33, twice). The Italian *cartone*, a large sheet of heavy paper, gave the name to the full-size drawing from which a fresco, a tapestry or a painting was transferred, by pricking its lines and dusting charcoal through them, or by tracing; the comic sense came later. The note at LEO §29 says that the London cartoon is "a full-sized drawing, not a comic image". Pater names four cartoons, and none is a straightforward survival. Leonardo's Paradise, "which he prepared as a cartoon for tapestry, to be woven in the looms of Flanders" (LEO §8; see Miniature-painting), is lost. The Saint Anne "now in London" once drew crowds: "For two days a crowd of people of all qualities passed in naïve excitement through the chamber where it hung, and gave Leonardo a taste of the 'triumph' of Cimabue" (LEO §29). Cimabue, the Florentine painter of the thirteenth century, made a Madonna that, Vasari tells, was carried in procession to Santa Maria Novella with rejoicing.[270] The note at LEO §29 adds that the National Gallery discusses the difficulty of identifying it with the cartoon Vasari describes. The two cartoons of the competition for the council-chamber are both lost: Michelangelo's, of an incident of the war with Pisa, "has reached us only in an old engraving", and Leonardo's, of the Battle of the Standard, "has come to us only in sketches, and in a fragment of Rubens" (LEO §33). The cartoon is the stage before the finished work, and in Pater's account of Leonardo the work often stopped there.

## See also

Authentic works; Fresco; Miniature-painting.

## Casuistical question

*casuistical question*

Attested: *casuistical question* (GIO §20). Among the instantaneous motions that the master reproduces is "some momentary conjunction of mirrors and polished armour and still water, by which all the sides of a solid image are exhibited at once, solving that casuistical question whether

[270] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Cimabue.

painting can present an object as completely as sculpture" (GIO §20; see Instantaneous motion). The question was the Renaissance *paragone*, the comparison of the arts, and the note at GIO §20 says that "The combination of reflected views allows one painted surface to show multiple aspects of a body, a feat often claimed for sculpture". Vasari tells the story behind Pater's sentence. When sculptors argued that their art showed a figure from every side while painting showed only one, Giorgione painted a man with his back turned, his front reflected in clear water at his feet, one side in a burnished cuirass and the other in a mirror, so that a single picture showed him all round.[271] "Casuistical" carries Pater's earlier compound: the question is one of the "art-casuistries" that a true criticism must work through (GIO §2; see Art-casuistry). The Leonardo essay had recalled the same dispute, "that debate on the question whether sculpture or painting is the nobler art" (LEO §21). Giorgione answers it with painting's own means, reflection and light.

## See also

Art-casuistry; Instantaneous motion.

# Character

*The general nature of a person or type, which sculpture shows, as against the passing situation that painting and poetry can develop · The Renaissance character*; *characters*; *characterless*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The nature of a person, the qualities that make him what he is; in the arts, a personage, and also the type a figure embodies.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In sculpture, which cannot command the resources of painting and poetry, the type, "the general character of the subject", is all-important (WIN §37).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §36 says that Pater's concern in Browning's poem "is the carefully staged moment in which the characters briefly become interesting".

**A place to read.** WIN §§36–37.

## Meaning

*Character* comes from the Greek *charaktēr*, the stamp on a coin, and so the distinctive mark impressed on a thing. It came to mean the marks of a person, his nature, and then the person himself, a character in a play or novel. Pater does not cite him, but in criticism the word has a long pairing with action: Aristotle in the *Poetics* puts the plot, the arrangement of

[271] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Giorgione.

actions, first in tragedy, and character second, since tragedy imitates action and life, and men are what they are by their characters but happy or unhappy by their actions.[272] Pater's pair is character and situation, the nature of a person and the moment in which that nature is placed.

## Use in the book

The word carries the argument of the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh paragraphs of the Winckelmann essay, which divide the arts by what they can show. Painting and poetry "have a variety of subject almost unlimited. The range of characters or persons open to them is as various as life itself; no character, however trivial, misshapen, or unlovely, can resist their magic. That is because those arts can accomplish their function in the choice and development of some special situation, which lifts or glorifies a character, in itself not poetical" (WIN §36). Browning is the example: his poetry is a poetry "of situations", and its characters "are always of secondary importance" (WIN §36; see Situation). The arts of situation can make anyone interesting, because they need only a moment.

Sculpture cannot. It lacks the appliances of painting and poetry, the detail, the background, the "double and treble lights" of language, and so in sculpture the type, "the general character of the subject to be delineated", is all-important (WIN §37; see Type): "in poetry and painting, the situation predominates over the character; in sculpture, the character over the situation" (WIN §37). Excluded from exquisite situations by the limits of its material (WIN §37; see Limits of material), sculpture chooses "from a select number of types intrinsically interesting", and presents them "in their broad, central, incisive lines" (WIN §37; see Centrality). Character in this sense is not individuality but type: the general nature of a god or a hero, purged of "all that is accidental" (WIN §37; see Accident).

The essay then turns the word against itself. Greek sculpture deals almost exclusively with youth, and the single instance in which all its effects are united, the Berlin adorante, "is characterless, so far as character involves subjection to the accidental influences of life" (WIN §40; see Accident). There are thus two characters in the essay, the general nature that sculpture shows and the acquired marks of experience that it purges, and the second is the first's enemy. The ideal figure has character in the first sense because it has none in the second. Hegel's tribute in the next paragraph completes the thought: the great men of the age of Pericles had "this plastic character", and were "ideal artists of themselves" (WIN §41; see Individuality). The Greek statesman or poet had, on this account, the character of a statue: a nature formed whole, not marked by accident.

The essay's other uses run between these senses. Goethe wrote "on the character of Winckelmann" (WIN §2; see Abstract type), and Lavater found ardour and indifference compatible "in the same character" (WIN

[272] Aristotle, *Poetics* 6, 1450a15–23, 38–39.

§10; see Ardour and indifference). The pairing of character and situation can be read as Pater's version of an old argument, Aristotle's plot against character and Lessing's poetry of action against sculpture of bodies, turned to his own purpose: to explain why Greek sculpture is calm, and why the modern arts must be intricate.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Winckelmann essay in which "character", "characters" or "characterless" occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §2** Goethe's fragments contain a few pages on the character of Winckelmann.

**WIN §10** Lavater considers ardour and indifference by no means incompatible in the same character.

**WIN §25** The germ of ritual, losing its domestic character, becomes more and more inexplicable.

**WIN §26** Mythology develops into a body of religious conceptions entirely human in form and character.

**WIN §36** Painting and poetry can lift any character by the development of some special situation.

**WIN §37** In poetry and painting the situation predominates over the character; in sculpture, the character over the situation.

**WIN §40** The adorante is characterless, so far as character involves subjection to the accidental.

**WIN §41** The men of the age of Pericles had this plastic character, ideal artists of themselves.

## See also

Abstract type; Accident; Ardour and indifference; Centrality; Creative act; Individuality; Limits of material; Pause in time; Plastic character; Situation; Type.

# Chasing

*chasing*, *chased*; *chaser's*

Attested: *chasing* (LEO §7); *chaser's* (LEO §13); *chased* (LEO §33). Chasing is the goldsmith's art of working the face of metal with hammer and blunt punches, to model and ornament it; the word is shortened from "enchase", from the French *enchâsser*, to set in a case. Verrocchio appears at his bench: "beneath the cheerful exterior of the mere well-paid craftsman, chasing brooches for the copes of Santa Maria Novella, or twisting metal screens for the tombs of the Medici, lay the ambitious desire to expand the destiny of Italian art by a larger knowledge and insight into things" (LEO

§7; see Cope). Leonardo was Verrocchio's pupil, and the essay keeps the figure for his own hand when science troubles it: "How, in this way, the clear purpose was overclouded, the fine chaser's hand perplexed, we but dimly see" (LEO §13). The battle drawing at Florence returns to it in its finest form, "a waving field of lovely armour, the chased edgings running like lines of sunlight from side to side" (LEO §33). The word can be read as the essay's figure for the precision that Leonardo never lost, the "hieratic preciseness" of the goldsmith's shop (LEO §8; see Hieratic preciseness).

## See also

Ambry; Cameo; Cope; Hieratic preciseness.

# Colouring

*The weaving of light through a picture, one of the two essential pictorial qualities, by which painting first delights the sense · The Renaissance colouring*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The handling of colour in a picture: its hues, their relations, and the light they carry.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is the drawing … : it is the colouring—that weaving of light, as of just perceptible gold threads, through the dress, the flesh, the atmosphere, in Titian's Lace-girl, that staining of the whole fabric of the thing with a new, delightful physical quality" (GIO §2).

**In this edition.** The note on the Lace-girl at GIO §2 says that Pater means "a painting he knew under a historical name", and that "His point is the shared effect of light across dress, flesh and air".

**A place to read.** GIO §2.

## Meaning

"Colouring" is the act and the result of laying on colour, and in the criticism of painting it names a painter's command of colour as a whole. The Italian theorists of the sixteenth century set it against drawing: *colorito*, the art of the Venetians, against *disegno*, the art of Florence and Rome. Vasari tells that Michelangelo, after seeing Titian's work, praised its colouring and manner but said it was a pity that in Venice painters did not learn to draw well from the start.[273] Pater can be read as keeping the pair and refusing the ranking. Drawing and colouring are the two "essential pictorial qualities", and neither serves the other.

[273] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Titian.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the long sentence of the Giorgione essay's second paragraph that defines "that true pictorial quality" which most spectators miss (GIO §2). Pater gives it two halves. The first is "the drawing—the design projected from that peculiar pictorial temperament" (see Drawing). The second: "it is the colouring—that weaving of light, as of just perceptible gold threads, through the dress, the flesh, the atmosphere, in Titian's Lace-girl, that staining of the whole fabric of the thing with a new, delightful physical quality" (GIO §2). Two figures define it. Colouring is a weaving, light drawn through every surface like gold thread through a cloth, so that dress, flesh and air are one fabric (see Gold thread); and it is a staining, a dye that soaks the whole thing and gives it "a new, delightful physical quality". The first figure is of structure, the second of substance, and both make colour pervade rather than cover.

The next sentence repeats the pair and makes the claim. "This drawing, then ... this colouring—the magic conditions of light and hue in the atmosphere of Titian's Lace-girl, or Rubens's Descent from the Cross:—these essential pictorial qualities must first of all delight the sense, delight it as directly and sensuously as a fragment of Venetian glass; and through this delight alone become the vehicle of whatever poetry or science may lie beyond them in the intention of the composer" (GIO §2; see Arabesque; Sensuousness). "Through this delight alone" is the essay's strongest phrase. Poetry and science reach the beholder only by way of colour and line, and a picture that does not first delight the eye cannot carry them at all. The colouring of the Venetians is the chief instance, and the essay's later image of Italy, where "all natural things are as it were woven through and through with gold thread" (GIO §24; see Gold thread), is the same weaving at large.

Elsewhere the word keeps a sense of tone laid over a thing. In the Botticelli essay "imaginative colouring" is the spirit that colour sets upon things, by which they become expressive to the spirit (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring); in the Winckelmann essay Winckelmann's letters have "their troubled colouring" (WIN §19), and of Hellenic culture Pater says that "The local, accidental colouring of its own age has passed from it" (WIN §49). The word moves between the painter's art and the tint of a mood or an age. In the Giorgione essay it is the painter's art, and Pater's two images, the weaving and the staining, can be read as making it the place where the material of painting becomes its meaning.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "colouring" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §8** To understand imaginative colouring is to see that all colour is a spirit upon things, by which they become expressive to the spirit.

**GIO §2** The colouring is a weaving of light, as of gold threads, through dress, flesh and atmosphere, a staining of the whole fabric.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's letters, with their troubled colouring, are a bizarre addition to the History of Art.

**WIN §49** The local, accidental colouring of its own age has passed from Hellenic culture.

## See also

Arabesque; Colour; Drawing; Gold thread; Imaginative colouring; Line and colour; Sensuousness.

## Colours of art

*colours of art*

Attested: *colours of art* (ROB §12). Colours made by art, as opposed to those found in nature. Pater uses the phrase in his account of the oriental pottery whose fame reached Florence, "with its strange, bright colours—colours of art, colours not to be attained in the natural stone" (ROB §12; see Oriental pottery). The phrase answers the sixth paragraph, which had called colour in sculpture "but an unskilful contrivance", borrowed from another art (ROB §6; see Borrowed interest). The colour of a glaze is made in the fire with the clay, and the essay can admit it (see Equivalent of colour).

## See also

Borrowed interest; Colour; Equivalent of colour; Garland; Oriental pottery; Terra cotta.

## Condition of music

*The state in which matter and form cannot be told apart, which music alone realises and toward which every art aspires · The Renaissance*

*condition of music*; *law or condition of music*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of being like music: an art whose subject and handling are wholly one.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music" (GIO §5).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §5 says that "Pater means the close union of a work's matter and its manner of expression", and that "A

painting may approach that union through light and color, whether or not it depicts musicians".

**A place to read.** GIO §§4–5, 10, 20–21.

## Meaning

A condition, from the Latin *condicio*, an agreement or stipulation, is the state in which a thing exists and the terms on which it holds. The condition of music is the state of music at its best, and Pater defines it at once: the state in which "the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression" (GIO §10). The phrase does not claim that all art should sound like music or imitate its forms. It claims that every art wants what music has, a meaning that cannot be separated from its medium.

## Use in the book

The doctrine is prepared by the *Anders-streben* of the fourth paragraph, which ends with all the arts aspiring towards the principle of music (GIO §4; see Anders-streben; Consummate art). The fifth paragraph states it: "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music." In the other arts the understanding can always tell the matter from the form, and art's constant effort is to obliterate the distinction (GIO §5; see Matter and form). The examples follow: the "mere matter" of a poem, its incidents, or of a picture, its event or topography, "should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling" (GIO §5). "Aspires" and "constant effort" make the condition a direction, not a possession: art strives to reach what only music has.

The tenth paragraph gives the reason: music alone completely realises the identification of matter and form (GIO §10; see Artistic ideal). The arts may therefore be represented as struggling after the law of music, and criticism estimates how nearly each work approaches it (GIO §10; see Musical law). The doctrine has become a measure, and the critic's task is to apply it.

Giorgione is the measure applied. In his selection of subject and his "subordination of mere subject to pictorial design", he is "typical of that aspiration of all the arts towards music, which I have endeavoured to explain,—towards the perfect identification of matter and form" (GIO §12). The twentieth paragraph names the condition again, "a condition realised absolutely only in music, as the condition to which every form of art is perpetually aspiring", and says that painting's approach to it depends "in great measure, on dexterous choice of that subject, or phase of subject" (GIO §20; see Interpenetration). The twenty-first adds a turn: "It is to the law or condition of music, as I said, that all art like this is really aspiring; and, in the school of Giorgione, the perfect moments of music itself, the making or hearing of music, song or its accompaniment, are themselves

prominent as subjects" (GIO §21; see Listening). Music enters the pictures twice, as their law and as their subject.

The doctrine can be set beside the philosophy that gave music its highest place in Pater's century. Arthur Schopenhauer had held, in *The World as Will and Representation* (1819), that music alone among the arts is not a copy of the Ideas but a direct copy of the will itself, and so speaks of the essence where the other arts speak of the shadow.[274] Pater makes no such metaphysical claim. His condition of music is a relation within the work, matter wholly absorbed into form, and it can be tested in a picture or a poem as well as in a song.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater names music as the condition or goal toward which the arts aspire, in the order of the book.

**GIO §4** All the arts aspire towards the principle of music, the typical or ideally consummate art.

**GIO §5** All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music, striving to obliterate the distinction of matter and form.

**GIO §10** Music most completely realises the identification of matter and form; criticism estimates how far each work approaches musical law.

**GIO §12** Giorgione is typical of the aspiration of all the arts towards music.

**GIO §20** The interpenetration of subject and form is a condition realised absolutely only in music.

**GIO §21** All art like this aspires to the law or condition of music; in Giorgione's school music is also the subject.

## Later readings

The phrase became a watchword of the Aesthetic Movement. Oscar Wilde, in the preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), wrote that from the point of view of form "the type of all the arts is the art of the musician". Whistler had come to the same analogy independently of Pater, and before the essay: his musical titles, Symphonies, Harmonies and Nocturnes, began with *Symphony in White, No. 3*, shown at the Royal Academy in 1867, and in his "Ten O'Clock" lecture (1885) he said that nature holds the elements of all pictures as the keyboard holds the notes of all music, and that the artist picks and chooses among them as the musician gathers his notes.[275]

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[274] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (1819), vol. 1, book 3, §52.

[275] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), preface; James McNeill Whistler, "Mr. Whistler's 'Ten O'Clock'", delivered 20 February 1885, printed 1888; Whistler, *Symphony in White, No. 3* (1865–67), Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1867.

## In this edition

The Key Words entry on music says that in this essay "music is the art in which form and subject are most fully at one", and that "Pictures of people making music give him a visible instance of that relation".

## See also

Anders-streben; Artistic ideal; Consummate art; Interpenetration; Listening; Matter and form; Musical law.

### Consummate art

*consummate art*; *consummate*

Attested: *consummate art* (GIO §4); *consummate* in ten further paragraphs (PRE §7; MIC §17; GIO §§10, 20; BEL §3; WIN §§2, 10, 41, 42, 50), and as a verb at LEO §27. "Consummate" is the Latin *consummatus*, summed up, completed. Pater uses the phrase of music at the end of the *Anders-streben* paragraph: the arts aspire "towards the principle of music; music being the typical, or ideally consummate art, the object of the great Anders-streben of all art" (GIO §4; see Anders-streben). "Ideally" qualifies "consummate": music is complete as an ideal, the type that the others approach. The adjective recurs through the essay's argument in the same sense: music realises the identification of matter and form at its height, in "its consummate moments" (GIO §10; see Condition of music), and the ideal instants of Giorgione's school are "like some consummate extract or quintessence of life" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). In the Winckelmann essay Goethe calls Winckelmann himself "consummate" (WIN §§2, 10), and otherwise the word is Greece's: Hegel speaks of "the consummate modelling of divine and human forms" (WIN §41), and "consummate Greek modelling" is part of "the eternal problem of culture" (WIN §50; see Modelling). The consummate is, in both essays, the point at which an art has nothing more to add, and the book finds it in Greek sculpture and in music.

## See also

Anders-streben; Condition of music; Ideal instant; Modelling.

### Conventionalism

*The agreed simplification that lets sculpture join repose to intense expression · The Renaissance*

*conventionalism*; *conventional*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The use of conventions, agreed and simplified forms, in place of the direct imitation of nature.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan sculptors unite repose to intense expression "by a system of conventionalism as skilful and subtle as that of the Greeks, repressing all such curves as indicate solid form, and throwing the whole into low relief" (ROB §11).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §11.

## Meaning

The Latin *conventio* is a coming together, an agreement, and a convention is a rule held because it has been agreed, not because nature requires it. "Conventional" took two values in English: the formal and agreed, and the stale and merely customary. In the decorative arts of Pater's day "conventionalism" was a doctrine. The architect Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament* (1856) argued that ornament should use natural forms not as copies but as simplified representations founded on them, so as not to break the unity of the object decorated.[276] Pater uses the noun in this sense of art, as a positive system.

## Use in the book

The word occurs once, in the last sentence of the eleventh paragraph of the della Robbia essay, and the sentence is its only use: "And these elements of tranquillity, of repose, they unite to an intense and individual expression by a system of conventionalism as skilful and subtle as that of the Greeks, repressing all such curves as indicate solid form, and throwing the whole into low relief" (ROB §11).

The sentence says what the convention is. It represses "all such curves as indicate solid form": the Tuscan sculptor does not try to give the full roundness of a body, but flattens it into a few planes, and so refuses the competition with nature that makes sculpture heavy (see Hard realism; Depression of surface). The result is low relief (see Low relief), a form that is plainly not a body, and so can carry intense feeling without stiffening into caricature (see Caricature). "As skilful and subtle as that of the Greeks" puts the Tuscan convention on a level with the Greek *Allgemeinheit* (see Allgemeinheit): both are systems of omission, the Greek omitting the passing feeling, the Tuscan omitting the full solidity of the form.

The adjective's other uses show the two values of the word side by side. In art the conventional is a discipline: the colour of Greek sculpture "has always been more or less conventional, with no melting or modulation of tones, never permitting more than a very limited realism" (WIN §34). In

[276] Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament* (London, 1856), "General Principles", proposition 13.

thought and religion it is a falsehood: Botticelli is "far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5; see Conventional orthodoxy), and the Conclusion says that what is "only conventional, has no real claim upon us" (CON §5). Between these the word describes what time does to an image: the medieval treatment of the Creation of Man "became almost conventional, handed on from artist to artist" (MIC §18), and in Leonardo the sacred subject is often "merely the pretext for a kind of work which carries one altogether beyond the range of its conventional associations" (LEO §25). The "older, conventional criticism" of Michelangelo's sonnets (MIC §10) and the "more conventional" image in the second edition of Vasari (LEO §2) belong to the second value.

The two values can be read as one principle. A convention is admirable when it is chosen for what it makes possible, as the Tuscan sculptor chose low relief to make expression bearable in stone; it is false when it is accepted in place of experience. The della Robbia essay shows the first; the Conclusion warns against the second; and the difference between them is the difference between a style and a habit.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "conventionalism" or "conventional" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §5** Botticelli is far from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors unite repose to intense expression by a system of conventionalism as subtle as the Greeks'.

**MIC §10** The older, conventional criticism assumed that the sonnets were addressed to Vittoria Colonna.

**MIC §18** The medieval treatment of the Creation of Man became almost conventional.

**LEO §2** In the second edition of Vasari the image of Leonardo was changed into something fainter and more conventional.

**LEO §25** A sacred subject is Leonardo's pretext for work beyond the range of its conventional associations.

**WIN §34** The colour of Greek sculpture has always been more or less conventional.

**CON §5** What is only conventional has no real claim upon us.

**C73 §6** In 1873, the same words.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Caricature; Conventional orthodoxy; Depression of surface; Hard realism; Low relief; Pure form; Repose.

*The making of man as Michelangelo's single subject, done off-hand in the cold stone · The Renaissance*

*creation of life*; *creation*, *Creation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The bringing of life into being; in Genesis, God's making of living things and of man.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For him it is not, as in the story itself, the last and crowning act of a series of developments, but the first and unique act, the creation of life itself in its supreme form, off-hand and immediately, in the cold and lifeless stone" (MIC §3).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §3 says that the Sistine ceiling has nine central narratives from Genesis, and that "Pater's claim is a judgment about the weight of the figure in the design".

**A place to read.** MIC §§3–4, with MIC §18.

## Meaning

The first chapter of Genesis tells the creation as a series of six days, from light to the living creatures, with man made last, on the sixth day, in God's image; the second chapter tells it again, with God shaping man from the dust of the earth and breathing life into him (Genesis 2:7). Michelangelo painted nine scenes from Genesis on the vault of the Sistine Chapel between 1508 and 1512, from the separation of light and darkness to the drunkenness of Noah, and the Creation of Adam stands among them.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the third paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "Of the whole story of the creation he has painted only the creation of the first man and woman, and, for him at least, feebly, the creation of light. It belongs to the quality of his genius thus to concern itself almost exclusively with the making of man. For him it is not, as in the story itself, the last and crowning act of a series of developments, but the first and unique act, the creation of life itself in its supreme form, off-hand and immediately, in the cold and lifeless stone" (MIC §3).

The first sentence is a judgement of weight, not a count, as the edition's note observes. The claim is about where the force lies. In Genesis man comes last, the crown of a series; for Michelangelo the series hardly matters, and creation means the making of man, done "off-hand and immediately". "In the cold and lifeless stone" turns the painted scene into sculpture: Michelangelo's Adam is made as a statue is made, by quickening stone.

The fourth paragraph makes the phrase the motive of his whole work: "This creation of life—life coming always as relief or recovery, and always in

strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled—is in various ways the motive of all his work, whether its immediate subject be pagan or Christian, legend or allegory; and this, although at least one-half of his work was designed for the adornment of tombs" (MIC §4; see Relief or recovery; Rough-hewn mass). The examples follow: the Last Judgment, whose real subject is the Resurrection, and the legend of Leda, "the delight of the world breaking from the egg of a bird" (MIC §4; see Resurrection). The tombs, which should be the place of death, become in this reading places of life emerging.

The eighteenth paragraph gives the subject its history: Michelangelo "receives from tradition his central conception, and does but add the last touches" (MIC §18; see Discipleship).

The Creation of Adam returns once more, as an image of sorrow: "What passionate weeping in that mysterious figure which, in the Creation of Adam, crouches below the image of the Almighty, as he comes with the forms of things to be, woman and her progeny, in the fold of his garment!" (MIC §8; see Mystery). And the nineteenth paragraph sets the two Florentine traditions side by side, the tradition of death, which "centres in the sacristy of San Lorenzo, as the tradition of the Creation centres in the Sistine Chapel" (MIC §19; see Outre-tombe).

The phrase can be read as the key to Pater's Michelangelo. The essay begins with strength and sweetness, and finds the sweetness in "this penetrative suggestion of life" (MIC §5; see Brooding spirit of life); the creation of life is the subject in which that suggestion is purest. Elsewhere in the book "creation" is mostly the work of an artist or a mind, as when the historic sense "estimates every intellectual creation in its connexion with the age from which it proceeded" (PIC §4; see Historic sense); in the Michelangelo essay the word keeps its first meaning, the making of the living out of the dead, and the two traditions of creation and of death are the poles of his art.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Michelangelo essay in which the Creation occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §2** Michelangelo's backgrounds show blank rock, as in a world before the creation of the first five days.

**MIC §3** Michelangelo concerns himself almost exclusively with the creation of man, the first and unique act, done in the cold and lifeless stone.

**MIC §4** The creation of life, coming always as relief or recovery, is the motive of all his work.

**MIC §8** A mysterious figure crouches weeping below the Almighty in the Creation of Adam.

**MIC §18** Michelangelo's treatment of the Creation shows his dependence on the tradition of the Florentine schools.

**MIC §19** The tradition of death centres in the sacristy of San Lorenzo, as the tradition of the Creation centres in the Sistine Chapel.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §3 says that "The Sistine ceiling has nine central narratives from Genesis. Alongside the creations of Adam and Eve are the Separation of Light from Darkness, the Creation of the Sun, Moon and Plants, and the Separation of Land from Water. Pater's claim is a judgment about the weight of the figure in the design." The note at MIC §7 says that "Jacopo carved the Genesis reliefs for the central portal of San Petronio in Bologna. Pater's argument about inherited forms invites comparison between Jacopo's Creation of Adam and the Sistine scene." The note at MIC §4 qualifies the claim about the Last Judgment: "The altar wall also includes the descent of the damned, an essential part of the scene's Christian iconography."

## See also

Animation; Brooding spirit of life; Death in its distinction; Discipleship; Expectancy and reception; Historic sense; Mystery; Outre-tombe; Pregnancy of expression; Relief or recovery; Resurrection; Rough-hewn mass.

# Crude symbolism

*crude symbolism*

Attested: *crude symbolism* (LEO §30). "Crude", from the Latin *crudus*, raw, is what has not been refined; a crude symbolism is a set of signs whose meanings are fixed and must be read off one by one. Pater uses the phrase in his praise of La Gioconda: "In suggestiveness, only the Melancholia of Dürer is comparable to it; and no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery" (LEO §30; see Suggestiveness; Refined and graceful mystery). Dürer's engraving *Melencolia I* (1514) is crowded with emblems, a magic square, a polyhedron, an hourglass, a bell, a ladder, tools on the ground, and it has been read for centuries as a puzzle to be decoded. Pater finds its suggestiveness comparable to the Gioconda's, and the sentence can be read as denying the Gioconda Dürer's method: her meaning is carried by no attribute, only by the face, the hands and the rocks. The next paragraph nonetheless says that Lady Lisa "might stand as … the symbol of the modern idea" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life). On this reading the phrase marks the difference between two kinds of symbol that the book

keeps apart, the sign that points beyond the form and the form that needs no sign (see Symbol).

## See also

Perpetual life; Refined and graceful mystery; Suggestiveness; Symbol; Symbolical; Symbolism.

# Cryptic language

*Sacred story used by Leonardo as a private cipher for fancies of his own · The Renaissance*

*cryptic language*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A language of hidden meaning, legible only to those who hold its key.

**In *The Renaissance*.** He used "incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake, or as mere subjects for pictorial realisation, but as a cryptic language for fancies all his own" (LEO §29).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §29, with LEO §25.

## Meaning

"Cryptic" comes through the Late Latin *crypticus* from the Greek *kryptikos*, from *kryptos*, hidden, and *kryptein*, to hide; the same root gives "crypt" and "cryptography". A cryptic language is a cipher, a script that shows one thing to everyone and another to the initiate. The essay supplies a literal instance: Leonardo wrote his notes "strangely, as his manner was, from right to left" (LEO §13), in a mirror-writing that had to be held to the glass to be read.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentence of the twenty-ninth paragraph, which turns from Leonardo's sacred pictures to his portraits of women: "As we have seen him using incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake, or as mere subjects for pictorial realisation, but as a cryptic language for fancies all his own, so now he found a vent for his thought in taking one of these languid women, and raising her, as Leda or Pomona, as Modesty or Vanity, to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression" (LEO §29; see Realisation; Symbolical). "As we have seen" points back four paragraphs, to the Saint John whose subject is "merely the pretext" for the painter's own work (LEO §25; see Conventional associations).

The sentence makes three claims about the sacred subjects. They are not used "for their own sake", as devotion would use them; they are not used as

"mere subjects for pictorial realisation", as a painter of narrative would use them (see Realisation); they are used as a cipher. The visible story is the surface of the code, and the "fancies all his own" are its hidden text. The second half of the sentence applies the same method to women. One of "these languid women" of Florence is given a name, Leda, Pomona, Modesty, Vanity, and the name works like the sacred subject: it is a pretext, and the meaning lies elsewhere, in the "seventh heaven of symbolical expression". The list mixes myth, a Roman goddess of fruit and two allegories, as if any name would serve.

A cipher implies a key, and the essay's account of the pupils suggests who might hold it. Leonardo worked "for the present hour, and for a few only, perhaps chiefly for himself" (LEO §24), and chose pupils "with just enough genius to be capable of initiation into his secret" (LEO §24). The cryptic language can be read as the counterpart in the pictures of that secret. Pater does not claim to decipher it. His own method, announced at the start of the essay, is to analyse "the impression made on him by those works" (LEO §3; see Impression), and the impression is what the cipher gives to those who cannot read it: a sense of meaning withheld. That sense is the "mystery" with which the essay begins, "something enigmatical beyond the usual measure of great men" (LEO §2).

The phrase can be set beside the allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century that the Pico essay describes, in which "Plato and Homer must be made to speak agreeably to Moses" (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation). Leonardo can be read as reversing the direction. The allegorists found Christian meaning hidden in pagan matter; Leonardo hides his own pagan or private meaning in Christian matter.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §29** Leonardo uses incidents of sacred story as a cryptic language for fancies all his own, and raises the women he paints to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Conventional associations; Impression; Realisation; Symbolical; Symbolical invention; Unsanctified and secret wisdom.

# Decorative

*The first law of Venetian painting: that a picture is a thing for the eye, a space of colour on the wall · The Renaissance*

*decorative*; *decoration*, *decorations*; *decorate*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Serving to adorn: belonging to the surface and the setting rather than to a story or an idea.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The early Venetian painters never forgot "that painting must be before all things decorative, a thing for the eye, a space of colour on the wall, only more dexterously blent than the marking of its precious stone or the chance interchange of sun and shade upon it:—this, to begin and end with; whatever higher matter of thought, or poetry, or religious reverie might play its part therein, between" (GIO §12).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §12 says that Pater "has the Byzantine inheritance of the Venetian lagoon in view".

**A place to read.** GIO §12.

## Meaning

"Decorative" is from the Latin *decorare*, to adorn, and *decus*, grace or seemliness. In the criticism of Pater's century the word was often a slight: decorative art was the lesser art of ornament, beside the higher art of history and idea. Pater turns the slight into a principle. To call painting "before all things decorative" is to say that its first duty is to the eye and the wall, and that whatever else it does it does on that condition.

## Use in the book

The word belongs to the twelfth paragraph of the Giorgione essay, where Pater gives the Venetian school its law. Venetian painting began in the "Byzantine decoration" of Murano and Saint Mark's (GIO §12; see Byzantine decoration), and remained "always subordinate to architectural effect" (GIO §12; see Architectural effect). That dependence was a protection. The school had no Giotto, no Angelico, no Botticelli; it was unassisted "and therefore unperplexed, by naturalism, religious mysticism, philosophical theories" (GIO §12; see Naturalism). "Exempt from the stress of thought and sentiment, which taxed so severely the resources of the generations of Florentine artists, those earlier Venetian painters, down to Carpaccio and the Bellini, seem never for a moment to have been so much as tempted to lose sight of the scope of their art in its strictness, or to forget that painting must be before all things decorative, a thing for the eye, a space of colour on the wall, only more dexterously blent than the marking of its precious stone or the chance interchange of sun and shade upon it:—this, to begin and end with; whatever higher matter of thought, or poetry, or religious reverie might play its part therein, between" (GIO §12).

The sentence frames everything else. The decorative is where painting begins and where it ends; thought, poetry and religious reverie come "between", inside the frame (see Religious reverie). The comparison with stone and sunlight places the picture among the natural pleasures of the eye: a painted wall is a marble's veining or a play of shadow, "only more

dexterously blent" (GIO §12). The second paragraph had said the same of every great picture (GIO §2; see Abstract painting). Giorgione inherits the law and changes the wall. He detaches those spaces of colour "obediently filling their places, hitherto, in a mere architectural scheme", frames them, and makes them movable (GIO §12; see Animated presence; Genre), and still he keeps "that old Venetian clearness or justice, in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art" (GIO §12). The decorative principle survives the move from wall to frame.

The other uses of the word show its usual standing. In the Du Bellay essay Du Bellay's poetry, like that of Ronsard and the other poets of the Pleiad, is "one of the decorations of an age which threw a large part of its energy into the work of decoration" (BEL §13), and in the Winckelmann essay sculpture rises as it "ceased to be merely decorative, and subordinate to architecture" (WIN §34). In both the decorative is a lower stage, an art serving something else. The Giorgione essay can be read as reversing that order for painting alone: what is a limitation in sculpture is, for the painter, the beginning of his art.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "decorative", "decoration", "decorations" or "decorate" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §1** The works of the Italian sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century are often almost hidden away amid the frippery of modern decoration.

**LEO §33** The citizens of Florence wished to decorate the walls of the great council-chamber.

**GIO §12** Venetian painting began in Byzantine decoration; painting must be before all things decorative, a space of colour on the wall.

**BEL §13** Du Bellay's poetry, like the Pleiad's, is one of the decorations of an age given to decoration.

**WIN §34** Sculpture threw itself upon pure form as it ceased to be merely decorative.

## Later readings

The thought had a future. In 1890 the young French painter Maurice Denis, independently of Pater, wrote that a picture, before it is a war-horse, a nude woman or some anecdote, is essentially a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order, in words that read like a gloss on Pater's.[277]

[277] Maurice Denis (writing as Pierre Louis), "Définition du néo-traditionnisme", *Art et Critique*, 23 and 30 August 1890.

## See also

Abstract painting; Animated presence; Architectural effect; Byzantine decoration; Genre; Naturalism; Religious reverie.

# Delineation

*Drawing the form: done in low relief with shadow, not line · The Renaissance*

*delineation*; *delineated*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The tracing of a form in outline; a drawing or portrayal.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan sculptors "seek their means of delineation among those last refinements of shadow, which are almost invisible except in a strong light" (ROB §4).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §4 says that in low relief "the strength of a shadow varies with the depth of carving and direction of light".

**A place to read.** ROB §4, with GIO §2.

## Meaning

The Latin *delineare* is to trace out with lines, from *linea*, a line, and delineation was first the draughtsman's act: the laying down of a form in outline. The word widened to any portrayal, in words as well as in drawing. Pater uses it in both senses, and in the della Robbia essay he gives it a paradox.

## Use in the book

The fourth paragraph of the della Robbia essay describes how the Tuscan sculptors draw. Haters of "heaviness and emphasis", they "seek their means of delineation among those last refinements of shadow" which "the finest pencil can hardly follow" (ROB §4; see Refinements of shadow). Delineation is a draughtsman's word, and the sentence takes the line away from it. In low relief a form is defined not by an outline but by the faint shadows that the slight projections of the marble cast, and these are so fine that "the finest pencil", the draughtsman's own instrument, "can hardly follow" them. The sculptor delineates with what the draughtsman cannot draw.

The paradox sets the Tuscan sculptors against two other ways of making form. Against "strongly-opposed light and shade" (see Light and shade) they set shadows almost invisible; against the full round of sculpture they set a surface that barely rises from its ground (see Low relief). Their delineation is the least emphatic possible, and the essay's next sentence names what it serves: "The whole essence of their work is expression" (ROB §4; see Passing of a smile).

The Giorgione essay uses the word in the draughtsman's sense and warns against overrating it. Most spectators suppose that all in a picture "is mere technical acquirement in delineation or touch", or else a merely literary interest, and so miss "that true pictorial quality" which lies between (GIO §2; see Line and colour). Delineation alone is craft. The Winckelmann essay uses it of the sculptor's subject: in sculpture "not the special situation, but the type, the general character of the subject to be delineated, is all-important" (WIN §37; see Type). The first essay uses it of writers: the Romantic school's "delineation of the middle age", Victor Hugo's in *Notre-Dame de Paris* among them, is "so suggestive and exciting" (FRE §32; see Romantic school).

The uses show, on this reading, Pater's preference for the least obvious means. A delineation is good, in his account, when it does not insist on its lines; the Tuscan relief, the Romantic portrait of an age, the Greek type are all forms drawn so as to suggest more than they state.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "delineation" or "delineated" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** The Romantic school's delineation of the middle age is suggestive and exciting.

**ROB §4** The Tuscan sculptors seek their means of delineation among the last refinements of shadow.

**GIO §2** Most spectators suppose that all is technical acquirement in delineation or touch.

**WIN §37** In sculpture the general character of the subject to be delineated is all-important.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §4 says that "Low relief projects only slightly from its ground. On a work like Luca's marble choir loft, the strength of a shadow varies with the depth of carving and direction of light. Pater treats that variation as a means of suggesting movement."

## See also

Light and shade; Line and colour; Low relief; Passing of a smile; Refinements of shadow; Romantic school; Type.

# Depression of surface

*The flattening of low relief, which gives a tomb figure the wasting of death · The Renaissance*

*depression of surface*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A depression is a pressing down, a lowering; a depression of surface is a carved surface kept low against its ground.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan sculptors gave "even to their monumental effigies something of its depression of surface, getting into them by this means a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §3 says that "Pater connects the shallow carving of a funerary image with a felt waning of the body it represents".

**A place to read.** ROB §3.

## Meaning

The Latin *deprimere* is to press down, and a depression is the result: a lowered place, a hollow, a flattening. In the language of sculpture a depression of surface is the shallowness of low relief, the form pressed back toward the plane from which it is cut.

## Use in the book

The third paragraph of the della Robbia essay is one sentence, and it is the phrase's chief passage: "These Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century worked for the most part in low relief, giving even to their monumental effigies something of its depression of surface, getting into them by this means a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3; see Low relief; Monumental effigy; Pathetic).

The sentence describes a transfer and a meaning. The transfer is from relief to the effigy: the Tuscans give the tomb figure "something of" the shallowness of their reliefs (see Monumental effigy). The meaning is what the shallowness then says. A body carved flat looks thinned, as a body wasted by illness or by death is thinned, and the effigy seems to be passing from flesh to something lighter (see Etherealise). The technique becomes a statement about its subject, and the statement is a moving one, "pathetic" in the old sense.

The sentence is the first instance in the essay of a principle it will develop: that sculpture overcomes its weight by giving up some of its solidity. The sixth paragraph will name the weight, "its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6; see Etherealise), and the eleventh will name the means, "repressing all such curves as indicate solid form" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism). In the tomb the two meet with special force, for the effigy is a dead body, and the sculptor who lightens it lightens death.

The phrase can be read as one of the book's most exact pieces of formal criticism. In this sentence Pater does not ask what the effigies represent or whose tombs they are; he looks at the depth of the carving and finds the

feeling in it. The two tombs he names in the eleventh paragraph (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait) are where his reader can test the observation.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**ROB §3** The depression of surface of low relief gives the Tuscan effigies a pathetic suggestion of the wasting of death.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §3 says that "'Pathetic' means moving or expressive of pathos. Pater connects the shallow carving of a funerary image with a felt waning of the body it represents."

## See also

Conventionalism; Etherealise; Low relief; Monumental effigy; Pathetic; Sepulchral portrait.

# Dominant tone

*dominant tone*

Attested: *dominant tone* (GIO §6). In music the dominant is the fifth note of the scale, the note that governs the harmony after the keynote; in painting a dominant tone is the colour or value that rules a picture and to which the others are tuned. Pater uses the phrase in his comparison of French and Swiss landscape: "And hence the superiority, for most conditions of the picturesque, of a river-side in France to a Swiss valley, because, on the French river-side, mere topography, the simple material, counts for so little, and, all being very pure, untouched, and tranquil in itself, mere light and shade have such easy work in modulating it to one dominant tone" (GIO §6). "Modulating" is a musician's word too, the passage from one key to another, and the sentence can be read as a small instance of the essay's thesis, landscape becoming music when its matter yields to the light. The Swiss valley, all salient peaks, resists the light; in landscape of little salient character, such as the French river-side, "all the material details are so easily absorbed by that informing expression of passing light" (GIO §6; see Informing expression; Light and shade). The paradox is Pater's: the less striking the scene, the more readily it becomes a picture.

## See also

Condition of music; Gold thread; Informing expression; Light and shade; Picturesque union of contrasts.

## Donjon

*donjon*

Attested: *donjon* (BEL §1). A donjon is the great tower or keep of a medieval castle, the lord's stronghold; the word is the French form of "dungeon", from a Vulgar Latin *dominio(nem)*, lordship, from *dominus*, lord, and English keeps the older spelling for the tower, since "dungeon" has come to mean the cell beneath it. Pater uses it in his description of the Château de Gaillon, "as you may still see it in the delicate engravings of Israël Silvestre—a Gothic donjon veiled faintly by a surface of dainty Italian traceries" (BEL §1), Silvestre being the seventeenth-century French engraver of views of châteaux and towns. The note at BEL §1 calls Gaillon, the château of Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, "an early site of Italianate ornament in France", and says that Pater's comparison "asks how much of a building's character comes from its silhouette and how much from its carved surfaces". The donjon is the silhouette, the strong medieval mass; the traceries are the surface, and they only veil it, "faintly". The image gives, on this reading, the essay's whole account of the French Renaissance in one building: "old French Gothic still", with a foreign aspect gilding the surface (BEL §3; see Gothic manner).

### See also

Daintiness; Gothic manner; Tracery.

## Dramatic painter

*The painter who transcribes an action as a spectator · The Renaissance dramatic painters*; *dramatic*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A dramatic painter is one who sets down an action as it would appear on a stage, from outside.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandajo "are dramatic, not visionary painters; they are almost impassive spectators of the action before them" (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that "Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects".

**A place to read.** BOT §4, with GIO §20.

### Meaning

The Greek *drama* is a thing done, from *dran*, to act. Dramatic painting is the painting of actions, the story told in figures, which Renaissance theory set at the head of the art: Leon Battista Alberti's treatise on painting (1435)

calls the narrative composition, the *istoria*, the painter's greatest work.[278] By that standard Giotto and Masaccio were the founders of Italian painting. Pater's phrase accepts their achievement and names its limit.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the Botticelli essay's central contrast. Botticelli "is a visionary painter, and in his visionariness he resembles Dante" (BOT §4; see Visionary painter). "Giotto, the tried companion of Dante, Masaccio, Ghirlandajo even, do but transcribe, with more or less refining, the outward image; they are dramatic, not visionary painters; they are almost impassive spectators of the action before them" (BOT §4). The definition is in the last clause. The dramatic painter stands before the action as a spectator stands before a stage, and he is "almost impassive": he sees, records and is not moved. The words "do but transcribe" make him a copyist of the outward image (see Outward image); "with more or less refining" allows him art without vision.

The word "dramatic" elsewhere in the book carries the opposite charge. The Giorgione essay praises "the highest sort of dramatic poetry" for presenting "profoundly significant and animated instants", in which a long history is condensed into a moment (GIO §20; see Concrete terms). Philosophy serves culture by helping one "to detect the passion, and strangeness, and dramatic contrasts of life" (WIN §51); the Conclusion counts the pulses "of a variegated, dramatic life" (CON §4). In these uses the dramatic is life at its most intense.

The two senses can be read as the distinction Pater cares about. Drama in life is passion; drama in the painters he calls dramatic is the record of passion by someone who does not share it. In the first sense, the dramatic as intensity of life, the visionary is more dramatic than they: the scene awakens in him a mood "of which it is the double or repetition" (BOT §4; see Mood). Giorgione's "animated instants" are the synthesis, a dramatic moment charged with a mood, and the Giorgione essay can be read as Pater's answer to the problem the Botticelli essay states.

The judgement is severe on Giotto, whose followers, the essay says, held Florentine painting to a "simple religion" for a century (BOT §1), and Pater softens it with "almost". Its point is not that the great narrative painters lacked feeling, but that their art aimed at the action, not at what the action awoke. The aesthetic critic, who asks what a picture does "to me" (PRE §2; see Pleasure), naturally prefers the painter who asked the same question of the world.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "dramatic" occurs, in the order of the book.

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[278] Leon Battista Alberti, *De pictura* (1435), book II.

**FRE §22** The details of the old tale suggested to Fauriel the notion that its words had been accompanied by dramatic action.

**BOT §4** Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandajo are dramatic, not visionary painters, almost impassive spectators of the action.

**GIO §20** The highest dramatic poetry presents profoundly significant and animated instants.

**WIN §41** Hegel holds that Greece cannot be understood without the ideal forms of sculpture, through which even its epic and dramatic heroes are seen.

**WIN §51** Philosophy helps one detect the passion, strangeness and dramatic contrasts of life.

**CON §4** We are given a counted number of pulses of a variegated, dramatic life.

**C73 §5** In 1873 the sentence is the same.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward. Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects."

## See also

Concrete terms; Data; Mood; Outward image; Pleasure; Visionary painter.

# Drapery

*drapery*; *draperies*

Attested: *drapery* (LEO §7; WIN §40); *draperies* (BOT §8; MIC §5). Drapery, from the French *draperie*, from *drap*, cloth, is in the arts the rendering of cloth hanging in folds over a figure, one of the painter's and sculptor's chief exercises. Pater uses the word four times, and his last use turns it into a figure. In Greek sculpture the hair, "so rich a source of expression in painting, because, relatively to the eye or the lip, it is mere drapery, is withdrawn from attention; its texture, as well as its colour, is lost, its arrangement but faintly and severely indicated, with no broken or enmeshed light" (WIN §40). Hair is "mere drapery" because it covers the head as cloth covers the body: an ornament of the surface, not a part of the expression. Painting can make much of it; sculpture lets it go. The other uses are literal and show the same scale of values. In Botticelli's Venus rising from the sea the "strange draperies" of the middle age are "powdered all over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies" (BOT §8; see Quaint conceit); Michelangelo gives "no lovely draperies and comely

gestures of life, but only the austere truths of human nature" (MIC §5); in Verrocchio's own work, "in the modelling of drapery, or of a lifted arm, or of hair cast back from the face", there came to the master "something of the freer manner" of a later age (LEO §7). Pater does not mention it, but Vasari tells that the young Leonardo drew clay figures draped in cloth dipped in clay.[279] Drapery, in the book, can be read as the test of a style's priorities: the Gothic decorates it, Michelangelo refuses it, the Renaissance studies it, and the Greek ideal reduces even hair to it.

## See also

Quaint conceit.

# Drawing

*The design projected from the pictorial temperament, in which all ideas float up as visible scene or image · The Renaissance*

*drawing*; *design*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The art of line and design in painting, the shaping of forms on the surface.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is the drawing—the design projected from that peculiar pictorial temperament or constitution, in which, while it may possibly be ignorant of true anatomical proportions, all things whatever, all poetry, all ideas however abstract or obscure, float up as visible scene or image" (GIO §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** GIO §2.

## Meaning

Drawing, the act of drawing a line, is in the criticism of painting the art of design, the Italian *disegno*: the shaping of figures and composition by line, as against colouring, *colorito* (see Colouring). For the Florentine theorists *disegno* was also an act of the mind, the idea of a work before it was made, and Giorgio Vasari called it the father of the three arts of architecture, sculpture and painting.[280] Pater's definition keeps the mental sense and moves it. His drawing is not anatomical knowledge, of which the pictorial temperament "may possibly be ignorant", but a temperament in which ideas take visible shape.

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[279] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (Florence, 1568), Life of Leonardo da Vinci.

[280] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Introduction, "Della pittura", chapter 1.

## Use in the book

The definition stands in the Giorgione essay's second paragraph, as the first of the two "essential pictorial qualities". Most spectators, Pater says, see in a picture either "mere technical acquirement in delineation or touch" or "a merely poetical, or what may be called literary interest" (GIO §2; see Literary interest), and miss "that true pictorial quality which lies between". Its first half is "the drawing—the design projected from that peculiar pictorial temperament or constitution, in which, while it may possibly be ignorant of true anatomical proportions, all things whatever, all poetry, all ideas however abstract or obscure, float up as visible scene or image" (GIO §2).

The sentence moves drawing from the hand to the temperament. A design is "projected", thrown out from a constitution, as an image is projected on a wall, and the constitution is one in which thought does not stay thought. In it "all poetry, all ideas however abstract or obscure, float up as visible scene or image" (GIO §2): the painter's mind turns everything into sight. The clause on anatomy is the sentence's quiet polemic. The Leonardo essay had warned that to think of Leonardo as "the mere reasoner who subjects design to anatomy" misses the impression he made on those around him (LEO §13), and the Giorgione essay goes further, allowing that the true painter may be ignorant of correct proportion. Drawing in Pater's sense is not correctness but vision (see Transmutation of ideas into images).

The next sentence gives the instance and the rule. "This drawing, then—the arabesque traced in the air by Tintoret's flying figures, by Titian's forest branches" (GIO §2; see Arabesque), with the colouring, "must first of all delight the sense", and "through this delight alone" carry poetry or science (GIO §2; see Colouring). The arabesque is drawing at its most musical: line that pleases before it represents, the trace of movement in the air. Later in the essay the pair returns as the means of Giorgione's school, whose subjects are chosen for "complete expression by drawing and colour" (GIO §20; see Genre; Interpenetration).

Elsewhere in the book design is judged by the same standard. In Botticelli's Dante the fire on the upturned soles of the feet "proves that the design is no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision" (BOT §3; see Visible form), and Botticelli attracts first "only by a quaintness of design" (BOT §8). The Giorgione essay's definition gathers these judgements into one: design is good when it is vision, and the painter's vision is a mind in which ideas become scenes.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "drawing" or "design" names the art of line and composition, rather than a single drawing or a plan, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli's Dante design is no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision.

**BOT §8** At first one is attracted only by a quaintness of design.

**LEO §10** Leonardo wasted many days in curious tricks of design.

**LEO §13** To think of Leonardo as the mere reasoner who subjects design to anatomy misses the impression he made on those around him.

**GIO §1** True pictorial charm is no mere result of communicable technical skill in colour or design.

**GIO §2** The drawing is the design projected from the pictorial temperament, in which all ideas float up as visible scene or image.

**GIO §12** Giorgione subordinates mere subject to pictorial design.

**GIO §16** The Concert's distinction is a sustained evenness of perfection in design, execution and type.

**GIO §20** Giorgione's school selects matter that lends itself to expression by drawing and colour.

**WIN §13** Goethe spent a whole year at Rome drawing from the antique.

## See also

Arabesque; Colouring; Genre; Interpenetration; Line and colour; Literary interest; Transmutation of ideas into images; Visible form.

## Earthenware

*earthenware*

Attested: *earthenware* (ROB §§2, 12). Pottery of fired clay, porous unless glazed; the humble ware of kitchen and table. Pater uses it for Luca della Robbia's glazed terracotta, and his chief passage makes the humble word the vehicle of a whole city's air: "Something more remains of Luca della Robbia; something more of a history, of outward changes and fortunes, is expressed through his work. I suppose nothing brings the real air of a Tuscan town so vividly to mind as those pieces of pale blue and white earthenware, by which he is best known, like fragments of the milky sky itself, fallen into the cool streets, and breaking into the darkened churches" (ROB §2). The image makes the pieces fragments of sky that have fallen to earth, joining the material's origin, earth, to its colour, the sky's. In the twelfth paragraph the word marks the beginning of the invention: "Luca's new work was in plain white earthenware at first, a mere rough imitation of the costly, laboriously wrought marble, finished in a few hours" (ROB §12; see Terra cotta). The note at ROB §2 says that "White

figures on a blue ground are especially associated with the family, although its work also uses greens, yellows, and more varied palettes".

## See also

Colours of art; Frippery; Homely art; Oriental pottery; Savour; Terra cotta.

## Emblematical

*emblematical*; *emblems*

Attested: *emblematical* (BOT §8); *emblems* (BOT §8; BEL §7). Of the nature of an emblem, a figure that stands for an idea. The Greek *emblēma* was an inlay, a piece set into a surface, and in 1531 the Milanese jurist Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum liber* made the emblem a genre, a picture joined to a motto and a verse.[281] Pater's adjective marks a figure as standing for something other than itself, and in the Birth of Venus it is the wind: "An emblematical figure of the wind blows hard across the grey water, moving forward the dainty-lipped shell on which she sails, the sea 'showing his teeth,' as it moves, in thin lines of foam, and sucking in, one by one, the falling roses, each severe in outline, plucked off short at the stalk, but embrowned a little, as Botticelli's flowers always are" (BOT §8). The sentence turns the emblem back into nature. The wind is a figure, but the sea, "showing his teeth" and sucking in the roses, is described as a living thing. The same paragraph frames the Venus in "the grotesque emblems of the middle age" (BOT §8; see Grotesque), and the Du Bellay essay notes the "strange love of emblems which is characteristic of the time" (BEL §7), the salamander of Francis I and the double crescent of Henry II.

## See also

Goddess of pleasure; Grotesque; Quaint conceit.

## Energy of conception

*The force of Michelangelo's invention, always about to break the conditions of comely form · The Renaissance*

*energy of conception*; *energy*, *energetic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Energy is active force; conception is the forming of an idea, and in art the design a work is to carry out.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Michelangelesque is "sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise, an energy of conception which seems at every

[281] Andrea Alciato, *Emblematum liber* (Augsburg, 1531).

moment about to break through all the conditions of comely form" (MIC §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §1.

## Meaning

The Greek *energeia* was Aristotle's word for activity, the working of a power, as against *dynamis*, the capacity not yet at work.[282] In English energy came to mean vigour, the force with which something acts. Conception is from the Latin *concipere*, to take in, and so to conceive a child or an idea; in the language of the arts it is the artist's first idea of a work, before its execution. An energy of conception is thus a force in the idea itself, a design that strains outward before a chisel has touched the stone.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the fourth sentence of the Michelangelo essay, which gives Pater's definition of his subject: "And to the true admirers of Michelangelo this is the true type of the Michelangelesque—sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise, an energy of conception which seems at every moment about to break through all the conditions of comely form, recovering, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things—*ex forti dulcedo*" (MIC §1; see Michelangelesque; Comely form; Ex forti dulcedo).

The sentence has two movements. The first is outward and violent: the energy "seems at every moment about to break through" the conditions of comely form. The second is inward and patient: "recovering, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things". The strength strains the form; the sweetness is recovered by small touches within it. "Seems" and "about to" hold the two together: the energy never quite breaks through, and the art is in the tension, a strength kept within bounds that it visibly presses.

The next paragraph puts the same force in history. The critics of strength find in Michelangelo "a convulsive energy", the mark of medieval art, "felt, even in its most graceful products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque" (MIC §2; see Convulsive energy). The energy of conception can be read as that force at its highest, mastered. The della Robbia essay had given "the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo", which the Tuscan sculptors shared, the work of "relieving that sense of intensity, passion, energy, which might otherwise have stiffened into caricature" (ROB §11; see Caricature).

Elsewhere energy is a word for a passionate nature and its outward force. Heloïse has a "great and energetic nature" (FRE §7); Botticelli's figures are "conscious of a passion and energy greater than any known issue of them

[282] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IX (Θ) 6, 1048a25–b9.

explains" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles), clothed "sometimes by passion with a character of loveliness and energy" (BOT §6); Michelangelo gives the Doni Madonna "much of the uncouth energy of the older and more primitive 'Mighty Mother'" (PIC §15; see Mighty Mother); Goethe's "various energy" is set against Winckelmann's single motive (WIN §10). In the Conclusion energy becomes the measure of life itself, and Pater asks how we may be present always at the focus where the vital forces "unite in their purest energy" (CON §4; see Focus).

The phrase may be taken as naming the quality that makes the strangeness of Michelangelo's art, the "blossoming of the aloe" of the second sentence (MIC §1; see Blossoming of the aloe). Energy alone would be the convulsive force of the Gothic; energy within comely form, recovering loveliness touch by touch, is the Michelangelesque.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "energy" or "energetic" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §7** Abelard tested the resources of humanity in Heloïse's great and energetic nature.

**FRE §29** Touches of intenser sentiment come, it would seem, from the profound and energetic spirit of the Provençal poetry.

**PIC §15** Michelangelo gives the Doni Madonna much of the uncouth energy of the Mighty Mother.

**BOT §5** Botticelli's persons are conscious of a passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains.

**BOT §6** Botticelli's men and women are clothed sometimes by passion with loveliness and energy.

**BOT §8** The passion and energy of Botticelli's realisation measure the influence of the imaginative system.

**BOT §9** Botticelli sympathises with humanity in its investiture at rarer moments with loveliness and energy.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan system shares the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo, relieving the sense of intensity, passion, energy that might have stiffened into caricature.

**MIC §1** The Michelangelesque is an energy of conception about to break through all the conditions of comely form.

**MIC §2** Medieval art is distinguished from classical work by a convulsive energy.

**GIO §16** The liquid air of the Holy Family in the Louvre fills its sacred personages with some wind-searched brightness and energy.

**BEL §13** The French Renaissance threw a large part of its energy into decoration.

**WIN §10** Winckelmann's narrow perfection contrasts with Goethe's various energy.

**CON §4** The Conclusion asks how to be present where vital forces unite in their purest energy.

**C73 §5** The 1873 Conclusion asks the same question.

## See also

Blossoming of the aloe; Caricature; Comely form; Convulsive energy; Ex forti dulcedo; Focus; Michelangelesque; Mighty Mother; Vital forces; Wistfulness of exiles.

## Engraved plate

*impressions of engraved plates*; *engraved*; *engraving*, *engravings*

Attested: *impressions of engraved plates* (BOT §3); *engravings* (BOT §9); *engraving* or *engravings* in three further paragraphs (LEO §33; GIO §4; BEL §1). A plate of copper cut with a design, inked and pressed to make a print. The Florentine Dante of 1481, with the commentary of the Florentine humanist Cristoforo Landino (1424–1498), was meant to carry such prints at the head of each canto, but the work was abandoned early.[283] Pater describes the result: "In a few rare examples of the edition of 1481, the blank spaces, left at the beginning of every canto for the hand of the illuminator, have been filled, as far as the nineteenth canto of the Inferno, with impressions of engraved plates, seemingly by way of experiment, for in the copy in the Bodleian Library, one of the three impressions it contains has been printed upside down, and much awry, in the midst of the luxurious printed page" (BOT §3; see Illuminator). The upside-down print is, in the edition's note, "a visible sign of the procedure's experimental character". The essay leaves the engravings with a doubt: "We might trace the same sentiment through his engravings; but his share in them is doubtful" (BOT §9).

## See also

Illuminator; Impression; Pictorial propriety; Poetical painter.

[283] Dante, *Comento di Christophoro Landino fiorentino sopra la Comedia di Danthe Alighieri* (Florence: Nicolò di Lorenzo, 1481).

# Equivalent of colour

*What sculpture puts in place of the painter's colour: generality, incompleteness, low relief · The Renaissance*

*equivalent of colour*; *equivalent for colour*; *equivalent*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An equivalent is a thing of equal value or effect in another kind; the equivalent of colour is whatever does in sculpture what colour does in painting.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To get not colour, but the equivalent of colour; to secure the expression and the play of life" (ROB §6).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §6 says that "Evidence of paint, gilding, and colored materials survives on ancient sculpture, and Luca's own work later tests the hierarchy".

**A place to read.** ROB §§6, 10, with GIO §4.

## Meaning

The Latin *aequivalere* is to be of equal force, and an equivalent is something that has the same value or effect as another, though different in kind. The idea lies behind much nineteenth-century thought about the arts, which asked what each art could do with its own means that another did with different ones. Pater asks it of colour, the painter's chief means of life, and of the colourless art of sculpture. He wrote while the coloured statue was a live dispute: the Welsh sculptor John Gibson's painted marble *Tinted Venus* had been shown in London, at the International Exhibition of 1862.

## Use in the book

The sixth paragraph of the della Robbia essay states the problem and is the phrase's chief passage. Colour in sculpture is "but an unskilful contrivance", a borrowing from another art (ROB §6; see Borrowed interest). The paragraph ends: "To get not colour, but the equivalent of colour; to secure the expression and the play of life; to expand the too firmly fixed individuality of pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form:—this is the problem which the three great styles in sculpture have solved in three different ways" (ROB §6).

The sentence defines colour by its effects. What colour gives to painting is "expression and the play of life" (see Play of life) and release from the fixed outline of a thing (see Individuality; Pure form). Sculpture must get these some other way. The rest of the essay names the three ways. The Greeks get them by generality, which avoids the frozen moment (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit). Michelangelo gets them by incompleteness, and the tenth paragraph returns to the phrase: "Well! that incompleteness is Michelangelo's equivalent for colour in sculpture; it is his way of

etherealising pure form, of relieving its stiff realism, and communicating to it breath, pulsation, the effect of life" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness; Breath; Pulsation). The Tuscans get them by low relief and convention (ROB §11; see Low relief; Conventionalism). "Well!" is the one exclamation of discovery in the essay: the puzzle of Michelangelo's unfinished work is solved by calling it colour.

The Giorgione essay makes the same claim a law of all the arts. "Thus, again, sculpture aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form towards colour, or its equivalent" (GIO §4; see Anders-streben), as all the arts aspire toward music. Each art, pressing at its limits, seeks what another art has. The two other uses of the noun show the same thought at larger scale: Pico's story is "a sort of analogue or visible equivalent to the expression of this purpose in his writings" (PIC §5; see Analogue), and the Winckelmann essay asks whether art can give the modern spirit "at least an equivalent for the sense of freedom" (WIN §53).

The essay's own hero tests the rule. Luca della Robbia did colour his sculpture (ROB §12; see Terra cotta), and the note at ROB §6 points out that his work "later tests the hierarchy". Pater's way through can be read in his words for the colours of the oriental pottery that haunted Luca's fancy, "colours of art, colours not to be attained in the natural stone" (ROB §12; see Colours of art): a glaze, on this reading, is made in the fire with the material, and on fruit "only subdued a little, a little paler than nature" (ROB §12; see Garland). Luca's glaze is not colour borrowed from painting but a new material, and so stands outside the rule it seems to break.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "equivalent" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §5** Pico's story is a visible equivalent to the expression of the purpose of his writings.

**ROB §6** The three great styles of sculpture seek not colour but the equivalent of colour.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness is Michelangelo's equivalent for colour in sculpture.

**GIO §4** Sculpture aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form toward colour or its equivalent.

**WIN §53** Can art give the modern spirit at least an equivalent for the sense of freedom?

## In this edition

The note at ROB §6 says that "Pater presents painted color as a borrowing from another medium. The premise reflects a particular aesthetic hierarchy. Evidence of paint, gilding, and colored materials survives on ancient sculpture, and Luca's own work later tests the hierarchy."

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Analogue; Anders-streben; Borrowed interest; Breath; Colour; Colours of art; Conventionalism; Garland; Incompleteness; Individuality; Low relief; Play of life; Pulsation; Pure form; Terra cotta.

## Etching

*etching*, *etchings*; *etcher*; *etched*

Attested: *etchings*, *etching* (GIO §6); *etcher* (LEO §18); *etched* (LEO §31). An etching is a print made from a metal plate on which the design has been drawn through a wax ground and bitten into the metal by acid, from the Dutch *etsen*, which comes from the German *ätzen*, to corrode, a verb that first meant to make to eat. Pater's example of matter and form is an etching by Alphonse Legros: its matter is "a long white road, lost suddenly on the hill-verge", and in the etching the road is "informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression" (GIO §6; see Indwelling solemnity). The note at GIO §6 says that Legros "used a relatively spare repertory of marks in many of his landscape etchings", and that Pater "asks the reader to imagine a plain road made solemn by the handling of a particular image". The choice of a print is apt. An etching has no colour, and its matter here is as bare as matter can be, a white road; whatever it has beyond topography comes from the handling. The Leonardo essay has the etcher's point as a figure for the wind on Leonardo's seashore, which "passes like the point of some fine etcher over the surface" (LEO §18; see Motion of great waters).

## See also

Indwelling solemnity; Matter and form; Motion of great waters.

## Expectancy and reception

*The Sistine Adam waiting for life: a figure without completeness, gathered into readiness to receive · The Renaissance*

*expectancy and reception*; *expectancy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Expectancy is the state of waiting for something to come; reception is the act of taking it in.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the Sistine Adam, "His whole form is gathered into an expression of mere expectancy and reception" (MIC §3).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §3 says that Pater "attends to Adam's reclining body and barely raised finger as an image of life about to arrive".

**A place to read.** MIC §3.

## Meaning

The two nouns describe a passive state, but not an empty one. Expectancy looks forward; reception opens to what comes. Together they make the posture of one about to be given something: the guest at the door, the soil before rain.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentences of the third paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which describe the Adam of the Sistine ceiling: "Fair as the young men of the Elgin marbles, the Adam of the Sistine Chapel is unlike them in a total absence of that balance and completeness which express so well the sentiment of a self-contained, independent life. In that languid figure there is something rude and satyr-like, something akin to the rugged hillside on which it lies. His whole form is gathered into an expression of mere expectancy and reception; he has hardly strength enough to lift his finger to touch the finger of the creator; yet a touch of the finger-tips will suffice" (MIC §3).

The comparison with the Elgin marbles is the key. The marbles of the Parthenon, which Lord Elgin brought to London in the first years of the nineteenth century and which Parliament bought for the British Museum in 1816, were for Pater's generation the type of Greek sculpture: young men perfect in "balance and completeness", each the image of "a self-contained, independent life". Michelangelo's Adam is as fair as they are, and unlike them in one thing. He is not self-contained; he is incomplete, waiting, half part of the hillside, "rude and satyr-like". His beauty is the beauty of need.

"Mere" makes the expectancy absolute: the whole form is nothing but waiting. "He has hardly strength enough to lift his finger" sets the weakness of the creature against the energy of the creator, and "yet a touch of the finger-tips will suffice" gives the gap its meaning. Life does not need to be wrestled into Adam; it needs only to arrive.

The phrase completes the argument of the paragraph's earlier sentence: "With him the beginning of life has all the characteristics of resurrection" (MIC §3; see Animation). The Adam who waits so is like one recovering from a swoon, and his expectancy is the expectancy of the sick for health. The incompleteness Pater finds in the painted figure can be read as akin to that he finds in Michelangelo's unfinished marbles (MIC §4; see Half-emergent form): a form that has not yet fully emerged, and that draws the spectator into its emergence.

The noun "expectancy" occurs once more, in a different key. When Greek sculpture permits "a more complex and significant action", the Winckelmann essay says, "it is most often represented as just finished, so that eager expectancy is excluded, as in the image of Apollo just after the slaughter of the Python, or of Venus with the apple of Paris already in her hand" (WIN §39; see Repose). Read together, the two passages give Pater's

contrast of the classical and the Michelangelesque: the Greek excludes expectancy, showing the moment after; Michelangelo makes expectancy the whole of a figure, showing the moment before.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "expectancy" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §3** The Sistine Adam's whole form is gathered into an expression of mere expectancy and reception.

**WIN §39** When Greek sculpture permits a complex action, it most often represents it as just finished, so that eager expectancy is excluded.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §3 says that "In the Creation of Adam, the extended hands form a narrow interval at the center of the encounter. Pater attends to Adam's reclining body and barely raised finger as an image of life about to arrive."

## See also

Animation; Creation of life; Expression; Half-emergent form; Repose.

# Expression

*The inner life brought to the surface of the work: the modern value that sculpture must make room for · The Renaissance*

*expression*, *expressions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The outward showing of an inward state, in a face, a gesture or a work of art; also a phrase or form of words.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The whole essence of their work is expression" (ROB §4); *intimité* "is what we call expression, carried to its highest intensity of degree" (ROB §13).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §13 calls *intimité* "the culmination of the essay's discussion of expression".

**A place to read.** ROB §§4, 9, 13, with WIN §34.

## Meaning

The Latin *exprimere* is to press out, as juice is pressed from fruit, and also to model or portray, as a form is pressed into wax. Expression is what comes out under pressure: the inner state made outward. In the theory of art the word had a long history before Pater. The French painter Charles Le Brun's lecture on the passions, published in 1698, gave painters a catalogue of the faces of anger, fear and joy, and in the eighteenth century

Winckelmann, in his *Gedanken* (1755), and Lessing set expression against beauty: Lessing argued that for the ancient sculptor beauty was the highest law, to which expression had to yield.[284] Pater inherits the opposition and changes its terms.

## Use in the book

The word occurs in forty-seven paragraphs, and the della Robbia essay, which names it thirteen times, is built on it. It gives the school "finish of expression" (ROB §2; see Finish of expression) and makes expression "the whole essence of their work" (ROB §4; see Passing of a smile); it names the danger, "an individuality of expression pushed to caricature" (ROB §6; see Caricature), and the Greek price, "the sacrifice of what we call expression" (ROB §9; see Abstraction); and it ends by defining *intimité* as "what we call expression, carried to its highest intensity of degree" (ROB §13; see Intimité).

The argument is a history in three terms. Greek sculpture had repose and generality and sacrificed expression; Michelangelo, heir of medieval inwardness, demanded expression and found a way to it through incompleteness; the Tuscan sculptors joined expression to repose. Expression is the modern value, and the essay's question is how sculpture, the art most fitted to repose, can make room for it.

The Winckelmann essay states the same history from the Greek side. Sculpture "becomes a perfect medium of expression for one peculiar motive of the imaginative intellect" (WIN §34), but "It renounces the power of expression by lower or heightened tones" (WIN §34); painting has its "power of indirect expression" (WIN §37), and the hair, "so rich a source of expression in painting", is in sculpture "withdrawn from attention" (WIN §40). The human form is "one entire medium of spiritual expression" (WIN §33). Philosophy, the same essay says, may give reasons why sculpture "should be the most sincere and exact expression of the Greek ideal" (WIN §9); it is also the art least able to express the modern.

Elsewhere the word marks what Pater most looks for in a painter. Leonardo learned "the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats" (LEO §10), and for him philosophy was to be something "divining the sources of springs beneath the earth or of expression beneath the human countenance" (LEO §13); in music, at the other extreme, "the subject from the expression" cannot be distinguished (GIO §10).

Pater's use of the word can be read as a quiet reversal of Lessing. For Lessing expression was what the ancient sculptor had to soften for the sake of beauty; for Pater it is the value the modern spirit brought to art, and the question is not how to subdue it but how to give it room without letting stone harden it into grimace. The Greek answer, generality, keeps beauty

[284] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon* (Berlin, 1766), chapter 2.

and gives up much expression; Michelangelo's, incompleteness, keeps expression and risks the form; the Tuscans, by low relief and convention, keep both within narrow limits. That the essay ends by calling the highest degree of expression *intimité*, the presence of one person in his work, shows where Pater's sympathy lies: in the end expression matters to him as the trace of a soul, and beauty as its setting.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which expression is a quality of art, or a work is called the expression of a feeling or idea, in the order of the book; the other eleven uses, of a phrase, a statement, a letter or a myth (PRE §6; FRE §§2, 22, 32; PIC §§1, 3, 5, 9; MIC §2; GIO §25; WIN §10), are not listed.

**FRE §29** The stories' morsels of deeper colour are expressions of the ideal intensity of love.

**BOT §7** Botticelli's type gives his Madonnas their unique expression and charm.

**BOT §8** The most complete expression of Botticelli's sentiment in classical subjects is the Venus rising from the sea.

**ROB §1** The Italian sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century gave expression to so much power and sweetness.

**ROB §2** The Tuscan sculptors share grace, purity and finish of expression.

**ROB §4** The whole essence of the Tuscan sculptors' work is expression.

**ROB §6** Sculpture tends to an individuality of expression pushed to caricature; each style must secure expression and the play of life.

**ROB §9** The Greek system sacrificed what we call expression; Michelangelo required individual expression.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo secured individuality and intensity of expression; the Venus of Melos has an expression most like his.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors fill their works with intense and individualised expression and unite it to repose.

**ROB §13** Intimité is expression carried to its highest intensity of degree.

**MIC §3** The form of the Sistine Adam is gathered into an expression of mere expectancy.

**MIC §4** Michelangelo secures ideality of expression by incompleteness.

**MIC §18** The Italian sculptors impressed on the Creation of Man a pregnancy of expression.

**MIC §19** Michelangelo gives the final expression to the Florentine tradition that centres in the sacristy of San Lorenzo.

**MIC §20** The Medici figures are a more direct expression of Michelangelo's thoughts than any symbolical conceptions.

**LEO §10** Leonardo learned to track the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats.

**LEO §13** For Leonardo philosophy was to divine the sources of expression beneath the human countenance.

**LEO §20** In Leonardo the expression of physical beauty often seems strained and marred in the effort.

**LEO §25** Variations by others have brought out the more the expression of Leonardo's originals.

**LEO §29** Leonardo's figures are raised to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression.

**LEO §30** By artificial means the subtle expression of La Gioconda was protracted on the face.

**GIO §6** Legros's etching is informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression; the landscape is absorbed by an informing expression of passing light.

**GIO §10** In music the subject cannot be distinguished from the expression.

**GIO §12** Venetian painting began by bringing a little more of human expression into Byzantine decoration.

**GIO §20** Giorgione arrests the passing expression.

**BEL §2** The Clouets' paintings have a silveriness of colour and a clearness of expression.

**BEL §3** Italian influence shows itself by a fine line or gesture or expression.

**WIN §4** The antique world, for all its own perfect self-expression, remains faint and remote to most of us.

**WIN §9** Philosophy may give reasons why sculpture should be the most sincere and exact expression of the Greek ideal.

**WIN §32** One form of art may be more adequate than another for the expression of a phase of the mind.

**WIN §33** The human form is one entire medium of spiritual expression.

**WIN §34** Sculpture becomes a perfect medium of expression and renounces expression by lower or heightened tones.

**WIN §37** Painting has its power of indirect expression.

**WIN §40** Hair is so rich a source of expression in painting; the frieze is the highest expression of indifference.

**WIN §46** The sensuous expression of ideas that discredit the world of sense was the delicate problem of Christian art.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §13 says that *intimité* "is the culmination of the essay's discussion of expression". The note at ROB §4 says that Pater treats the variation of shadow in low relief "as a means of suggesting movement".

## See also

Abstraction; Caricature; Conventionalism; Equivalent of colour; Expectancy and reception; Expressiveness; Finish of expression; Flexible life; Ideality of expression; Individual expression; Indwelling soul; Intimité; Passing of a smile; Repose; Type.

# Expressiveness

*The power of a whole century's art to show the soul within, opening and closing the della Robbia essay · The Renaissance*

*expressiveness*; *expressive*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The power of expressing, of showing an inward state; the quality of a face or work that is full of meaning.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The art of Italy in the fifteenth century has "that profound expressiveness, that intimate impress of an indwelling soul" (ROB §1).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §1 says that Pater places the restraint of Brunelleschi's churches beside Botticelli's painting and the sculpture of Luca's generation "to suggest a quality shared across the arts".

**A place to read.** ROB §§1, 13.

## Meaning

Expressiveness is the capacity for expression, as against the expression itself: a face is expressive when it shows much, whatever it shows. The adjective is commoner in the book; Pater uses the noun twice, in the first and the last paragraphs of one essay.

## Use in the book

The della Robbia essay is framed by the word. Its first paragraph sets the Italian sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century among the arts of their century: their sculpture shares with Botticelli's paintings and the churches of the architect Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446), builder of the dome of Florence Cathedral, "that profound expressiveness, that intimate impress of an indwelling soul" (ROB §1; see Indwelling soul). The last paragraph begins by recalling it: "I said that the art of Luca della Robbia possessed in an unusual measure that special characteristic which belongs to all the workmen of his school, a characteristic which, even in the absence of much

positive information about their actual history, seems to bring those workmen themselves very near to us" (ROB §13; see Positive knowledge). The next sentence names it again, "a profound expressiveness, what the French call *intimité*" (ROB §13; see Intimité).

"I said" ties the end to the beginning, and the essay's argument lies between them. In the first paragraph expressiveness is a quality of a century and of all its arts, painting, sculpture, architecture alike; in the last it is a quality of a school, possessed "in an unusual measure" by Luca, and it is personal, bringing the men "very near to us". The essay has moved from the period's character to the individual's, and expressiveness has become *intimité*. Brunelleschi stands with Botticelli as proof that the quality is not sculpture's alone.

The middle paragraphs explain why it is "rarest of all" in sculpture (ROB §13; see Imaginative order): the material resists it (see Special limitation), and each style must find its own way to it (see Equivalent of colour). The adjective names the means: Luca united to pottery the "exquisite and expressive system of low relief" (ROB §12; see Homely art).

The adjective's other uses widen the idea. Colour for the imaginative painter is "a spirit upon" things "by which they become expressive to the spirit" (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring); La Gioconda "is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire", and the thoughts of the world have power there "to refine and make expressive the outward form" (LEO §31). Expressiveness in each case is the spirit visible in matter, in a colour, a face, a relief.

The word can be read as the quality by which Pater justifies writing about men whose lives are lost. The essay's first paragraph laments that "one asks in vain for more than a shadowy outline of their actual days" (ROB §1; see Austere dignity); its last says that their work, even without the record, "seems to bring those workmen themselves very near to us" (ROB §13). An expressive work is a biography in another form.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "expressiveness" or "expressive" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §8** Colour is a spirit upon things by which they become expressive to the spirit.

**ROB §1** The sculptors of the earlier fifteenth century share with Botticelli and Brunelleschi that profound expressiveness of an indwelling soul.

**ROB §12** Luca united the expressive system of low relief to the homely art of pottery.

**ROB §13** The profound expressiveness of the della Robbia school brings its workmen very near to us.

**LEO §31** La Gioconda is expressive of what men had come to desire; the world's thoughts make expressive the outward form.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §1 says that "Filippo Brunelleschi designed Florentine churches including San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito. Pater places their restraint alongside Botticelli's painting and the sculpture of Luca's generation to suggest a quality shared across the arts."

## See also

Austere dignity; Equivalent of colour; Expression; Homely art; Imaginative colouring; Imaginative order; Indwelling soul; Intimité; Positive knowledge; Special limitation.

# Finesse

*Delicacy of operation: the quality Leonardo sought in nature, and the Italian gift the French took from Italy · The Renaissance*

*finesse*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French for fineness, delicacy, subtlety: the delicate working of a fine hand, or of nature.

**In *The Renaissance*.** He sought "to satisfy ... a microscopic sense of finish by her finesse, or delicacy of operation, that subtilitas naturae which Bacon notices" (LEO §17).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §17 translates the word "Subtlety" and says that it "here concerns the delicacy and intricacy of natural processes".

**A place to read.** LEO §17, with LEO §18.

## Meaning

The French *finesse*, from *fin*, fine, means fineness of grain or of thread, and then delicacy of perception and of execution; it can also mean cunning, the subtle stroke, and English kept that sense in "to finesse". Pascal set the *esprit de finesse*, the mind that sees at a glance many slight principles together, against the *esprit de géométrie*, the mind that reasons from a few clear ones.[285] Pater's use keeps to delicacy, but his Leonardo, whose age's science sought "in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences", and who was no "mere reasoner" (LEO §13; see Divination), can be read as having the mind Pascal called *finesse*.

[285] Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, fragment 512 in Lafuma's numbering (1 in Brunschvicg's).

## Use in the book

The word enters with Pater's own gloss. In the return to nature Leonardo "was seeking to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises, a microscopic sense of finish by her finesse, or delicacy of operation, that subtilitas naturae which Bacon notices" (LEO §17; see Curiosity; Subtilitas naturae). The sentence pairs a faculty with its object. Curiosity is satisfied by nature's surprises; the "microscopic sense of finish" is satisfied by her finesse. Nature works finely, down to the smallest scale, and the painter whose own sense of finish is "microscopic" finds in her the only standard that matches it. "That subtilitas naturae which Bacon notices" names the source: Bacon had held that the subtlety of nature far exceeds the subtlety of the senses and the understanding.[286]

In the next paragraph the finesse has passed from nature to the painter. Leonardo's landscape "is the landscape, not of dreams or of fancy, but of places far withdrawn, and hours selected from a thousand with a miracle of finesse" (LEO §18; see Bizarre; Veil of sight). Now finesse is the delicacy of a choice: of all the places and all the hours, the one that shows nature at her most refined. Together the two uses suggest how the painter learns from nature. He seeks her finesse, and the seeking gives him a finesse of his own.

The word returns at the end of the essay, in France. Francis the First, "like Lewis the Twelfth before him, was attracted by the finesse of Leonardo's work" (LEO §35), and the Du Bellay essay makes finesse the gift of Italy to France. "There was indeed something in the native French taste naturally akin to that Italian finesse" (BEL §2), and Ronsard, in his reform of French poetry, doubled the French daintiness by Italian finesse (BEL §3; see Daintiness). The cost is named at once: "Thereupon, nearly all the force and all the seriousness of French work disappear; only the elegance, the aerial touch, the perfect manner remain" (BEL §3). Pater adds that the result is consummate and has an unmistakable æsthetic value (BEL §3; see Æsthetic value). The finesse that in Leonardo was a delicacy learned from nature becomes, in France, a manner.

The French word suits the movement it describes. It is Italian finesse that the book praises, and it names it in the language of the country to which Italian art was carried, where it died away, as the Leonardo essay says, "as a French exotic" (LEO §35; see Exotic).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "finesse" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §17** Leonardo sought to satisfy a microscopic sense of finish by nature's finesse, or delicacy of operation.

**LEO §18** His landscapes are of hours selected from a thousand with a miracle of finesse.

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[286] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* (1620), book I, aphorism 10.

**LEO §35** Francis the First was attracted by the finesse of Leonardo's work.

**BEL §2** Native French taste was naturally akin to Italian finesse.

**BEL §3** Ronsard doubles the French daintiness by Italian finesse.

## See also

Æsthetic value; Bizarre; Curiosity; Daintiness; Divination; Exotic; Hieratic preciseness; Return to nature; Subtilitas naturae; Veil of sight.

# Finish of expression

*The completed, polished expression the Tuscan sculptors share, carried from marble into clay · The Renaissance*

*finish of expression*; *finish*, *finished*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Finish is the last working of a surface, its polish and completion; a finish of expression is an expression brought to completion.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Part of the charm of this work, its grace and purity and finish of expression, is common to all the Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century" (ROB §2).

**In this edition.** The notes at ROB §2 describe the glazed terracotta of Luca's workshop and say that his glazed terracotta "was used for both reliefs and sculpture in the round".

**A place to read.** ROB §2, with ROB §10 and LEO §17.

## Meaning

To finish is to bring to an end, and in the crafts the finish is the last stage, the smoothing, polishing and detailing that makes a work complete. The word implies care and the absence of roughness. Pater attaches it, unusually, not to a surface but to expression, so that what is polished is the feeling a work shows.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentence of the second paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "Part of the charm of this work, its grace and purity and finish of expression, is common to all the Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century; for Luca was first of all a worker in marble, and his works in terra cotta only transfer to a different material the principles of his sculpture" (ROB §2; see Marble; Terra cotta).

The sentence makes two claims. The first is that finish of expression belongs to the school, not to Luca alone; the second is that Luca's clay carries the marble's principles. Finish of expression is thus a habit learned in the hard material and kept in the soft. Clay can be modelled quickly, and

Luca's first pieces were "a mere rough imitation" of marble, "finished in a few hours" (ROB §12; see Earthenware); the finish of expression belongs to what he found "on this humble path" (ROB §12; see Terra cotta).

The tenth paragraph of the essay sets another kind of finish against it. Michelangelo's sculpture is "so rough-hewn here, so delicately finished there" (ROB §10; see Rough-hewn), and its incompleteness "was in reality perfect finish" (ROB §10; see Perfect finish). The Tuscan finish completes the expression; Michelangelo's leaves the form incomplete so that the expression may stay alive. The essay admires both, and the eleventh paragraph finds the Tuscans "midway" between Greek generality and Michelangelo's "studied incompleteness" (ROB §11; see Pure form).

The word elsewhere marks Leonardo and the Pleiad, the book's two most finished arts. Leonardo sought in nature to satisfy "a microscopic sense of finish by her finesse" (LEO §17), and the Medusa has an "exquisitely finished beauty" (LEO §12); whether the head of Jesus in the Last Supper was "finished or unfinished" hardly matters to its effect (LEO §27). The poetry of the Pleiad has the merits "of the old,—grace and finish, perfect in minute detail" (BEL §17). In each case finish is admired and also, faintly, distrusted: the Pleiad's grace is that of "a certain premature agedness" (BEL §17), and Leonardo's "endless re-touchings" left much "unfinished" (LEO §20).

The phrase can be read as Pater's way of honouring craft without making it the end. Finish of expression is the craftsman's virtue turned to the purposes of feeling: the smile of a child carved so exactly that it seems to pass (ROB §4; see Passing of a smile).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "finish" or "finished" occurs, in the order of the book; uses in the sense of ending a task or an action (PIC §6; LEO §§6, 28; WIN §39) are not listed.

**ROB §2** Grace and purity and finish of expression are common to all the Tuscan sculptors.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's sculpture is rough-hewn here, delicately finished there, and its incompleteness is in reality perfect finish.

**ROB §12** Luca's first earthenware was a rough imitation of marble, finished in a few hours.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo left his thoughts of death in half-finished designs, finished and unfinished groups.

**LEO §12** The fascination of corruption penetrates the Medusa's exquisitely finished beauty.

**LEO §17** Leonardo sought to satisfy a microscopic sense of finish in nature's finesse.

**LEO §27** Finished or unfinished, the head of Jesus consummates the sentiment of the Last Supper.

**GIO §21** Giorgione's musical motive can be followed in sketch or finished picture.

**BEL §17** The Pleiad's poetry has the merits of the old, grace and finish, perfect in minute detail.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §2 says that Luca's workshop "became known for terracotta covered with an opaque, durable glaze", and another that "Luca's glazed terracotta was used for both reliefs and sculpture in the round".

## See also

Earthenware; Expression; Incompleteness; Marble; Passing of a smile; Perfect finish; Pure form; Rough-hewn; Terra cotta.

# Foreshortening

*foreshortening*

Attested: *foreshortening* (LEO §12). To foreshorten is to draw a form that recedes from the eye so that it appears shortened, as perspective requires; the Italian word is *scorcio*, and the skill was one that painters of the fifteenth century displayed with pride. Pater uses it once, at the close of his account of the Medusa of the Uffizi: the features are "singularly massive and grand, as we catch them inverted, in a dexterous foreshortening, crown foremost, like a great calm stone against which the wave of serpents breaks" (LEO §12; see Fascination of corruption; Platonic calm). The head is seen inverted, crown foremost, so that the face is upside down and shortened, and the foreshortening gives it its mass. "Dexterous" praises the skill, and the simile turns the skill to meaning. The Gorgon whose look turned men to stone is herself seen as a stone, calm and heavy, while the snakes break against her like the sea. Here, it may be said, the paragraph's beauty and terror meet: the device of perspective makes the corpse monumental.

## See also

Fascination of corruption; Platonic calm.

# Fresco

*fresco, frescoes*

Attested: *frescoes* (PIC §10; MIC §18; GIO §14; WIN §22); *fresco* (LEO §26; WIN §22, twice; WIN §27, twice). Painting on fresh lime plaster, from the Italian *a fresco*, "on the fresh": the pigment, ground in water, is laid on

wet plaster and binds with it as it dries, so that the painter must finish each day's patch before it sets. Pater's places are the great walls of Italy. Pico's limited world is like the map of the world held by the creative Logos "in one of the earlier frescoes of the Campo Santo at Pisa" (PIC §10). Michelangelo receives the Creation from tradition and "does but add the last touches, in transferring it to the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel" (MIC §18; see Discipleship). Leonardo, Pater says, painted the Last Supper "not in fresco, where all must be impromptu, but in oils, the new method which he had been one of the first to welcome, because it allowed of so many after-thoughts" (LEO §26); the edition's note explains that he worked on a dry wall preparation. Giorgione's frescoes on the façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi at Venice passed away, in all probability, almost within his own age, though in Pater's day "some crimson traces" of them still lent splendour to the Rialto (GIO §14); the surviving fragment was detached in 1937. Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican commemorate the tradition of the Church and the classical tradition, "the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22); Angelico's fresco is set beside the many-headed gods of the East as an overcharged symbol (WIN §27).

## See also

Discipleship; Orthodoxy.

## Garland

*garlands*

Attested: *garlands* (ROB §12), its one occurrence. A wreath of flowers, leaves or fruit, worn, hung or carved as ornament. The word came into English from the Old French *garlande*. Pater uses it in the last sentence of the twelfth paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "Luca loved the forms of various fruits, and wrought them into all sorts of marvellous frames and garlands, giving them their natural colours, only subdued a little, a little paler than nature" (ROB §12). The glazed wreaths of lemons, pine cones, apples and leaves that frame the roundels of the della Robbia workshop are among its best-known works. Pater's phrase "a little paler than nature" can be read as a condition on the colour the sixth paragraph had called "an unskilful contrivance" (ROB §6): colour is admitted when it is subdued, held below the brightness of the thing it imitates, as the essay elsewhere holds expression below caricature (see Caricature; Equivalent of colour). The note at ROB §12 says that "Fruits and foliage recur in the glazed frames of the della Robbia family's workshop", and that the comparison "marks Pater's shift from dismissing color as a borrowing to considering it an effect the medium can make its own".

## See also

Caricature; Colours of art; Equivalent of colour; Oriental pottery; Terra cotta.

# Genre

*The easily movable picture of real men and women, refined till it seems a glimpse of life from afar, which Pater makes Giorgione invent · The Renaissance*

*genre*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, "kind": in painting, pictures of scenes of everyday life, as against history, religion and portrait.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Giorgione "is the inventor of genre, of those easily movable pictures which serve neither for uses of devotion, nor of allegorical or historic teaching—little groups of real men and women, amid congruous furniture or landscape—morsels of actual life, conversation or music or play, but refined upon or idealised, till they come to seem like glimpses of life from afar" (GIO §12).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §12 says that Pater "uses 'genre' for portable pictures of apparently ordinary activities with an unusually heightened atmosphere", and that "The claim of invention helps him tell a story of Venetian painting turning toward private collecting and sustained contemplation".

**A place to read.** GIO §12, with GIO §20.

## Meaning

The French *genre*, from the Latin *genus*, is a kind or sort. In the vocabulary of painting that the French academy fixed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the "genres" were the ranked kinds of picture, and "genre painting" came to mean one of the lower of them, below history and portrait, the scenes of daily life that Dutch and Flemish painters had made their own. Pater's use is both historical and polemical. He claims the kind for a Venetian of 1500, and he defines it so that it rises: Giorgione's daily life is "refined upon or idealised".

## Use in the book

The claim comes at the centre of the twelfth paragraph, after Pater has set out the decorative law of Venetian painting (see Decorative). "At last, with final mastery of all the technical secrets of his art, and with somewhat more than 'a spark of the divine fire' to his share, comes Giorgione. He is the inventor of genre, of those easily movable pictures which serve neither for uses of devotion, nor of allegorical or historic teaching—little groups of

real men and women, amid congruous furniture or landscape—morsels of actual life, conversation or music or play, but refined upon or idealised, till they come to seem like glimpses of life from afar" (GIO §12). The definition works by subtraction and then by addition. Genre is not devotion, not allegory, not history (see Devotion); it is real people, in fitting rooms and landscapes, at their talk and music and play. Then it is refined, "till they come to seem like glimpses of life from afar". The distance is the point. Genre in the Dutch sense brings daily life close; Giorgione's makes it far, a life seen as through a window, idealised by the seeing.

The paragraph goes on to the object. Giorgione detaches the spaces of colour from the wall and frames them, so that people may carry them "as one might a poem in manuscript, or a musical instrument", and they come "like an animated presence, into one's cabinet" (GIO §12; see Animated presence). Genre is a kind of subject and also a kind of possession, the private picture. "Of all art such as this, art which has played so large a part in men's culture since that time, Giorgione is the initiator" (GIO §12). The claim is large.

The twentieth paragraph returns to the word to say why the kind suits the condition of music. "It is the school of genre, and employs itself mainly with 'painted idylls,' but, in the production of this pictorial poetry, exercises a wonderful tact in the selecting of such matter as lends itself most readily and entirely to pictorial form, to complete expression by drawing and colour" (GIO §20; see Articulated story). Genre suits painting because its subjects need no story and no doctrine (see Interpenetration; Listening). The low kind of the academies can be read as becoming, in Pater's account, the kind nearest to the highest condition of art.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "genre" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §12** Giorgione is the inventor of genre, easily movable pictures of real men and women, refined till they seem glimpses of life from afar.

**GIO §20** It is the school of genre, and selects matter that lends itself most readily to pictorial form.

## See also

Animated presence; Articulated story; Decorative; Devotion; Interpenetration; Listening.

# Germinal principle

*germinal principle*

Attested: *germinal principle* (LEO §30). "Germinal", from the Latin *germen*, a sprout or seed, describes what contains the beginning of growth; a germinal principle is the seed from which a later thing develops. Pater uses the phrase in his account of La Gioconda, in which, he says, there is "an element ... given to, not invented by, the master" (LEO §30; see Invention). The element, Pater suggests, comes from Verrocchio. In a folio of drawings once owned by Vasari were "certain designs by Verrocchio, faces of such impressive beauty that Leonardo in his boyhood copied them many times. It is hard not to connect with these designs of the elder, by-past master, as with its germinal principle, the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it, which plays over all Leonardo's work" (LEO §30; see Unfathomable smile). On this reading the masterpiece grows from a borrowed seed, and the borrowing is part of its greatness. The Michelangelo essay had made the same point of Michelangelo, who "receives from tradition his central conception, and does but add the last touches" (MIC §18; see Medievalism), and the Leonardo essay finds it in the work that seems most entirely his own. The image itself was in Leonardo from the start: "From childhood we see this image defining itself on the fabric of his dreams" (LEO §30), and Vasari's models "of women smiling" were among his first works (LEO §5; see Passing of a smile).

## See also

Invention; Medievalism; Passing of a smile; Unfathomable smile.

# Giorgionesque

*An influence, a spirit or type in art, more lasting than Giorgione's authentic works and active in men as different as those to whom his supposed works are really assignable · The Renaissance*

*Giorgionesque*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Of the manner of Giorgione; and, as Pater uses the noun, the spirit that descends from him whatever the hand.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For the æsthetic philosopher, therefore, over and above the real Giorgione and his authentic extant works, there remains the Giorgionesque also—an influence, a spirit or type in art, active in men so different as those to whom many of his supposed works are really assignable" (GIO §18).

**In this edition.** The Key Words entry on the Giorgionesque calls it "A quality or influence Pater recognizes across works associated with Giorgione's school", a word that "lets him describe an artistic kinship even where the painter's hand is uncertain".

**A place to read.** GIO §§18–19.

## Meaning

The suffix *-esque*, from the Italian *-esco*, makes adjectives of manner from names, as "Dantesque" or "Michelangelesque" (see Michelangelesque). Pater uses the form as a noun: "the Giorgionesque", a thing in its own right. The change of part of speech is the idea. The adjective describes works by their likeness to a master; the noun names what the likeness is, a type or spirit that exists apart from any one hand.

## Use in the book

The word answers a loss. Criticism has reduced Giorgione's authentic works to "almost one picture" (GIO §13), and "of those six or eight famous pictures it is now known that only one is certainly from Giorgione's hand" (GIO §14; see Authentic works). Pater accepts the verdict and keeps what it cannot touch: "there remains the Giorgionesque also—an influence, a spirit or type in art, active in men so different as those to whom many of his supposed works are really assignable" (GIO §18; see Æsthetic philosopher). The three nouns, influence, spirit, type, define it from three sides: as a force that acts, as an animating breath, and as a form that recurs.

The paragraph then tells how the Giorgionesque was made. "A veritable school, in fact, grew together out of all those fascinating works rightly or wrongly attributed to him; out of many copies from, or variations on him, by unknown or uncertain workmen, whose drawings and designs were, for various reasons, prized as his; out of the immediate impression he made upon his contemporaries, and with which he continued in men's minds; out of many traditions of subject and treatment, which really descend from him to our own time, and by retracing which we fill out the original image" (GIO §18). The school is made of mistakes as well as truths, and Pater counts both. "Rightly or wrongly attributed" is the essay's frankest phrase: the wrong attributions are part of the influence, because they were believed. The result is "a sort of impersonation of Venice itself" (GIO §18; see Impersonation).

The nineteenth paragraph defines the type by its work. "A certain artistic ideal is there defined for us—the conception of a peculiar aim and procedure in art, which we may understand as the Giorgionesque, wherever we find it, whether in Venetian work generally, or in work of our own time" (GIO §19; see Artistic ideal). The Concert is "the typical instance, and a pledge authenticating the connexion of the school, and the spirit of the school, with the master" (GIO §19). "Or in work of our own time" carries the Giorgionesque into Pater's century, and Pater's own note at GIO §16 names Rossetti as the poet "whose own painted work often comes to mind as one ponders over these precious things" (GIO §16), which can be read as one such case. The essay's last paragraph gives the theory (GIO §25; see Indirect influence).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Giorgionesque" occurs, with GIO §20, where Pater gives *il fuoco Giorgionesco*, a phrase he ascribes to Vasari, in the order of the book.

**GIO §18** Over and above the real Giorgione there remains the Giorgionesque, an influence, a spirit or type in art.

**GIO §19** A certain artistic ideal, the Giorgionesque, wherever we find it; the Concert is its typical instance.

**GIO §20** Il fuoco Giorgionesco, the vivacity Pater ascribes to Vasari.

## In this edition

The note at GIO §18 says that Pater's category "includes work by other painters, copies, attributions, and enduring habits of seeing", and that "The difference between influence and authorship is what lets his argument survive changes to the list of works by Giorgione". The Glossary defines the word as "Sharing qualities associated with Giorgione or his circle", and adds: "In Pater it can describe an effect even when attribution remains uncertain."

The Introduction notes that the Concert, the one picture Pater was sure of, is now given by the Uffizi to Titian, and that "his essay already has a name, the *Giorgionesque*, for qualities that can travel beyond the work of one painter". The loss Pater accepted for the other pictures has since overtaken his chief example, and his argument was built to survive it. ### See also

Æsthetic philosopher; Artistic ideal; Ascertained facts; Authentic works; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; Impersonation; Indirect influence; Michelangelesque.

# Gothic manner

*The medieval style of France, strong and often rude, which took on Italian grace in its last phase · The Renaissance*

*Gothic manner*; *old French Gothic*; *Gothic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The style of the later middle ages in the north, in building above all, and by extension in carving, painting and poetry.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In the middle of the sixteenth century, when the spirit of the Renaissance was everywhere, and people had begun to look back with distaste on the works of the middle age, the old Gothic manner had still one chance more, in borrowing something from the rival which was about to supplant it" (BEL §1).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §1 says that the Loire châteaux "bring Italian-derived ornament and planning into a French tradition of towers, roofs and emphatic vertical lines".

**A place to read.** BEL §§1–4.

## Meaning

"Gothic" first meant belonging to the Goths, and Italian writers of the Renaissance used it as a reproach for the architecture of the centuries before their own, as barbarous; by Pater's time the word had lost the reproach and become the name of a style, the pointed architecture of the north and the art that went with it. A "manner" is a way of working, a style as the habit of a time or a hand. The Gothic manner is the medieval way of making things, and in Pater it carries both its strength and its roughness.

## Use in the book

The Du Bellay essay opens with the Gothic manner at the end of its life. When people had begun to look back on medieval work "with distaste", the old manner "had still one chance more, in borrowing something from the rival which was about to supplant it" (BEL §1; see Borrowed interest). The result was "a new and peculiar phase of taste with qualities and a charm of its own, blending the somewhat attenuated grace of Italian ornament with the general outlines of northern design" (BEL §1). The outline is Gothic, the ornament Italian, and the blend is French. Pater's example is the Château de Gaillon, "a Gothic donjon veiled faintly by a surface of dainty Italian traceries" (BEL §1; see Donjon), and he draws the conclusion that the Renaissance in France is "the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself" (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer). The Gothic manner is not replaced by the Renaissance; the Renaissance is its last phase.

The second paragraph shows the manner at its best and its worst. French work had always had a daintiness of hand, characteristic "too of a hundred French Gothic carvings and traceries" (BEL §2; see Daintiness), and in the Gothic cathedrals and the chansons de geste the ponderous mass becomes graceful, "although below both alike there is a fund of mere Gothic strength, or heaviness" (BEL §2; see Chanson de geste). Gothic, in the essay, is the ground under the refinement, a strength that can be felt in the carving and a heaviness that the carving lightens.

The third paragraph says how deep the change went, and the answer is that it did not go deep. Ronsard accepted "that influx of Renaissance taste, which, leaving the buildings, the language, the art, the poetry of France, at bottom, what they were, old French Gothic still, gilds their surfaces with a strange, delightful, foreign aspect passing over all that northern land, in itself neither deeper nor more permanent than a chance effect of light" (BEL §3). The sentence can be read as the essay's most exact statement of its view. The Renaissance in France is a light on a Gothic surface: delightful,

foreign and passing. In poetry the old French chanson, "like the old northern Gothic ornament", was "often, in its essence, something rude and formless" until Ronsard gave it structure (BEL §4; see Pindaric ode). Gothic is the rude form that the Pleiad refines.

Elsewhere in the book the word has a gentler sense. Botticelli's Birth of Venus has draperies "powdered all over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies" (BOT §8; see Quaint conceit), and there the Gothic manner is a decorative habit, the medieval love of small pattern lingering in a pagan picture. In the first essay it is at the foot of "that early Gothic tower, which the next generation raised to grace the precincts of Abelard's school", that Michelet sees in thought "a terrible assembly" of all that came of Abelard's teaching (FRE §4; see Scholastic philosophy). The Gothic is present at both ends of the book's Renaissance, in Abelard's Paris and in the France of the Pleiad, and the book's view of the Renaissance as an effort of the middle age itself can be read in the word's survival.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Gothic" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §4** At the foot of the early Gothic tower by Abelard's school Michelet sees a terrible assembly.

**BOT §8** The Venus's draperies are powdered all over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies.

**BEL §1** The old Gothic manner had one chance more, in borrowing something from the rival about to supplant it.

**BEL §2** Below the Gothic cathedrals and chansons de geste is a fund of mere Gothic strength, or heaviness.

**BEL §3** Renaissance taste left the buildings and poetry of France old French Gothic still, gilding their surfaces.

**BEL §4** The old French chanson, like the old northern Gothic ornament, was often rude and formless.

## Pater's sources

Pater's own note at BEL §2, which was first printed in the third edition of 1888, reads: "The purely artistic aspects of this subject have been interpreted, in a work of great taste and learning, by Mrs. Mark Pattison.—*The Renaissance of Art in France*." Emilia Pattison, the art historian later known as Lady Dilke, published *The Renaissance of Art in France* in two volumes in 1879.[287]

[287] Mrs. Mark Pattison [Emilia Francis Strong, later Lady Dilke], *The Renaissance of Art in France*, 2 vols. (London, 1879).

## In this edition

The notes at BEL §1 describe Gaillon, the château of Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, as "an early site of Italianate ornament in France", and say that the Loire châteaux "bring Italian-derived ornament and planning into a French tradition of towers, roofs and emphatic vertical lines".

## See also

Borrowed interest; Chanson de geste; Daintiness; Donjon; Pindaric ode; Quaint conceit; Saint Martin's summer; Scholastic philosophy; Tracery.

# Grotesque

*What the Greek ideal excluded, and every later art admitted · The Renaissance*

*grotesque*, *grotesques*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The grotesque is the fantastic, distorted or monstrous in art, and in decoration the ornament of hybrid creatures and twisting foliage.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "All such instances may be ranged under the grotesque; and the Hellenic ideal has nothing in common with the grotesque" (WIN §38).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §11 and WIN §38, with BOT §3.

## Meaning

The Italian *grottesca* is the ornament of the *grotte*, the buried rooms of Nero's Golden House in Rome, which were found in the 1480s and taken for caves; their painted walls, with figures sprouting into leaves and beasts, gave Renaissance decorators a new style and the style a name. The word then widened to any art of distortion and incongruity. Victor Hugo's preface to *Cromwell* (1827) made the grotesque the mark of modern art against the ancient,[288] and John Ruskin devoted a chapter of *The Stones of Venice* (1853) to the "Grotesque Renaissance" and its debasement.[289] By Pater's time the word named a category of the imagination as well as a kind of ornament.

## Use in the book

The word occurs in eight paragraphs, and together they draw a line through the history of art with the Greeks on one side. The Winckelmann essay states the line. Some of the feebler allegorical designs of the middle age

[288] Victor Hugo, *Cromwell* (Paris, 1827), preface.

[289] John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. III (London, 1853), chapter 3, "Grotesque Renaissance".

portray “isolated qualities” as “by so many masks”, and its religious art has “faces fixed immovably into blank types of placid reverie”; Pater ranges all such instances under the grotesque and draws the line quoted above (WIN §38). Every art after the Greek has something of it: medieval work shows a convulsive energy “felt, even in its most graceful products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque” (MIC §2; see Convulsive energy; Quaintness); the charnel-house details nest “together with birds and flowers” in sixteenth-century traceries (BEL §16); the modern world’s art is “subtle and penetrative, yet somewhat grotesque” (WIN §45).

The Leonardo essay finds the grotesque in nature itself. “Legions of grotesques sweep under his hand; for has not nature too her grotesques—the rent rock, the distorting lights of evening on lonely roads, the unveiled structure of man in the embryo, or the skeleton?” (LEO §11; see Unveiled human form). The question is rhetorical and bold: if nature makes grotesques, the Hellenic ideal that excludes them excludes part of nature. The Botticelli essay gives the word a narrower use, as a problem of translation. Dante’s grotesques are “so often a stumbling-block to painters” (BOT §3; see Lower in key), and the Birth of Venus is framed by “the grotesque emblems of the middle age” (BOT §8; see Quaint conceit), so that the Greek goddess rises among the very forms the Greeks did without.

The word can be read as the book’s name for what its Hellenism leaves out and its sensibility cannot. Pater accepts Winckelmann’s line and then crosses it in every essay. He notes that Winckelmann “could hardly have conceived of the subtle and penetrative, yet somewhat grotesque art of the modern world” (WIN §45), and the remark is a judgement: the limit of Winckelmann’s Greece is the limit of his imagination. Botticelli’s Venus, with its grotesque emblems around a figure like the nudes of the French painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867), can stand for the whole book, the Hellenic ideal held inside a frame it would have refused.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “grotesque” or “grotesques” occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Dante’s grotesques, a stumbling-block to painters, must be lowered in key when translated into visible form.

**BOT §8** The grotesque emblems of the middle age frame Botticelli’s Venus.

**MIC §2** The convulsive energy of medieval art is felt, even in its most graceful products, as a subdued quaintness or grotesque.

**MIC §19** The preoccupation with death might have become merely morbid or grotesque, as in the Danse Macabre.

**LEO §11** Legions of grotesques sweep under Leonardo’s hand; nature too has her grotesques.

**BEL §16** The grotesque details of the charnel-house nest in the traceries of sixteenth-century architecture.

**WIN §38** The Hellenic ideal has nothing in common with the grotesque.

**WIN §45** Winckelmann could hardly have conceived the somewhat grotesque art of the modern world.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the word.

## See also

Convulsive energy; Danse Macabre; Hellenic ideal; Lower in key; Quaint conceit; Quaintness; Unveiled human form.

# Half-emergent form

*The figure that seems still to be rising out of its block, left for the spectator to complete · The Renaissance*
*half-emergent form*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A form that has only half come out: in sculpture, a figure still partly held by the unworked stone.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo's incompleteness "trusts to the spectator to complete the half-emergent form" (MIC §4).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §4 says that "Pater treats the appearance of emergence from stone as an aesthetic resource", and points to "The four Florentine Prisoners".

**A place to read.** MIC §4.

## Meaning

To emerge is to come up out of a liquid, from the Latin *emergere*. A half-emergent form is caught in the middle of that movement, like a swimmer breaking the surface. In sculpture the image is literal: the carver works into a block, and a figure he has not finished seems to be rising out of it, half free and half still stone.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the third sentence of the fourth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, whose first part names the means by which Michelangelo reaches ideality of expression (see Ideality of expression): he secures it "by an incompleteness, which is surely not always undesigned, and which, as I think, no one regrets, and trusts to the spectator to complete the half-emergent form" (MIC §4; see Incompleteness).

The phrase gives the spectator a part. The figure is not finished, and the work trusts the one who looks to finish it, in the imagination. The emergence, which the sculptor began, is completed by the spectator's eye. The della Robbia essay had said the same of nearly all his sculpture: its incompleteness "suggests rather than realises actual form", and those who wonder at it feel "that they too would lose something if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone" (ROB §10; see Half-realised form). The Michelangelo essay turns the image toward the spectator, who completes the emergence.

The rest of the paragraph extends the image to the stone itself: his persons have "something of the unwrought stone about them", and with him "the very rocks seem to have life" (MIC §4; see Master of live stone). It ends with the morsel of uncut stone left on the David's head (MIC §4; see Rough-hewn mass).

The edition's note separates two questions the phrase joins, the effect on a viewer and the reasons the carving stopped. The four Prisoners in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, carved for the tomb of Pope Julius II and left unfinished, are the clearest examples: figures twisting out of rough blocks, some of them hardly more than a torso emerging from the mass. Pater's hedge, "surely not always undesigned", makes the same separation (MIC §4; see Incompleteness).

The phrase may be taken to unite the two themes of the paragraph, the creation of life and the work of the spectator. The "creation of life", "always in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled" (MIC §4; see Creation of life), is the motive of all Michelangelo's work, and the half-emergent form is that creation caught in the act. The figure has begun to live and is not yet free; the one who looks completes it, and so takes part in the making of life that is the subject of the whole.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §4** Michelangelo's incompleteness trusts to the spectator to complete the half-emergent form.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §4 says that "Pater treats the appearance of emergence from stone as an aesthetic resource. Michelangelo left several sculptures at different stages of completion, so the effect on a viewer and the circumstances in which carving stopped are separate questions. The four Florentine Prisoners offer especially clear examples."

## See also

Creation of life; Half-realised form; Ideality of expression; Incompleteness; Master of live stone; Rough-hewn; Rough-hewn mass.

*The figure that never quite emerges from Michelangelo's stone, and the viewer who would lose something if it did · The Renaissance*

*half-realised form*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A form only half made real, partly carved and partly still in the block.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Viewers feel "that they too would lose something if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone, so rough-hewn here, so delicately finished there" (ROB §10).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §10 says that "What Pater takes to be a recurring expressive quality should be distinguished from the separate historical question of why a given sculpture remained unfinished".

**A place to read.** ROB §10, with MIC §4.

## Meaning

"Realise" in Pater has its first sense, to make real, to give actual existence (see Realise). A half-realised form is a form that has half come into being: in Michelangelo's unfinished statues, a body that is polished in one place and still rough stone in another. The phrase describes a state between the idea and the thing.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the fourth sentence of the tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "Many have wondered at that incompleteness, suspecting, however, that Michelangelo himself loved and was loath to change it, and feeling at the same time that they too would lose something if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone, so rough-hewn here, so delicately finished there; and they have wished to fathom the charm of this incompleteness" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness; Rough-hewn).

The sentence is written from the viewer's side. "Many" wonder, suspect, feel and wish; the subject is everyone who has looked at the unfinished marbles and been moved by them. Pater gives them three thoughts in order: that the artist loved the incompleteness, that they too would lose by its completion, and that its charm needs explaining. The middle thought is the important one. The viewer would lose something if the form "ever quite emerged": what he values is the emerging itself, the form caught on the way from stone to body. The next sentences give the explanation the viewers wanted: incompleteness is Michelangelo's "equivalent for colour in sculpture" (ROB §10; see Equivalent of colour).

The Michelangelo essay returns to the image and gives the viewer a part to play. Michelangelo's incompleteness "trusts to the spectator to complete

the half-emergent form" (MIC §4; see Half-emergent form; Ideality of expression). The half-realised form is completed in the mind of the one who looks at it. The same paragraph tells of "a morsel of uncut stone" left on the David's head (MIC §4; see Rough-hewn).

The phrase can be read as an image of Pater's own criticism. His subjects often reach him half-realised: sculptors whose histories are "for the most part lost, or told but briefly" (ROB §1), a Giorgione "reduced almost to a name" by his critics (GIO §14). He trusts the reader, as Michelangelo trusts the spectator, to complete the form, and he values the suggestion above the full statement, as the viewer of Michelangelo's unfinished Prisoners values the figure that has not quite left the stone.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once; the related phrase "half-emergent form" occurs at MIC §4.

**ROB §10** Viewers would lose something if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone.

**MIC §4** Michelangelo trusts to the spectator to complete the half-emergent form.

## Later readings

Independently of Pater, the French sculptor Auguste Rodin made the half-emerged figure a deliberate form in his marbles, as in *La Pensée*, a young woman's head rising from an uncut block.[290]

## In this edition

The note at ROB §10 says that the quality is "Often discussed under the Italian term non finito, 'unfinished.' What Pater takes to be a recurring expressive quality should be distinguished from the separate historical question of why a given sculpture remained unfinished." The note at MIC §4 says that "Pater treats the appearance of emergence from stone as an aesthetic resource", and that "the effect on a viewer and the circumstances in which carving stopped are separate questions".

## See also

Equivalent of colour; Half-emergent form; Ideality of expression; Incompleteness; Perfect finish; Realise; Rough-hewn.

# Hard realism

*The tendency of stone to compete with the body it represents, and so to become heavy, fixed and dead · The Renaissance*

[290] Auguste Rodin, *La Pensée*, marble, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

*hard realism*; *realism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Realism is the faithful imitation of things as they are; a hard realism is one that imitates without softening or selection.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Sculpture's limitation "consists in the tendency of such work to a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form" (ROB §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** ROB §6, with ROB §10.

## Meaning

"Realism" entered English criticism in the 1850s, from French, as the name of a programme: the faithful rendering of ordinary things without idealisation (see Realist). Pater uses the word more often of a tendency than of a programme, and in sculpture he means by it the material's own pull toward literalness. "Hard" is both a judgement and a description: the realism is harsh, and it belongs to a hard material.

## Use in the book

The first sentence of the sixth paragraph of the della Robbia essay is the phrase's chief passage: "That limitation results from the material, and other necessary conditions, of all sculptured work, and consists in the tendency of such work to a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form, that solid material frame which only motion can relieve, a thing of heavy shadows, and an individuality of expression pushed to caricature" (ROB §6; see Special limitation; Presentment; Caricature).

The sentence lists five symptoms of one condition. Hard realism, mere form, a solid frame, heavy shadows, expression pushed to caricature: each names a way in which a statue is too much a thing. The next sentence restates the tendency: "this tendency to the hard presentment of mere form trying vainly to compete with the reality of nature itself" (ROB §6). The reason can be read in the material. A painted figure is plainly an image, flat on its canvas; a carved figure stands in the same space as the viewer, with the same three dimensions as a body, and so invites comparison with a body and always loses. "Only motion can relieve" the solid frame, and the statue cannot move. Sculpture's danger, on this account, is that it is too real.

The rest of the essay gives the ways out (see Equivalent of colour). Michelangelo "avoided a too heavy realism" by leaving his sculpture incomplete, his way "of relieving its stiff realism" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness). The Tuscan sculptors repressed "all such curves as indicate solid form" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism). The Greek colour "never permitting more than a very limited realism" (WIN §34) belongs to the same discipline.

The word's other use in the book is historical and carries no blame. The movement of the fifteenth century was "partly also the coming of what is called the 'modern spirit,' with its realism, its appeal to experience" (LEO §17). Realism here is the method of Leonardo's science, the appeal to experience and the return to nature.

The two uses can be read as Pater's double attitude to the real. In the study of nature he welcomes realism as the appeal to experience; in sculpture he fears it as the death of the image. The difference is between knowing a thing and making one: the student of nature should be as literal as he can, but the artist who is literal in stone makes a corpse, "its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6; see Etherealise).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "realism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** Sculpture tends to a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form trying vainly to compete with nature.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo avoided a too heavy realism; incompleteness relieves the stiff realism of pure form.

**LEO §17** The modern spirit came with its realism, its appeal to experience.

**WIN §34** The colour of Greek sculpture never permitted more than a very limited realism.

## See also

Caricature; Conventionalism; Equivalent of colour; Etherealise; Incompleteness; Presentment; Realist; Special limitation.

# Harpsichord

*harpsichord*

Attested: *harpsichord* (GIO §15). The harpsichord is a keyboard instrument whose strings are plucked by quills when the keys are pressed; the English name comes from the Italian *arpicordo* or the French *harpechorde*, formed from the words for harp and string, and its *s* is unexplained. Pater uses the word in the sentence that describes the one of the famous pictures that criticism left to Giorgione: "The Concert in the Pitti Palace, in which a monk, with cowl and tonsure, touches the keys of a harpsichord, while a clerk, placed behind him, grasps the handle of a viol, and a third, with cap and plume, seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing, is undoubtedly Giorgione's" (GIO §15; see Cowl; Clerk). The three musicians are caught at three moments of one act: touching the keys, grasping the viol, waiting to sing. The instant is the one before music begins, or between its phrases, and Pater's next sentence makes the picture

hear it, praising "the skill which has caught the waves of wandering sound, and fixed them for ever on the lips and hands" (GIO §15; see Wandering sound). The note at GIO §15 says that the Uffizi now gives the Concert to Titian, and that "The musicians' hands and exchanged glances still make it a revealing test of Pater's account of visual rhythm". The harpsichord stands at the centre of the picture that is the essay's "typical instance" of the Giorgionesque (GIO §19), in which music is both the subject and the law (see Condition of music).

## See also

Clerk; Condition of music; Cowl; Distinction; Listening; Wandering sound.

# Hieratic preciseness

*The priestly exactness and grace that Leonardo kept from Verrocchio's studio to the last · The Renaissance*

*hieratic preciseness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An exactness like that of sacred art: formal, ordered, set apart, and finished in every part.

**In *The Renaissance*.** To the last Leonardo recalls Verrocchio's studio "in a hieratic preciseness and grace, as of a sanctuary swept and garnished" (LEO §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §8.

## Meaning

"Hieratic" comes through Latin from the Greek *hieratikos*, priestly, from *hiereus*, priest, and *hieros*, sacred. The Greeks used it for the priestly script of Egypt, and the art criticism of the nineteenth century took it for the formal, traditional style of religious art, bound by rule and set apart from ordinary life: Egyptian and early Greek sculpture, the icons of Byzantium. "Preciseness" is exactness, with a touch of fastidiousness. A hieratic preciseness is an exactness that has the air of a rite.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes a long sentence in the eighth paragraph of the Leonardo essay, which lists what Leonardo kept from his apprenticeship: "And as in a sense he anticipates Leonardo, so, to the last Leonardo recalls the studio of Verrocchio, in the love of beautiful toys, such as the vessel of water for a mirror, and lovely needle-work about the implicated hands in the Modesty and Vanity, and of reliefs, like those cameos which in the

Virgin of the Balances hang all round the girdle of Saint Michael, and of bright variegated stones, such as the agates in the Saint Anne, and in a hieratic preciseness and grace, as of a sanctuary swept and garnished. Amid all the cunning and intricacy of his Lombard manner this never left him" (LEO §8; see Cameo).

The sentence moves from things to a quality. First come the goldsmith's objects, the toys, the needlework, the cameos and the agates, small and bright and finished; then the quality they share, "a hieratic preciseness and grace". The last clause sets it against Leonardo's later manner. The "cunning and intricacy" of Milan were added on top; the priestly exactness of the Florentine workshop lay beneath and "never left him". The essay has already shown the workshop where it was learned, Verrocchio "chasing brooches for the copes of Santa Maria Novella" (LEO §7; see Chasing; Cope), and much of it, Pater says, "there must have been in that lost picture of Paradise", the perfection of the older miniature style (LEO §8; see Miniature-painting).

"Swept and garnished" is the wording of the King James Version in the parable of the unclean spirit, who returns to the house he left and finds it "empty, swept, and garnished", and brings seven worse spirits with him (Matthew 12:44; Luke 11:25). Pater's simile takes only the order and the cleanness of the phrase. On one reading the parable's sequel is not out of place in an essay whose women "are not of the Christian family" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias): the sanctuary is kept clean, and what comes to dwell in it is strange.

The phrase can be read as one half of a paradox the essay goes on to state. Leonardo is "the most profane of painters", for whom the sacred subject "is often merely the pretext" (LEO §25; see Conventional associations; Sacred and profane); yet his manner keeps the exactness of sacred art. The hieratic preciseness is a priestly manner without the priest's meaning. The same exactness returns in the essay's last sentence, where Leonardo is one who desired beauty "always in such precise and definite forms, as hands or flowers or hair" (LEO §36; see Desire of beauty), and in the portrait of Beatrice d'Este, painted "precise and grave, full of the refinement of the dead" (LEO §19).

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §8** To the last Leonardo recalls the studio of Verrocchio, in a hieratic preciseness and grace, as of a sanctuary swept and garnished.

## See also

Cameo; Chasing; Conventional associations; Cope; Daughters of Herodias; Desire of beauty; Finesse; Miniature-painting; Sacred and profane.

## Human image

*human image*

Attested: *human image* (GIO §24). The phrase names the figure of a person in a picture, as against its setting. Pater uses it in the last sentence of his description of Venetian landscape, after the gold thread and the blue peak and the long valley in which Jacob embraces Rachel: "Nowhere is there a truer instance of that balance, that modulated unison of landscape and persons—of the human image and its accessories—already noticed as characteristic of the Venetian school, so that, in it, neither personage nor scenery is ever a mere pretext for the other" (GIO §24; see Gold thread). "Accessories" is a term of the studio, the things beside the main figure, and Pater's sentence denies them their lesser rank. In Venetian painting the landscape is not a background to the persons, nor the persons an excuse for the landscape; they are "modulated", tuned to each other like voices in a chord. The essay's sixth paragraph had said the same of the Venetian masters, who use the details of their Alpine country "but as the notes of a music which duly accompanies the presence of their men and women" (GIO §6; see Abstracted elements).

## See also

Abstracted elements; Gold thread; Matter and form; Modulated unison.

## Human personality

*human personality*

Attested: *human personality* (LEO §19). Pater uses the phrase once, as the second object of Leonardo's study: "And not into nature only; but he plunged also into human personality, and became above all a painter of portraits" (LEO §19), with faces of a modelling more skilful than any before (LEO §19; see Modelling). To "take a character as it was, and delicately sound its stops" suited his curiosity (LEO §19; see Sound its stops). "Plunged" repeats the verb of the ninth paragraph, where he "plunged, then, into the study of nature" (LEO §9): personality is a depth, like nature, to be entered. Elsewhere the book uses "personality" of the critic's objects and of the self. In the Preface "this engaging personality presented in life or in a book" is an object of æsthetic criticism like a song or a picture (PRE §2; see Engaging personality), and the Conclusion speaks of "that thick wall of

personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us" (CON §3). Leonardo's portraits, on this reading, are the painter's way through that wall: to "take a character as it was" is to reach the person the Conclusion thinks unreachable. The portraits Pater names, of Ludovico Sforza, his mistresses and the Duchess Beatrice, bring the attributions of his day, and the notes at LEO §19 record the present identification of Cecilia Gallerani with the *Lady with an Ermine* in Kraków and the uncertainty about the sitter of *La Belle Ferronnière*.

## See also

Engaging personality; Modelling; Sound its stops.

# Ideal art

*Greek art as the Winckelmann essay defines it: thought that does not outrun its sensible form, made possible by a pause in reflexion and a happy body · The Renaissance*

*this ideal art*; *ideal artists*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Art that realises an ideal, a perfect form; in the essay, art in which the idea and its sensible embodiment are perfectly matched.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek art is an ideal art "in which the thought does not outstrip or lie beyond the proper range of its sensible embodiment" (WIN §29).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §28 says that with the Venus of Melos Pater "supplies his own example of an ideal in which meaning seems to reside entirely in the visible figure".

**A place to read.** WIN §§27–29.

## Meaning

"Ideal" in the language of German aesthetics, from Winckelmann to Hegel, meant beauty fully realised, the perfect form that nature only approaches. Hegel made the Ideal the subject of the first part of his lectures on aesthetics, and found it most fully achieved in classical, that is Greek, art.[291] Pater's phrase belongs to that tradition, and his definition can be read as Hegel's in plainer words: ideal art is art in which the thought and its sensible form are equal, neither falling short of the other.

[291] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), part I, "Die Idee des Kunstschönen oder das Ideal"; part II, section 2, "Die klassische Kunstform".

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the head of the twenty-ninth paragraph, after the contrast of Angelico's Coronation with the Venus of Melos. Medieval and oriental art are "inadequate to the matter they clothe" (WIN §27; see Finite image); before the Venus the mind "begins and ends with the finite image" (WIN §28; see Finite image). "This ideal art, in which the thought does not outstrip or lie beyond the proper range of its sensible embodiment, could not have arisen out of a phase of life that was uncomely or poor" (WIN §29). The definition has two halves, and the paragraph gives a condition for each. The thought must not outstrip the form: that requires the "delicate pause in Greek reflexion" (WIN §29; see Pause in time). The form must be worthy of the thought: that requires "the perfect animal nature of the Greeks" (WIN §29; see Animal nature). These are "the two conditions of an artistic ideal" (WIN §29; see Artistic ideal).

Pater then gives the second condition its mythology and its climate. "Those 'Mothers' who, in the second part of Faust, mould and remould the typical forms that appear in human history, preside, at the beginning of Greek culture, over such a concourse of happy physical conditions as ever generates by natural laws some rare type of intellectual or spiritual life" (WIN §29). The Mothers are Goethe's goddesses of the realm of forms, to whom Faust descends for the tripod by which he calls up the shades of Paris and Helen;[292] Pater makes them the presiding powers of a happy accident. Then the conditions themselves: "That delicate air, 'nimbly and sweetly recommending itself' to the senses, the finer aspects of nature, the finer lime and clay of the human form, and modelling of the dainty framework of the human countenance:—these are the good luck of the Greek when he enters upon life" (WIN §29). The air is described in Duncan's words before Macbeth's castle, where "the air / Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself / Unto our gentle senses";[293] Pater does not name the play, and the borrowed line, spoken by a king about to be murdered, can be read as giving his praise of the Greek climate an undertone of which he says nothing.

The phrase returns once, transformed, in Hegel's words at WIN §41: the men of the age of Pericles "are ideal artists of themselves, cast each in one flawless mould" (WIN §41; see Plastic character). Ideal art is no longer only a kind of statue but a kind of life, and the essay's claim is that in Greece the two were made of the same material.

The phrase can be read as the essay's highest praise and its gentlest warning. Ideal art is a balance, and a balance can be lost from either side. The thought may grow too inward, as it did in the middle age, and outrun the form; the form may lose its worth, as the "uncomely or poor" phase of life would have denied it (WIN §29). Greek art had both conditions by

[292] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust: Der Tragödie zweiter Teil* (1832), Act I, "Finstere Galerie".

[293] Shakespeare, *Macbeth* I.vi.1–3.

"good luck" (WIN §29), and the word, used twice in the paragraph, is not a casual one. The ideal was given, not earned, and the essay's later pages ask how much of it can be earned again.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with WIN §41, where the Greeks are ideal artists of themselves, in the order of the book.

**WIN §29** This ideal art, in which the thought does not outstrip its sensible embodiment, required a pause in reflexion and a perfect animal nature.

**WIN §41** In Hegel's words, the men of the age of Pericles are ideal artists of themselves.

## See also

Animal nature; Artistic ideal; Finite image; Pause in time; Plastic character; Sensible analogue.

# Ideality of expression

*The raising of a figure above actuality, reached by abstraction in Greece, low relief in Tuscany and incompleteness in Michelangelo · The Renaissance ideality of expression*; *ideality*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Ideality is the quality of being ideal; ideality of expression is the raising of what a figure expresses above the actual and the particular.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo "secures that ideality of expression which in Greek sculpture depends on a delicate system of abstraction, and in early Italian sculpture on lowness of relief, by an incompleteness" (MIC §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §4, with ROB §§7–11.

## Meaning

"Ideal" is from the Greek *idea*, the form of a thing (see Idealise), and "ideality", a word of the eighteenth century, names the quality of what is ideal, raised above the accidents of the real. Expression in Pater's criticism is what a work conveys of feeling and thought (see Expression). Ideality of expression is the condition in which a figure conveys not a passing mood but something lasting and general, the kind of expression that sculpture, with its hard material, especially demands.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the third sentence of the fourth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "As I have already pointed out, he secures that ideality of expression which in Greek sculpture depends on a delicate system of abstraction, and in early Italian sculpture on lowness of relief, by an incompleteness, which is surely not always undesigned, and which, as I think, no one regrets, and trusts to the spectator to complete the half-emergent form" (MIC §4; see Half-emergent form).

"As I have already pointed out" refers back to the essay on Luca della Robbia, which made the argument in full. There Pater explains the problem: sculpture, working in hard and colourless material, tends to "a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form" (ROB §6; see Hard realism), and each great school found a way of escaping it. The Greeks used *Allgemeinheit*, seeking "the type in the individual" and purging all accident (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit); the Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century used low relief, "repressing all such curves as indicate solid form, and throwing the whole into low relief" (ROB §11; see Low relief); Michelangelo used incompleteness, which "suggests rather than realises actual form" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness). The Michelangelo essay repeats the scheme in a single sentence and names the end the three systems serve: ideality of expression.

The sentence sets the three methods as equals. Abstraction, low relief and incompleteness are different means to the same end, and none is ranked above the others. That is the force of "that ideality": one quality, reached three ways. The hedges, "surely not always undesigned" and "as I think, no one regrets" (MIC §4; see Incompleteness), leave the question of design open and the result welcome.

The noun "ideality" occurs once more, of dramatic poetry: "Now it is part of the ideality of the highest sort of dramatic poetry, that it presents us with a kind of profoundly significant and animated instants" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). There the ideal is reached by concentration: a single gesture or look in which a long history is condensed. The two uses can be read together. In sculpture ideality is gained by taking away, by abstraction, flatness or incompleteness; in drama by drawing together into an instant. Both lift the work above the actual by refusing to show everything.

The phrase holds, on this reading, Pater's general theory of sculpture. Sculpture, being the most material of the arts, is in most danger of mere realism; its masters are those who find a way to make the marble express an idea. The Michelangelo essay's place for the phrase, at the head of its account of the unfinished figures and the living rocks, makes incompleteness not a defect but one of three great solutions.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ideality" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §4** Michelangelo secures ideality of expression by incompleteness, as Greek sculpture did by abstraction and Tuscan sculpture by low relief.

**GIO §20** It is part of the ideality of the highest dramatic poetry to present profoundly significant and animated instants.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Animation; Expression; Half-emergent form; Hard realism; Ideal instant; Idealise; Incompleteness; Low relief.

# Il fuoco Giorgionesco

*The Giorgionesque fire: the vivacity with which Giorgione arrests the sudden act and the passing expression · The Renaissance*

*il fuoco Giorgionesco*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Italian, "the Giorgionesque fire": the quickness and heat of Giorgione's rendering of life in motion.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The sudden act, the rapid transition of thought, the passing expression—these he arrests with that vivacity which Vasari has attributed to him, il fuoco Giorgionesco, as he terms it" (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §20 renders it "The Giorgionesque fire" and says that "The phrase makes the painter's quick apprehension of movement a kind of fire".

**A place to read.** GIO §20.

## Meaning

The Italian *fuoco* is fire, and in the language of the arts, as in English, it is ardour, spirit, the warmth that makes a work live. *Giorgionesco* is the adjective of the painter's name, Giorgionesque. Pater gives the phrase to Vasari, as Vasari's name for Giorgione's vivacity, but it is not in Vasari's Life; it belongs to later Venetian connoisseurship, which used it of Titian's colour.[294] Pater puts it in Italian, as a term of art borrowed from the painters' own tradition. The fire is a fire of speed: the power to catch a moment before it goes.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the twentieth paragraph, just after Pater's list of the instantaneous motions the master reproduces, the lacing-on of armour, the fainting lady, the embrace "caught with death itself from dying lips" (GIO

[294] Ricciarda Ricorda, "Il 'fuoco giorgionesco' da Angelo Conti a d'Annunzio", *Archivio d'Annunzio* 2 (2015), 129–142, at 136, citing Salvatore Settis, *La "Tempesta" interpretata* (Turin, 1978), 78, and Anton Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana* (Venice, 1771), 105.

§20; see Instantaneous motion). Then: "The sudden act, the rapid transition of thought, the passing expression—these he arrests with that vivacity which Vasari has attributed to him, il fuoco Giorgionesco, as he terms it" (GIO §20). Three things are arrested, an act, a thought, an expression, and each is "sudden", "rapid" or "passing". The fire is the painter's answer to the speed of what he paints: he burns as fast as life moves.

The phrase gathers a figure that runs through the essay. Giorgione comes "with somewhat more than 'a spark of the divine fire' to his share" (GIO §12); Giorgione himself, "the most vivid and stimulating of Venetian masters", was "a live flame, as it seemed, in those old shadowy times", and what remains of him "has been reduced almost to a name by his most recent critics" (GIO §14); and the air of his school is "literally empyrean, all impurities being burnt out of it" (GIO §23; see Empyrean). The divine spark is genius, the live flame is the man as his own age saw him, the Giorgionesque fire is the painter's quickness, and the burnt air is the purity of his world. Pater's Giorgione is a figure of fire from first to last, and the essay's account of his short life, "early dead, but celebrated" (GIO §17), is the account of a flame. "Fuoco" and "flame" can be read as Pater's way of keeping the master alive after the critics have taken his pictures: what remains is heat, and the heat passes to the Giorgionesque (see Giorgionesque).

The figure points forward to the Conclusion and the book's most famous flame, its call "To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The Conclusion was written first, in 1868, and the Giorgione essay nine years later; the fire of the painter can be read as the Conclusion's ideal found in an artist. Giorgione arrests the passing expression with fire, and the Conclusion asks its reader to burn with the passing moment.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Giorgione essay in which fire, flame or burning is a figure, with the Conclusion's flame, in the order of the book.

**GIO §7** In Mariana's song the kindling force and poetry of the whole play passes into music.

**GIO §12** Giorgione comes with somewhat more than a spark of the divine fire to his share.

**GIO §14** What remains of the most vivid of Venetian masters, a live flame, has been reduced almost to a name.

**GIO §20** He arrests the sudden act and the passing expression with il fuoco Giorgionesco.

**GIO §23** The air of Giorgione's school is literally empyrean, all impurities burnt out of it.

**CON §5** To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame is success in life.

**C73 §6** The 1873 text of the same sentence.

## Later readings

The phrase was not new in Italian: the Venetian connoisseur Anton Maria Zanetti had written in *Della pittura veneziana* (1771) that Titian's colour leans much towards the Giorgionesque fire. What Pater's admirers took from him was the ascription to Vasari and the weight he gave the phrase. The Italian critic Angelo Conti, in his monograph on Giorgione (1894), and his friend the poet Gabriele d'Annunzio, whose Venetian novel of 1900 is called *Il fuoco*, both made the Giorgionesque fire a figure for the splendour of Venetian life; a study by Ricciarda Ricorda traces the phrase from Pater through Conti to d'Annunzio.[295]

## See also

Empyrean; Giorgionesque; Hard, gem-like flame; Ideal instant; Instantaneous motion.

# Illuminator

*illuminator*

Attested: *illuminator* (BOT §3). The painter of a manuscript's initials, borders and miniatures, who lit up the page with colour and gold; the word for the art is from the Latin *illuminare*, to light up (see Illumination). Early printed books often left spaces for an illuminator to fill by hand, so that a printed volume could be finished like a manuscript, and the Florentine Dante of 1481 did so, leaving at each canto a space "for the hand of the illuminator", which in a few copies was filled with engraved prints instead (BOT §3; see Engraved plate). The sentence records a change of crafts at a single page. The space was made for a hand; it was filled by a press. Pater's interest is in the experiment, but the phrase "the hand of the illuminator" keeps the older art in view, and with it the luxury of the page that the misprinted plate disturbs.

## See also

Engraved plate; Illumination; Impression.

[295] Ricorda, "Il 'fuoco giorgionesco' da Angelo Conti a d'Annunzio", 129–142.

*The stillness beneath the surface of Greek sculpture, over which passion plays without disturbing it, and which in the end has a touch of the corpse · The Renaissance*

*impassivity*; *impassive*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of being unmoved by passion or feeling; outward calm that shows no emotion.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Hellenic ideal lets passion play over the surface of the form, "losing thereby nothing of its central impassivity, its depth and repose" (WIN §38).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §§38, 45.

## Meaning

*Impassive* is formed from *passive*, the Latin *passivus*, capable of suffering (from *pati*, to suffer), and the negative *in-*: unable to suffer, unmoved. Christian theology taught that God cannot suffer change, and that the bodies of the blessed after the resurrection will be impassible, beyond the reach of harm.[296] Pater does not mention either, but his word keeps something of both: impassivity in the essay is a godlike quality, and a quality of bodies that have passed beyond life.

## Use in the book

The word first comes in the Botticelli essay, where it is a fault. Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandajo, who transcribe the outward image, are "almost impassive spectators of the action before them" (BOT §4; see Dramatic painter). Impassivity there is the indifference of the transcriber, who sees without being moved, against Botticelli's visionary sympathy.

The Winckelmann essay turns it into a virtue. Under the law of restraint, Greek sculpture keeps passion below the pitch at which it must be transitory (WIN §38; see Law of restraint). "It allows passion to play lightly over the surface of the individual form, losing thereby nothing of its central impassivity, its depth and repose" (WIN §38). The sentence can be read as an image of water: a breeze moves the surface of a deep pool and leaves its depths still. Impassivity is not the absence of passion but its place, at the surface, while the centre of the figure stays at rest. The sentence that follows names the price: to all but the highest culture the reserved faces of the gods "will ever have something of insipidity" (WIN §38; see Higher culture).

[296] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 9, a. 1 (God's immutability); Supplement (compiled after his death from his commentary on the *Sentences*), q. 82, a. 1 (the impassibility of the bodies of the blessed).

Impassivity looks like dullness to an eye that has not learned to see the movement on the surface.

The forty-fifth paragraph then turns the word against the Greeks. The "supreme and colourless abstraction" of the gods, the secret of their repose, is also "a premonition" of medieval art (WIN §45; see Abstraction). "That high indifference to the outward, that impassivity, has already a touch of the corpse in it" (WIN §45), and Pater sees in it Angelico and an anonymous medieval painter he calls the Master of the Passion to come (WIN §45; see High indifference). The godlike stillness, carried one step further, becomes the stillness of death, and the Greek statue already foreshadows "the ascetic interest" of medieval art (WIN §45; see Shutting the eyes).

The two uses can be read as the essay's whole judgement on Greek sculpture in one word. Impassivity is its depth and its danger: it lets the statue hold passion without being carried away by it, and it is the first step toward the refusal of passion altogether. The essay does not resolve the double value, and can be read as wanting both kept in view. The impassive face is the perfection of the Hellenic ideal and the sign that it will pass.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "impassive" or "impassivity" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §4** Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandaio are dramatic, not visionary painters, almost impassive spectators of the action before them.

**WIN §38** Passion plays lightly over the surface of the Hellenic form, which loses nothing of its central impassivity.

**WIN §45** That high indifference to the outward, that impassivity, has already a touch of the corpse in it.

## See also

Abstraction; Dramatic painter; High indifference; Higher culture; Law of restraint; Play of life; Repose; Shutting the eyes.

# Incompleteness

*Michelangelo's unfinished sculpture read as design: what time did for the Venus of Melos · The Renaissance*

*incompleteness*; *incomplete*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of being unfinished, of lacking some part.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo gains his effect "by leaving nearly all his sculpture in a puzzling sort of incompleteness, which suggests rather than realises actual form" (ROB §10).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §10 says that the quality is "Often discussed under the Italian term non finito, 'unfinished.'"

**A place to read.** ROB §10, with MIC §4.

## Meaning

The Late Latin *incompletus* is unfilled, unfinished. Michelangelo's many sculptures left with parts still in the rough block, the slaves for the tomb of Pope Julius II, the late Pietàs, the figures of the Medici Chapel, were explained by his first biographers as the result of circumstance or of his own exacting standard; Vasari says that he gave up a work if he found the smallest error in it.[297] Later criticism named the quality *non finito*, the unfinished, and asked whether it was intended. Pater's answer is that it does not matter: the incompleteness works.

## Use in the book

The word stands in the long second sentence of the tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which compares Michelangelo with an accident of time: "What time and accident, its centuries of darkness under the furrows of the 'little Melian farm,' have done with singular felicity of touch for the Venus of Melos, fraying its surface and softening its lines, so that some spirit in the thing seems always on the point of breaking out, as though in it classical sculpture had advanced already one step into the mystical Christian age, its expression being in the whole range of ancient work most like that of Michelangelo's own:—this effect Michelangelo gains by leaving nearly all his sculpture in a puzzling sort of incompleteness, which suggests rather than realises actual form" (ROB §10; see Accident).

The comparison makes the ruin an artist. Burial and weather frayed the Venus's surface and softened its lines; the result is "some spirit in the thing" that "seems always on the point of breaking out". The spirit is the effect of the incompleteness, and what time did by chance Michelangelo did by leaving his work unfinished. "Suggests rather than realises" names the method (see Realise): a form fully realised states everything and leaves nothing for the spirit to break out of. The phrase "one step into the mystical Christian age" makes the Venus a bridge between the Greek and the modern, and so places Michelangelo, whose expression is most like hers, on the same bridge (see Mystic).

The paragraph gives two further accounts and holds them together. Incompleteness is "Michelangelo's equivalent for colour in sculpture", his way "of etherealising pure form" (ROB §10; see Equivalent of colour). And

[297] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (1568), "Life of Michelangelo".

"It was a characteristic too which fell in with his peculiar temper and mode of living, his disappointments and hesitations" (ROB §10). The first account is formal, the second biographical; Pater does not choose between them, and the "too" lets the man's troubles and the art's solution be one. Near its end the paragraph turns to paradox, "it was in reality perfect finish" (ROB §10; see Perfect finish), and the next calls it "the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo" (ROB §11; see Pure form).

The Michelangelo essay repeats the claim with a hedge: Michelangelo secures ideality of expression by "an incompleteness, which is surely not always undesigned" (MIC §4; see Ideality of expression; Half-emergent form). "Surely not always undesigned" concedes that some of the incompleteness was accident; "no one regrets" can be read as saying that accident and design have the same effect. The Botticelli essay uses the word of a limit, not a gift: "it was partly an incompleteness of resources, inseparable from the art of that time," that subdued and chilled his Venus (BOT §8; see Minor tones). And the Michelangelo essay ends its account of his thoughts of death with the new body imagined after death as "a dream that lingers a moment, retreating in the dawn, incomplete, aimless, helpless" (MIC §20).

The word can be read as one of the book's central aesthetic claims, and its boldest. Vasari explained the unfinished works by circumstance and by Michelangelo's severity with himself; the della Robbia essay makes them the summit of his art. The claim belongs with the Conclusion's preference for what passes over what is fixed: a finished form is a moment arrested, and an incomplete one is a moment still happening.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "incompleteness" or "incomplete" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §8** An incompleteness of resources, inseparable from the art of that time, subdued Botticelli's imagery.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo leaves nearly all his sculpture in a puzzling incompleteness, which is his equivalent for colour.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors partake of the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo.

**MIC §4** Michelangelo secures ideality of expression by an incompleteness surely not always undesigned.

**MIC §20** In Michelangelo's thoughts of death the new body is a dream retreating in the dawn, incomplete, aimless, helpless.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §10 says that the quality is "Often discussed under the Italian term non finito, 'unfinished.' What Pater takes to be a recurring expressive quality should be distinguished from the separate historical

question of why a given sculpture remained unfinished." The note on the Venus of Melos at ROB §10 says that "Pater imagines its burial and weathered surface as collaborators in an expressive effect that he compares with Michelangelo's unfinished marble".

## See also

Accident; Equivalent of colour; Half-emergent form; Half-realised form; Ideality of expression; Minor tones; Mystic; Perfect finish; Pure form; Realise; Rough-hewn.

# Individual expression

*The special history of the special soul: what Michelangelo demanded of sculpture · The Renaissance*
*individual expression*; *individualised expression*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Expression of what belongs to one person and no other: his character, his feeling, his history.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Work "which was not concerned with individual expression, with individual character and feeling, the special history of the special soul, was not worth doing at all" (ROB §9).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §11 says that "Pater's ideal of Tuscan relief combines the breadth he assigns to Greek sculpture with the individual expression he finds in Michelangelo".

**A place to read.** ROB §9, with ROB §11.

## Meaning

"Individual" is the Latin *individuus*, undivided, what cannot be split without ceasing to be itself; in the logic of the schools the individual was the single instance, the opposite of the general. Individual expression is thus the opposite of the Greek law, which purged "from the individual all that belongs only to him" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit). The phrase names exactly what that law left out.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentence of the ninth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which states what Michelangelo needed: "To him, lover and student of Greek sculpture as he was, work which did not bring what was inward to the surface, which was not concerned with individual expression, with individual character and feeling, the special history of the special soul, was not worth doing at all" (ROB §9; see Inwardness).

The sentence piles its terms in apposition: individual expression, individual character and feeling, the special history of the special soul. The

last is the strongest, and its doubled "special" insists that the soul in question is not a type but this one, with its own story. "Lover and student of Greek sculpture as he was" concedes the Greek inheritance and sets it aside: Michelangelo loved the art whose law he could not accept. "Not worth doing at all" is absolute, and it is echoed at the end of the essay, where the same characteristic is, "essentially, perhaps", "the quality which alone makes work in the imaginative order really worth having at all" (ROB §13; see Imaginative order). The essay's two "at all"s join Michelangelo's demand to Pater's own.

The eleventh paragraph extends the demand to the Tuscan sculptors. "Like Michelangelo, these sculptors fill their works with intense and individualised expression", and they unite repose "to an intense and individual expression by a system of conventionalism" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism). The Tuscans, on this account, share Michelangelo's aim and the Greeks' calm; their portrait tombs are "the careful sepulchral portraits of particular persons" (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait), and "particular" is the same insistence as "special".

The phrase can be read as stating, in Michelangelo's mouth, the creed of the whole book. The Preface asks of every work what "special impression" it gives (PRE §3); the Conclusion speaks of the "individual in his isolation" (CON §3). The Renaissance, as Pater tells it, is the age in which art turned to the special history of the special soul, and the phrase is the della Robbia essay's name for that turn.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "individual expression" or "individualised expression" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §9** To Michelangelo work not concerned with individual expression was not worth doing at all.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors fill their works with intense and individualised expression and unite it to repose.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §11 says that "Pater's ideal of Tuscan relief combines the breadth he assigns to Greek sculpture with the individual expression he finds in Michelangelo".

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Conventionalism; Expression; Imaginative order; Individuality; Inwardness; Sepulchral portrait.

*The fixed separateness of a carved form, and the living character of a person: what sculpture must loosen and keep · The Renaissance*
*individuality*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of being an individual: separate existence, and the character that marks one being off from others.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The great styles in sculpture seek "to expand the too firmly fixed individuality of pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form" (ROB §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §6, with WIN §34.

## Meaning

Individuality is separateness and distinctness: what makes one thing this thing and not another. The word can be said of objects, a stone or a statue, and of persons, whose individuality is their character. Pater's uses of it in the della Robbia essay play one sense against the other.

## Use in the book

The sixth paragraph of the della Robbia essay uses the word twice, in its two senses. Sculpture tends to "an individuality of expression pushed to caricature" (ROB §6; see Caricature): here individuality is personal character, overstated. And the great styles must "expand the too firmly fixed individuality of pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form" (ROB §6; see Equivalent of colour): here it is the separateness of the carved object, its hard boundary against the air. A statue is an individual thing, cut off and complete, and that is its defect: it has, in the Winckelmann essay's words, "no backgrounds, no sky or atmosphere" (WIN §34; see Pure form).

The tenth paragraph reconciles the two senses in Michelangelo. "In a way quite personal and peculiar to himself" he "secured for his work individuality and intensity of expression" (ROB §10; see Caricature), while his incompleteness loosened the fixed outline of the form (see Incompleteness). In Michelangelo the man is strongly present and the stone is not quite closed.

The Winckelmann essay gives the Greeks the same achievement in another form. Sculpture's limitations are many, "and it is a proof of the high artistic capacity of the Greeks, that they apprehended and remained true to these exquisite limitations, yet, in spite of them, gave to their creations a mobile, a vital, individuality" (WIN §34). "Mobile" is the key word: the Greek individuality moves, and so escapes the fixity the della Robbia essay fears. The essay's long quotation from Hegel makes the

Greeks individuals in life as in art: "They are great and free, and have grown up on the soil of their own individuality, creating themselves out of themselves" (WIN §41). The remaining use runs the other way: Leonardo's pupils were men "ready to efface their own individuality" for the sake of his secret (LEO §24).

The word can be read as naming the double problem the della Robbia essay solves. Sculpture must convey the individuality of a person and loosen the individuality of a thing; the first without caricature, the second without dissolution. Each of the three great styles does both in its own proportion, and the essay's admiration goes to the ones that let the person in without letting the stone harden.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "individuality" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** Sculpture tends to an individuality of expression pushed to caricature; the styles expand the fixed individuality of pure form.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo secured individuality and intensity of expression.

**LEO §24** Leonardo's pupils were ready to efface their own individuality.

**WIN §34** The Greeks gave their creations a mobile, a vital, individuality.

**WIN §41** Hegel: the Greeks grew up on the soil of their own individuality.

## See also

Caricature; Equivalent of colour; Incompleteness; Individual expression; Pure form; Vitality.

# Indwelling solemnity

*indwelling solemnity*

Attested: *indwelling solemnity* (GIO §6). The phrase is Pater's example of form transforming matter. "In an actual landscape we see a long white road, lost suddenly on the hill-verge. That is the matter of one of the etchings of M. Alphonse Legros: only, in this etching, it is informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression, seen upon it or half-seen, within the limits of an exceptional moment, or caught from his own mood perhaps, but which he maintains as the very essence of the thing, throughout his work" (GIO §6; see Etching; Essence). "Indwelling" means dwelling within, as the soul dwells in the body; the solemnity is not added to the road but

found in it, or put into it so thoroughly that it seems to have been there. Pater leaves its source open, "seen upon it or half-seen", "caught from his own mood perhaps". Whether it came from the scene or from the artist, it is now "the very essence of the thing", and the road is no longer topography. The della Robbia essay had used the same adjective of Tuscan sculpture, in which Pater found "that intimate impress of an indwelling soul" (ROB §1; see Indwelling soul). There the soul dwells in the work; here a solemnity dwells in a road.

## See also

Essence; Etching; Indwelling soul; Informing expression; Matter and form.

## Informing expression

*informing expression*; *informing*, *informed*

Attested: *informing expression* (GIO §6); *informing* (GIO §7); *informed* (GIO §6; WIN §22). "Inform" is the Latin *informare*, to give form to, and the schoolmen used it for the act by which form shapes matter: the soul informs the body. Pater uses the word in that philosophical sense. A sudden light can give a homely scene "artistic qualities", and "such tricks of circumstance are commonest in landscape which has little salient character of its own; because, in such scenery, all the material details are so easily absorbed by that informing expression of passing light, and elevated, throughout their whole extent, to a new and delightful effect by it" (GIO §6; see Gold thread). The light informs the landscape: it gives the matter its form, and the matter is "absorbed" into it. The Legros etching is "informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression" (GIO §6; see Indwelling solemnity). In the next paragraph the word passes to poetry, where the subject of a poem of moral aspiration "has been penetrated by the informing, artistic spirit" and yet can still be told apart from it (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). The verb holds the essay's thesis in its grammar: form is not a dress on matter but what informs it, the principle that makes it what it is.

## See also

Dominant tone; Gold thread; Indwelling solemnity; Lyrical poetry; Matter and form.

## Inspired sleep

*Sleep charged with dreams, the expression Michelangelo gave to his Bacchus and others · The Renaissance*

*inspired sleep*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sleep filled with a breath from beyond: the state of one who dreams prophetic or visionary dreams.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "No one ever expressed more truly than Michelangelo the notion of inspired sleep, of faces charged with dreams" (MIC §7).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §7 says that the marble Bacchus "belongs to Michelangelo's first Roman period, around 1496–97".

**A place to read.** MIC §7.

## Meaning

To inspire is to breathe into, from the Latin *inspirare*; the inspired person is filled with a spirit not his own, as the prophet or the poet was thought to be. Sleep in ancient belief was a time of such inspiration: the gods spoke in dreams, and the sick slept in the temples of Asclepius to be healed by them. Inspired sleep is thus sleep that is not empty but full, a state of receiving.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is in the seventh paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which tells of his early works: "It was now, on returning to Florence, that he put forth that unique presentment of Bacchus, which expresses, not the mirthfulness of the god of wine, but his sleepy seriousness, his enthusiasm, his capacity for profound dreaming. No one ever expressed more truly than Michelangelo the notion of inspired sleep, of faces charged with dreams" (MIC §7; see Presentment).

The Bacchus is a surprising example. The god of wine is usually shown in his mirth, the reveller of the Dionysiac procession; Michelangelo's, as Pater reads it, is serious, drowsy and rapt. "Enthusiasm" can be read in its Greek sense, *enthousiasmos*, possession by a god, which joins the sleepiness to inspiration: the god of wine is himself possessed. "His capacity for profound dreaming" makes the drunkenness of Bacchus a form of vision. The statue, now in the Museo del Bargello in Florence, shows the god swaying, his eyes heavy, a cup raised, with a small satyr behind him stealing grapes.

The edition's note dates the Bacchus to "Michelangelo's first Roman period, around 1496–97", which places it in Rome, not "on returning to Florence"; it stood in the garden of the Roman banker Jacopo Galli.[298] The judgement about the statue's expression stands apart from the date.

"Faces charged with dreams" makes the Bacchus one instance of a general power, and the book gives others. The Doni Madonna includes "the sleepy-looking fauns of a Dionysiac revel" (PIC §15; see Unveiled human

[298] Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* (1553); Vasari, *Lives*, Life of Michelangelo (1568).

form). The Medici tombs include the figures traditionally called "Night and Day, The Twilight and The Dawn", and Michelangelo's Night is carved asleep. Michelangelo gave her a voice in a quatrain, *Caro m'è 'l sonno, e più l'esser di sasso*, "Sleep is dear to me, and dearer to be stone", so long as the harm and the shame endure.[299] Pater finds the traditional titles "far too definite" for figures that come nearer to "the mind and spirit of their author" (MIC §20; see Disembodied spirit), though he does not speak of them as sleepers. The Winckelmann essay sets beside these the Greek image of waking: in Greek sculpture of youth "Everywhere there is the effect of an awaking, of a child's sleep just disturbed", and the Berlin adorante is "the image of man as he springs first from the sleep of nature" (WIN §40; see Adorante).

The phrase can be read as naming the inward side of Michelangelo's strength. The essay's figures are massive and charged with force, and yet the force is often turned inward, toward dream. The Adam waiting for life (MIC §3; see Expectancy and reception), the Bacchus sunk in his enthusiasm and the Night of the Medici tombs share a state between sleeping and waking, in which the body is still and the mind is full. Michelangelo, Pater says in the same paragraph, "believed in dreams and omens" (MIC §7; see Omen).

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which a work of art is said to express sleep, in the order of the book.

**PIC §15** Michelangelo brings the sleepy-looking fauns of a Dionysiac revel into the presence of the Madonna.

**MIC §7** Michelangelo's Bacchus expresses the god's sleepy seriousness; no one expressed more truly the notion of inspired sleep.

**WIN §40** In Greek sculpture of youth there is everywhere the effect of an awaking, of a child's sleep just disturbed.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §7 says that "The marble Bacchus belongs to Michelangelo's first Roman period, around 1496–97. The Bargello displays it in Florence. Look for the god's precarious balance and the small satyr stealing grapes behind his leg."

## See also

Adorante; Disembodied spirit; Expectancy and reception; Omen; Presentment; Unveiled human form.

[299] Michelangelo, *Rime*, the quatrain answering Giovanni Strozzi's epigram on the Night (Enzo Noè Girardi's edition of the *Rime*, 1960, no. 247).

## Instantaneous effect

*instantaneous effect*; *instantaneous*

Attested: *instantaneous effect* (GIO §14); *instantaneous* (GIO §20). Pater uses the phrase for the part of Giorgione's work that was made to be seen at once and was soon lost. Much of the work on which Giorgione's "immediate fame" depended was "work done for instantaneous effect", and it "in all probability passed away almost within his own age", like the frescoes on the fondaco at the Rialto (GIO §14; see Fondaco dei Tedeschi). The phrase has two edges. Fresco on an outer wall is meant to strike the passer-by at a glance, and it is exposed to sea air and weather; work done for an instant's effect lasts little longer than an instant. "Immediate fame" matches it: a reputation made quickly on work that faded quickly, so that the legend outlived its evidence. The adjective returns six paragraphs later in praise: the master is pre-eminent for "the resolution, the ease and quickness, with which he reproduces instantaneous motion" (GIO §20; see Instantaneous motion). The two uses can be set side by side. The instant that the frescoes lived for was lost; the instant that the pictures caught is kept, "arrested" for ever (GIO §20; see Ideal instant).

### See also

Fondaco dei Tedeschi; Fresco; Ideal instant; Instantaneous motion.

## Instantaneous motion

*The sudden act and the passing expression, which Giorgione reproduces with ease and quickness and arrests for ever · The Renaissance*

*instantaneous motion*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Movement caught at a single instant, as if stopped in its course.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The master is pre-eminent for the resolution, the ease and quickness, with which he reproduces instantaneous motion—the lacing-on of armour, with the head bent back so stately—the fainting lady—the embrace, rapid as the kiss, caught with death itself from dying lips—some momentary conjunction of mirrors and polished armour and still water, by which all the sides of a solid image are exhibited at once ..." (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §20 says that Pater "refers to the paragone, the Renaissance comparison of the powers of different arts", and that the reflected views allow one painted surface "to show multiple aspects of a body, a feat often claimed for sculpture".

**A place to read.** GIO §20.

## Meaning

"Instantaneous" is of an instant, done or happening in no time. Instantaneous motion is a contradiction that painting resolves: motion takes time, and a picture has none, so the painter must choose an instant that implies the motion before and after it. The phrase names Giorgione's gift for that choice.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the twentieth paragraph, in the list that defines the master by his subjects. "The master is pre-eminent for the resolution, the ease and quickness, with which he reproduces instantaneous motion" (GIO §20), and the list follows, each item a motion at its quickest. "The lacing-on of armour, with the head bent back so stately" is an act half done; "the fainting lady" a body in the instant of falling; "the embrace, rapid as the kiss, caught with death itself from dying lips" a gesture and a fate at once; and "some momentary conjunction of mirrors and polished armour and still water" a chance arrangement of reflections, by which the picture shows every side of a figure and settles "that casuistical question whether painting can present an object as completely as sculpture" (GIO §20; see Casuistical question).

"Resolution, the ease and quickness" describe the painter's hand as much as his subject: he must be as fast as what he paints. The next sentence names the quality: the sudden act and the passing expression "he arrests with that vivacity which Vasari has attributed to him" (GIO §20; see Il fuoco Giorgionesco). The master "reproduces" motion and then "arrests" it, and both verbs matter. The painter does not freeze the act into a pose; he catches it so that it still seems to move. The paragraph's theory follows from the instance: the "profoundly significant and animated instants" of dramatic poetry, and the "ideal instants" that Giorgione's school selects (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). Instantaneous motion is the physical side of the ideal instant, the moment of the body, as the ideal instant is the moment of meaning.

The list can be read as carrying Giorgione's own story. "The embrace, rapid as the kiss, caught with death itself from dying lips" recalls the death that Pater has just told from Vasari: the lady secretly stricken with the plague, and Giorgione taking "the sickness from her mortally, along with her kisses" (GIO §17; see Romantic love). The painter of the instant died of an instant, and the phrase can be taken as joining his art and his legend. The word has a sadder use earlier in the essay (GIO §14; see Instantaneous effect).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "instantaneous" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §14** Work done for instantaneous effect passed away almost within Giorgione's own age.

**GIO §20** The master reproduces instantaneous motion with resolution, ease and quickness.

## Later readings

In 1878, the year after the essay first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, the English-born photographer Eadweard Muybridge made at Palo Alto the instantaneous photographs of a galloping horse that showed what the eye could not see, the motion of the legs at a single instant.[300] Independently of Pater, the camera took up the problem he had praised the painter for solving, and solved it by speed alone.

## See also

Casuistical question; Ideal instant; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; Instantaneous effect; Romantic love.

# Interpenetration

*The perfect mutual penetration of subject and handling, realised absolutely only in music and approached in painting by the choice of subject · The Renaissance*

*interpenetration*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A penetrating of each by the other: two things so entered into one another that neither can be found apart.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "I have spoken of a certain interpenetration of the matter or subject of a work of art with the form of it, a condition realised absolutely only in music, as the condition to which every form of art is perpetually aspiring. In the art of painting, the attainment of this ideal condition, this perfect interpenetration of the subject with the elements of colour and design, depends, of course, in great measure, on dexterous choice of that subject, or phase of subject; and such choice is one of the secrets of Giorgione's school" (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** GIO §20.

[300] Eadweard Muybridge, *The Horse in Motion*, photographs taken at Palo Alto, June 1878.

## Meaning

The Latin *penetrare* is to pass into, and the prefix *inter*, between, makes the passing mutual. Interpenetration is the state in which two things have entered each other throughout: not mixed side by side, but each present in every part of the other. Pater's earlier words for the same relation were "identification", "union or identity" and "saturate" (GIO §§9–10); "interpenetration" adds the idea of motion, each element passing into the other.

## Use in the book

The word opens the twentieth paragraph, where Pater returns from Giorgione's life to his theory. "I have spoken of a certain interpenetration of the matter or subject of a work of art with the form of it, a condition realised absolutely only in music, as the condition to which every form of art is perpetually aspiring" (GIO §20; see Condition of music). The sentence restates the fifth and tenth paragraphs in a new word, and the next sentence says what follows for painting: "In the art of painting, the attainment of this ideal condition, this perfect interpenetration of the subject with the elements of colour and design, depends, of course, in great measure, on dexterous choice of that subject, or phase of subject; and such choice is one of the secrets of Giorgione's school" (GIO §20).

The practical turn is the essay's most original step. Painting cannot dissolve every subject into colour and design; some subjects resist, because they carry a story or a doctrine that the eye cannot take in. The painter who would reach the condition of music must therefore begin before he paints, with the choice of what to paint. Giorgione's school exercises "a wonderful tact" in selecting matter that lends itself to pictorial form (GIO §20; see Genre), and its pictures "belong to a sort of poetry which tells itself without an articulated story" (GIO §20; see Articulated story). The interpenetration is achieved by selection. Music, a concert, water poured from a pitcher, a pause in a landscape: these subjects are already half colour and sound, and they pass wholly into the handling.

"Or phase of subject" is a careful addition. A painter may choose not a new subject but a phase of an old one, the moment in a story at which it becomes a picture (see Ideal instant). Giorgione's "subordination of mere subject to pictorial design" (GIO §12) is the same tact seen from the other side. The subject is not removed; it is chosen so that it can be absorbed.

The Winckelmann essay uses the word of a life. The youths on horseback of the Panathenaic frieze have a "colourless, unclassified purity of life, with its blending and interpenetration of intellectual, spiritual, and physical elements, still, folded together" (WIN §40; see Relative). There it is the elements of a person that interpenetrate, mind, spirit and body, and the result is a life in which none can be told apart. The two uses can be read as one ideal applied to art and to man. A picture in which subject and

handling interpenetrate, and a life in which thought and body interpenetrate, are equally beyond the reach of the analysing intellect, and equally complete.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "interpenetration" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §20** The interpenetration of matter and form is realised absolutely only in music; in painting it depends on the choice of subject.

**WIN §40** The Panathenaic horsemen show a blending and interpenetration of intellectual, spiritual and physical elements.

## See also

Articulated story; Condition of music; Genre; Ideal instant; Matter and form; Relative.

# Intimate presence

*intimate presence*

Attested: *intimate presence* (LEO §10). "Intimate", from the Latin *intimus*, innermost, describes what reaches the inside of a thing. Pater uses the phrase for what Leonardo learned from his study of nature: "He learned here the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats, the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled" (LEO §10). The next sentence gives the contrast: he was no longer "the cheerful, objective painter", through whom the figures of Florentine life passed to the wall as through clear glass (LEO §10; see Objective painter). The objective painter lets the world pass through him to the wall; on one reading the painter of intimate presence enters what he paints and remains in it, felt there as a presence. The phrase can be set beside the della Robbia essay's "intimate impress of an indwelling soul" (ROB §1; see Indwelling soul). There the soul dwells in the work; in Leonardo it is the painter himself who is present, as a power working from within.

## See also

Indwelling soul; Objective painter.

# Invention

*Leonardo's power of finding: the moment of invention, the ecstasy of invention, and the element given to the master, not invented by him · The Renaissance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The finding or devising of something new; in the art theory of the Renaissance, the conceiving of a subject and its composition.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Perhaps necessity kept his spirit excited: the next four years are one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention" (LEO §29).

**In this edition.** The note on *bien-être* at LEO §21 calls it "an interval of ease or well-being that allows invention to occur", and the Outline says of the essay that "Observation and invention are intertwined".

**A place to read.** LEO §26, with LEO §§21, 29–30.

## Meaning

The Latin *inventio*, from *invenire*, to come upon, to find, first meant discovery. In rhetoric it was the finding of arguments, the first of the orator's tasks, and Alberti carried the term into painting: a fine invention, he wrote, is strong enough to give pleasure on its own, even without the painting.[301] The word also meant a contrivance, a thing devised, and a fiction, a story made up. Pater uses all these senses, and once, translating a French phrase, he keeps the oldest: *après l'invention du blé* becomes "After the discovery of wheat" (FRE §6).

## Use in the book

The word is a keyword of the Leonardo essay. Its first use is a fiction: Vasari's story of the Medusa painted on a wooden shield "is perhaps an invention" (LEO §12; see Legend). Then it is a faculty. Portraiture "suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention" (LEO §19; see Human personality).

The essay's chief claim about invention is that it comes in moments. Leonardo waits for "that moment of bien-être, which to imaginative men is the moment of invention" (LEO §21; see Bien-être), and the anecdotes of the Last Supper bear it out: "They show him refusing to work except at the moment of invention, scornful of anyone who supposed that art could be a work of mere industry and rule, often coming the whole length of Milan to give a single touch" (LEO §26). Invention is set against "industry and rule", the diligence and method by which art can be taught. It is not a talent always at hand but a state that must be waited for, and the single touch is its product. At Florence after Milan the moment lengthens: "the next four years are one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention" (LEO §29; see Ecstasy).

The plural names the products. The griffin of one of the drawings is "one of Leonardo's finest inventions" (LEO §22; see Griffin), and the Saint John of the Louvre is one of "those symbolical inventions" in which the

[301] Leon Battista Alberti, *De pictura* (1435), book III.

subject starts a sentiment (LEO §25; see Ostensible subject; Symbolical invention). The invention is not the story but what the painter makes of it.

The essay ends its account of invention by setting a limit to it. Of La Gioconda Pater writes: "As often happens with works in which invention seems to reach its limit, there is an element in it given to, not invented by, the master" (LEO §30; see Germinal principle). The element, Pater suggests, is the smile, which it is "hard not to connect" with Verrocchio's designs (LEO §30). The greatest invention, on this reading, includes something received, and at its limit finding turns again into its first sense, coming upon what was already there.

Outside the Leonardo essay the word is used of a technical discovery, Luca della Robbia's "further invention of giving them colour", in Vasari's words (ROB §12), of "the grim inventions of Dürer" (MIC §19), and of the Greek sculptors' attitudes, "exquisite as is the invention of the Greeks in this direction" (WIN §39).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "invention" or "inventions" occurs, in the order of the book; the verb is not listed.

**FRE §6** Pater renders the French *après l'invention du blé* "After the discovery of wheat".

**ROB §12** Vasari says that Luca added the further invention of giving his figures of baked earth colour.

**MIC §19** The Florentine preoccupation with sad images might have ended, as it did elsewhere, in the grim inventions of Dürer.

**LEO §12** Vasari's story of the earlier Medusa is perhaps an invention, yet has the air of truth.

**LEO §19** Portraiture suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention.

**LEO §21** The moment of bien-être is to imaginative men the moment of invention.

**LEO §22** The griffin is one of Leonardo's finest inventions.

**LEO §25** The Saint John is one of those symbolical inventions in which the subject is a starting-point of sentiment.

**LEO §26** Leonardo refused to work except at the moment of invention.

**LEO §29** The next four years were one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention.

**LEO §30** Where invention seems to reach its limit, there is an element given to, not invented by, the master.

**WIN §39** Exquisite as is the invention of the Greeks in the attitudes of sculpture, the situations it permits are few.

## See also

Bien-être; Ecstasy; Germinal principle; Griffin; Human personality; Legend; Ostensible subject; Symbolical invention; Vision and ecstasy.

### Inventive force

*inventive force*; *inventive*

Attested: *inventive force* (BOT §3); *inventive* in four further paragraphs (MIC §2; GIO §§1, 2; BEL §21). The power of finding something new, from the Latin *invenire*, to come upon. Rhetoric's *inventio* was the finding of arguments; in painting invention was the conceiving of a composition. In the illustrations to Dante there is "an inventive force about the fire taking hold on the upturned soles of the feet" of the damned (BOT §3; see Painter's vision). The detail is Dante's own, the soles of the simonists burning from heel to toe;[302] the force is in the rendering, which "proves that the design is no mere translation of Dante's words" (BOT §3; see Painter's vision). Elsewhere "inventive" is a mark of the individual. A poet's work must show "something individual, inventive, unique" (BEL §21), and true poetry "comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing" (GIO §1). Invention can be read, in Pater, as the point where the artist's own temperament enters a received subject, and in Botticelli it enters through the soles of the damned.

## See also

Painter's vision; Pictorial propriety; Poetical painter.

### Law of restraint

*The rule of Greek sculpture as Pater states it: passion kept below the pitch at which it must pass, so that the figure may last · The Renaissance*

*a law of restraint*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A rule of holding back: in art, the principle that expression should stop short of its extreme.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The law of restraint "keeps passion always below that degree of intensity at which it must necessarily be transitory" (WIN §38).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §38.

[302] Dante, *Inferno* XIX.25–30.

## Meaning

*Restraint* comes through French from the Latin *restringere*, to bind back. A law of restraint is a rule that binds expression back from its full force. Pater does not mean a law imposed on the artist from outside, as a censor restrains, but a law of the art itself, the condition on which it achieves what it aims at. The phrase belongs with the essay's other words for the self-limitation of sculpture: its renunciation of colour and background (WIN §34; see Plastic art), its motion "ever kept in reserve" (WIN §39; see Reserve).

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the thirty-eighth paragraph, which explains how Greek sculpture achieves its breadth. Works produced under the law of type and abstraction "are really characterised by Hellenic generality or breadth" (WIN §38; see Breadth of humanity). "In every direction it is a law of restraint. It keeps passion always below that degree of intensity at which it must necessarily be transitory, never winding up the features to one note of anger, or desire, or surprise" (WIN §38). The reasoning can be read as compact: intense passion is passing by nature; a statue is permanent; therefore a statue that shows intense passion shows a moment as if it were an eternity, and falsifies both. Restraint is the condition of permanence.

Pater then gives the opposite cases. "In some of the feebler allegorical designs of the middle age, we find isolated qualities portrayed as by so many masks; its religious art has familiarised us with faces fixed immovably into blank types of placid reverie" (WIN §38; see Grotesque). "Men and women, again, in the hurry of life, often wear the sharp impress of one absorbing motive, from which it is said death sets their features free" (WIN §38). The examples are not of excess but of fixity. The mask, the fixed face of reverie and the face stamped by one motive all fail the law in the same way: each is given over to a single note. The last example is the most striking, for it makes death, as "it is said", the restorer of the face's balance; the dead face, freed from its absorbing motive, can be read as having the repose that Greek sculpture gives to the living. Pater ranges all such instances "under the grotesque" (WIN §38; see Grotesque). Restraint is thus not coldness. Under it passion is still allowed "to play lightly over the surface" (WIN §38; see Impassivity); what it forbids is the one note held too long.

The phrase can be read against the book's most famous sentence. The Conclusion makes it success in life to burn always "with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame), and seems to praise the very intensity the law of restraint forbids. The two are less opposed than they look. The flame of the Conclusion is a way of perceiving, not a passion fixed on one object; in the Conclusion "it might even be said" that "our failure is to form habits" (CON §5), which is the grotesque of the thirty-eighth paragraph, the one absorbing motive, in the

life of the mind. The law of restraint and the gem-like flame can both be read as refusals to let a single note become a mask.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with WIN §34, on the self-limitation of sculpture, and WIN §39, on its reserve, in the order of the book.

**WIN §34** Sculpture renounces the attributes of its material that do not forward its motive, holds colour only by convention, and gains more than it loses by this limitation.

**WIN §38** In every direction Greek sculpture works by a law of restraint, keeping passion below the intensity at which it must be transitory.

**WIN §39** In the best Greek sculpture motion is ever kept in reserve, and the actions it permits are simple and few.

## See also

Breadth of humanity; Grotesque; Hard, gem-like flame; Impassivity; Plastic art; Repose; Reserve.

# Light and shade

*The painter's contrast, refused by the Tuscan relief and praised when it modulates rather than opposes · The Renaissance*
*light and shade*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The distribution of light and dark in a picture or a scene; the painter's chiaroscuro.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan sculptors are "haters of all heaviness and emphasis, of strongly-opposed light and shade" (ROB §4).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §4 says that in low relief "the strength of a shadow varies with the depth of carving and direction of light".

**A place to read.** ROB §4, with GIO §6.

## Meaning

"Light and shade" is the English for the Italian *chiaroscuro*, the clear and the dark, and it names the means by which a painter models form: a body seems round because one side is lit and the other in shadow. Strong light and shade gives drama and relief; soft light and shade gives atmosphere. In sculpture the light and shade are real, cast by the projections of the carved surface, and the sculptor controls them by the depth at which he carves.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs twice, and the two uses state one taste. In the della Robbia essay it is what the Tuscan sculptors refuse: "They are haters of all heaviness and emphasis, of strongly-opposed light and shade", and draw instead with shadows almost invisible (ROB §4; see Refinements of shadow). Sculpture in the round produces strong contrasts: a deep-cut face throws heavy shadows, and the sixth paragraph names "a thing of heavy shadows" among the faults of sculpture (ROB §6; see Hard realism). Low relief, barely raised from its ground, casts only faint ones. The Tuscan sculptors chose the faint, and "heaviness and emphasis" are the qualities their choice avoids.

In the Giorgione essay the phrase is praised when it modulates. A French river-side is superior, "for most conditions of the picturesque", to a Swiss valley, because there mere topography counts for so little and mere light and shade have "such easy work in modulating it to one dominant tone" (GIO §6; see Dominant tone). The landscape that has little of its own is the one light and shade can most easily make into a picture; the strong Swiss scene resists.

The two passages can be read as one principle applied to two materials. Light and shade are good when they unify and bad when they divide: "modulating" to "one dominant tone" in the landscape, "refinements" almost invisible in the relief, against the "strongly-opposed" contrasts of heavy carving. The Giorgione essay goes further: a great picture has, "in its primary aspect", no more definite message than "an accidental play of sunlight and shadow" (GIO §2; see Abstract painting; Accident). Pater's taste in light is the taste of the whole book: for the subtle over the emphatic, the passing over the fixed, and the gradation over the contrast.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "light and shade" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §4** The Tuscan sculptors are haters of strongly-opposed light and shade.

**GIO §6** On the French river-side mere light and shade modulate the simple material to one dominant tone.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §4 says that "Low relief projects only slightly from its ground. On a work like Luca's marble choir loft, the strength of a shadow varies with the depth of carving and direction of light. Pater treats that variation as a means of suggesting movement."

## See also

Abstract painting; Accident; Delineation; Dominant tone; Hard realism; Low relief; Refinements of shadow.

## Limits of material

*The bounds that an art's material sets, which the best workmen keep and so find new effects within · The Renaissance*
*the true limits of their material*; *material*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The bounds within which a material can be worked well, what it allows and what it refuses.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Italian painters on glass in France kept within the true limits of their material and got from it "quite a new order of effects" (BEL §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BEL §1, with GIO §1.

## Meaning

The material of an art is what it is made of, glass, marble, clay, colour, sound, words, and each has its own nature: glass transmits light, marble takes a fine edge, clay can be glazed. Its limits are the things it cannot do, or cannot do well. "True" limits are the real ones, as against the limits that habit or timidity impose, and to keep within them is to work with the material and not against it.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the first paragraph of the Du Bellay essay, in its account of the Italian painters who came to France and worked on glass. "Taking it up where the middle age had left it, they found their whole work among the last subtleties of colour and line; and keeping within the true limits of their material, they got quite a new order of effects from it, and felt their way to refinements on colour never dreamed of by those older workmen, the glass-painters of Chartres or Le Mans" (BEL §1). The sentence makes the limits the source of the novelty. The painters did not escape the medieval art of glass; they took it up where it was left and kept within its bounds, and the new order of effects came from inside those bounds. The essay can be read as making this the pattern of the whole French Renaissance: a native art, kept within its own nature, refined to effects never dreamed of before (BEL §1; see Renaissance in France).

The book had already made the same point about sculpture. In the della Robbia essay the special limitation of sculpture "results from the material, and other necessary conditions, of all sculptured work" (ROB §6; see

Special limitation), and the three great styles are three ways of meeting it; Luca's terra cotta transfers "to a different material the principles of his sculpture" (ROB §2; see Homely art), and Luca himself became desirous "to realise the spirit and manner of that sculpture, in a humbler material" (ROB §12). The limitation is not regretted. It is what each style answers, and the answer is its art.

The Giorgione essay turns the observation into a doctrine. The sensuous material of each art "brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material), and each art has "its own special responsibilities to its material" (GIO §1; see Responsibilities to its material). It is in its special mode of handling its given material that each art may pass into the condition of another (GIO §3; see Mode of handling). The glass-painters of the Du Bellay essay can be read as the doctrine's first example: they found new effects not by borrowing from another art but by keeping to their own.

The Winckelmann essay applies it to the arts' rank. One form of art, "by the very limitations of its material, may be more adequate than another for the expression of any one phase of that development" (WIN §32; see Development), the development of the mind itself, and sculpture, "a perfect medium of expression for one peculiar motive of the imaginative intellect", "renounces all those attributes of its material which do not forward that motive" (WIN §34; see Plastic art); it is excluded "by the proper limitation of its material from the development of exquisite situations" (WIN §37). There the limits of material decide what an art can say, and the Greek sculptor's renunciation is the same discipline as the French glass-painter's. In every case the word "limits" carries no complaint. A material's limits are its nature, and the book's best workmen are those who know it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "material" names the medium of an art, in the order of the book.

**ROB §2** Luca's terra cotta transfers to a different material the principles of his sculpture.

**ROB §6** The limitation of sculpture results from the material and other necessary conditions of all sculptured work.

**ROB §12** Luca desires to realise the spirit and manner of marble sculpture in a humbler material.

**GIO §1** Each art's sensuous material brings its own phase of beauty, and each art has its responsibilities to its material.

**GIO §3** In its special mode of handling its given material each art may pass into the condition of another.

**BEL §1** Keeping within the true limits of their material, the painters on glass got a new order of effects from it.

**WIN §32** One art, by the very limitations of its material, may be more adequate than another for a phase of the spirit.

**WIN §33** The spirituality that only lurks about architecture takes up, in sculpture, the whole given material.

**WIN §34** Sculpture renounces all those attributes of its material which do not forward its motive.

**WIN §37** Sculpture is excluded by the proper limitation of its material from the development of exquisite situations.

## See also

Development; Homely art; Mode of handling; Painting on glass; Plastic art; Pure form; Renaissance in France; Responsibilities to its material; Sensuous material; Special limitation.

# Line and colour

*Drawing and colouring, the painter's own means and his temptation · The Renaissance*
*line and colour*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Line and colour are drawing and colouring, the two means that belong to painting alone.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli blends story and sentiment "with the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting" (BOT §3).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §8 says that "Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres provides a nineteenth-century point of reference for the contour of the nude".

**A place to read.** BOT §3, with LEO §10 and BOT §8.

## Meaning

The pair names the two halves of the old Italian quarrel, *disegno* and *colore*, and joins them instead of setting them against each other (see Colour). Line is contour and drawing, the edge that defines a form; colour is the surface within it. Pater's century had its champion of line in Ingres, whose saying that drawing is the probity of art was collected after his death,[303] and its champion of colour in the French painter Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863). "Line and colour" refuses the choice.

[303] Henri Delaborde, *Ingres, sa vie, ses travaux, sa doctrine* (Paris: Plon, 1870), p. 123: "Le dessin est la probité de l'art".

## Use in the book

The phrase comes three times, each time with a different value. In the Botticelli essay it is a charm, half of what the poetical painter blends (BOT §3; see Poetical painter; Abstract painting). In the Leonardo essay it is a temptation: "He wasted many days in curious tricks of design, seeming to lose himself in the spinning of intricate devices of line and colour" (LEO §10). "Wasted", "tricks", "lose himself", "spinning": the means become a labyrinth, and the painter vanishes into them. In the Giorgione essay they are the painter's own gift, "that inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour" which is "quite independent of anything definitely poetical in the subject it accompanies" (GIO §2; see Abstract painting).

Botticelli's line has its own sentiment in Pater's account. The roses in the Birth of Venus fall "each severe in outline, plucked off short at the stalk" (BOT §8), and the Madonna's face is drawn in "abstract lines" that "have little nobleness" (BOT §7; see Abject). The Venus herself is "a figure that reminds you of the faultless nude studies of Ingres" (BOT §8). The comparison can be read as a judgement on Botticelli's line: its purity is classical, as Ingres's was, and it is set inside a frame of medieval ornament (see Grotesque). Line, in Botticelli, can be read as where the Greek ideal survives; colour, which at first "you may think ... cadaverous or at least cold" (BOT §8; see Cadaverous), as where the sentiment of exile shows.

The three uses can be read as a small history of the means in Pater's book. In Botticelli line and colour serve a sentiment; in Leonardo they threaten to become an end; in Giorgione they are the end, but an end that has absorbed its sentiment. Pater admires the first and the last, and his account of Leonardo's "wasted" days shows that he sees the risk before he praises Giorgione: the means of painting, loved for themselves, can become "devices". The phrase marks the line between the pictorial charm he defends and the virtuosity he distrusts.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli blends story and sentiment with the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting.

**LEO §10** Leonardo seemed to lose himself in the spinning of intricate devices of line and colour.

**GIO §2** The pictorial gift is an inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour, independent of anything poetical in the subject.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §8 says that "Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres provides a nineteenth-century point of reference for the contour of the nude. His presence in the paragraph makes the comparison cross medieval, ancient, and modern categories."

## See also

Abject; Abstract painting; Cadaverous; Colour; Grotesque; Poetical painter.

### Literary interest

*literary interest*; *literary*

Attested: *literary interest* (GIO §2); *literary* in twelve further paragraphs (FRE §§21, 23; MIC §9; BEL §§7, 8; WIN §§6, 7, 19, 21, 53; CON §6; C73 §7). Pater uses the phrase for the error he sets out to correct in the criticism of painting. Popular judgment on pictures commits "the false generalisation of all art into forms of poetry", and most spectators, and many critics, see in a picture either technical acquirement or "a merely poetical, or what may be called literary interest, addressed also to the pure intelligence" (GIO §2; see Pictorial quality). Literary interest is the interest of the story or the idea a picture illustrates, the thing that could be told in words, and it speaks "to the pure intelligence" as surely as technique does. Both miss "that true pictorial quality which lies between" (GIO §2; see Colouring). The phrase touched a live debate. Victorian exhibitions were full of subject pictures that told stories, and a few months after the essay appeared Whistler, independently of Pater, wrote that a picture "should have its own merit, and not depend upon dramatic, or legendary, or local interest".[304] Pater's quiet "what may be called" names the fault without the polemic, and the rest of the essay shows the alternative: pictures that tell "without an articulated story" (GIO §20; see Articulated story).

## See also

Articulated story; Colouring; Drawing; Matter and form; Pictorial quality.

### Low relief

*The Tuscan sculptors' system: form kept close to its ground, and so freed from the weight of stone · The Renaissance*

*low relief*; *lowness of relief*; *relief*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sculpture in which the figures project only slightly from a flat background.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "What is the precise value of this system of sculpture, this low relief?" (ROB §5).

[304] James McNeill Whistler, in *The World*, 22 May 1878; reprinted as "The Red Rag" in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (London, 1890).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §4 says that "Low relief projects only slightly from its ground".

**A place to read.** ROB §5, with ROB §§3, 11 and MIC §4.

## Meaning

Relief, from the Italian *rilievo*, a raising up, is sculpture carved from a block so that the figures stand out from a ground. Giorgio Vasari distinguished three kinds: half relief, in which the figures stand halfway out; low relief; and a third, "flattened" kind, *stiacciato*, which has little more than the drawing of the figure, with the slightest swelling of the surface. His examples of the last were the figures on the ancient vases of Arezzo, on cameos and on coins.[305] Donatello carried the flattened relief furthest in the fifteenth century; Luca della Robbia and his contemporaries worked in a low relief that allowed their figures more body while keeping them close to the plane.

## Use in the book

The fifth paragraph of the della Robbia essay is the phrase's chief passage, and it asks the essay's central question: "What is the precise value of this system of sculpture, this low relief? Luca della Robbia, and the other sculptors of the school to which he belongs, have before them the universal problem of their art; and this system of low relief is the means by which they meet and overcome the special limitation of sculpture" (ROB §5; see Special limitation).

The question is the Preface's method applied to a technique. The Preface asks of each work what is its "virtue" (PRE §3; see Virtue); here the question is asked of a way of carving, and the answer is that low relief solves a problem. The problem is stated in the next paragraph: sculpture tends to "a hard realism", to heaviness, to the competition of stone with the living body (ROB §6; see Hard realism). Low relief solves it by refusing the competition. A figure that barely rises from its ground is plainly not a body; it is closer to a drawing, defined by "refinements of shadow" (ROB §4; see Refinements of shadow; Delineation), and it can carry intense feeling without the feeling stiffening into caricature (ROB §11; see Caricature).

The essay connects low relief with three things. It lends the monumental effigies "something of its depression of surface", and so "a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3; see Depression of surface). It is the result of the Tuscan "system of conventionalism", which represses "all such curves as indicate solid form", "throwing the whole into low relief" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism). And it is the "science" of the school, "its exquisite and expressive system of low

[305] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives* (1550), Introduction to the three arts of design, "Of Sculpture", chapter X.

relief", which Luca carried from marble into pottery (ROB §12; see Homely art; Science).

The Michelangelo essay makes low relief one of three equivalent means. Michelangelo "secures that ideality of expression which in Greek sculpture depends on a delicate system of abstraction, and in early Italian sculpture on lowness of relief, by an incompleteness" (MIC §4; see Ideality of expression). Greek abstraction, Tuscan low relief and Michelangelo's incompleteness are three ways to the same end, an expression lifted above the literal (see Abstraction; Incompleteness; Equivalent of colour). The Giorgione essay finds low relief's kinship with poetry: among the instances of one art aspiring toward another is "the analogy between a Greek tragedy and a work of Greek sculpture, between a sonnet and a relief" (GIO §4; see Anders-streben). The sonnet and the relief can be read as kin: both small and bounded, both winning intensity from their limits. Leonardo, as a boy, "constructed models in relief, of which Vasari mentions some of women smiling" (LEO §5; see Passing of a smile).

The phrase can be read as Pater's chief example of a limitation chosen and turned to strength. The low relief gives up the full roundness of sculpture, and gains by the loss the qualities of drawing and of feeling.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "low relief" or "lowness of relief" occurs, with the paragraphs in which a sculptured relief is named, in the order of the book; "relief" in the sense of comfort or release (PIC §11, MIC §4) or contrast (WIN §36) is not listed.

**ROB §3** The Tuscan sculptors worked for the most part in low relief, giving their effigies its depression of surface.

**ROB §5** Low relief is the means by which the Tuscan sculptors overcome the special limitation of sculpture.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan system of conventionalism throws the whole into low relief.

**ROB §12** Luca united the expressive system of low relief to the homely art of pottery.

**MIC §4** Ideality of expression depends in early Italian sculpture on lowness of relief.

**LEO §5** Leonardo constructed models in relief, some of women smiling.

**LEO §8** Leonardo kept Verrocchio's love of reliefs, like the cameos on Saint Michael's girdle in the Virgin of the Balances.

**GIO §4** There is an analogy between a sonnet and a relief.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §4 says that "Low relief projects only slightly from its ground. On a work like Luca's marble choir loft, the strength of a shadow varies with the depth of carving and direction of light. Pater treats that variation as a means of suggesting movement." The Introduction says that "A relief can catch a gesture just before it passes." The note at ROB §2 says that Luca's glazed terracotta "was used for both reliefs and sculpture in the round, so the term describes the material independently of the depth of carving".

## See also

Abstraction; Anders-streben; Caricature; Conventionalism; Delineation; Depression of surface; Equivalent of colour; Hard realism; Homely art; Ideality of expression; Incompleteness; Passing of a smile; Refinements of shadow; Science; Special limitation; Virtue.

# Lower in key

*Softening a poet's images when they become visible · The Renaissance lowered in key*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To lower in key is to reduce intensity, as music may be transposed into a lower key or a picture painted in a lower range of tones.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater writes that "the words of a poet, which only feebly present an image to the mind, must be lowered in key when translated into visible form" (BOT §3).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §3 says that "The engravings in the 1481 printing and the set of drawings associated with Botticelli are distinct projects".

**A place to read.** BOT §3.

## Meaning

A key, in music, is the scale on which a piece is built, and to lower it is to play the same music at a lower pitch; in Victorian talk of painting, a picture was in a high or a low key according to the range of its lights and darks. Both senses give Pater's phrase its meaning: the same matter, carried at less intensity. The principle has a famous ancestor. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Laocoön* (1766) argued that the sculptor of the Laocoön group softened the priest's scream into a sigh because what poetry may describe, sculpture, which shows it to the eye, must moderate.[306] Pater calls the book in the

[306] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon* (Berlin, 1766), chapters 1–4.

Giorgione essay "an important contribution" "to such a philosophy of the variations of the beautiful" (GIO §2).

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the account of Botticelli's illustrations to Dante: "The grotesques, so often a stumbling-block to painters, who forget" the principle quoted above, "make one regret that he has not rather chosen for illustration the more subdued imagery of the Purgatorio" (BOT §3; see Grotesque).

The argument is about the difference between words and images. A poet's words "only feebly present an image to the mind", and this can be read as follows: the reader sees a monster dimly, through language, and the dimness tempers the horror. A painter who renders the same monster at full strength gives the eye what the mind only glimpsed, and the result is excessive. The painter must therefore lower the key, keeping the subject and reducing its force. Botticelli, in Pater's judgement, did not always do so, and the wish for the Purgatorio is a wish for a subject already in a lower key.

The phrase states early in the book a doctrine the Giorgione essay develops: that each art has "its own special mode of reaching the imagination, its own special responsibilities to its material" (GIO §1; see Special limitation). It also describes Pater's own taste. Botticelli's best work, in his account, is in a lower key throughout: the "minor tones" of the Venus, its light "cold—mere sunless dawn" (BOT §8; see Minor tones), the wan colour of the Madonnas. A critic who praises a cold dawn over the sunshine "a later painter would have cloyed you with" (BOT §8) is a critic of lowered keys.

The phrase can be read as the book's rule for its own prose as well. Pater writes of Leonardo's horrors, of Michelangelo's tombs, of the flux of the Conclusion, and his sentences keep them subdued, as Lessing's sculptor kept the scream a sigh. The Botticelli essay is a study of an art in a minor key, written in one.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §3** A poet's words must be lowered in key when translated into visible form; Botticelli's grotesques make one wish he had chosen the Purgatorio.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §3 says that "The engravings in the 1481 printing and the set of drawings associated with Botticelli are distinct projects. Pater's wish concerns the limited selection in that printed volume, whereas the drawings extend to later parts of the poem." The note at GIO §2 says that

Lessing's *Laocoön* "distinguishes arts that arrange bodies in space from poetry, which unfolds signs in time".

## See also

Anders-streben; Grotesque; Minor tones; Painter's vision; Pictorial propriety; Special limitation; Visible form.

## Madonna

*Madonna*, *Madonnas*

Attested: *Madonnas* (BOT §§7, 9); *Madonna* in six paragraphs (PIC §15; BOT §7; LEO §§18, 22, 25; WIN §39). Italian, "my lady": the Virgin Mary, and a picture of her, usually with the Child. Botticelli's are the book's most discussed. Botticelli's Madonnas have a "unique expression and charm" (BOT §7; see Type), and Pater describes their usual form: "Hardly any collection of note is without one of these circular pictures, into which the attendant angels depress their heads so naïvely" (BOT §7). The edition's note explains that "'Depress' means lower", and that in the round format "tilted heads and bent shoulders fit the upper arc". The circular picture, the *tondo*, was a Florentine form for private houses. Pater's Madonnas are reluctant (see Intolerable honour), "peevish-looking" and "conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty" (BOT §7; see Abject), and they "plead in unmistakable undertones for a warmer, lower humanity" (BOT §9; see Undertone). Pater sets them against "the Sistine Madonna and the Virgins of Fra Angelico" (BOT §7). Elsewhere the book has the Doni Madonna of Michelangelo (PIC §15), Leonardo's Madonna of the Balances (LEO §25), and the Greek goddesses, of whom the Winckelmann essay says: "There is no Greek Madonna; the goddesses are always childless" (WIN §39).

## See also

Abject; Intolerable honour; Type; Undertone.

## Manner

*manner*

Attested: *manner* (BEL §§1, 3, 13); in eighteen further paragraphs, of a way of doing or a style (FRE §§17, 22, 24; PIC §14; BOT §8; ROB §§12, 13; LEO §§7, 8, 9, 13, 25; GIO §§8, 17; WIN §§7, 19, 31, 43). The plural *manners*, customs, occurs in three paragraphs (FRE §23; GIO §17; WIN §23). Manner is a way of doing, from the Latin *manus*, hand, through the Old French *maniere*; in the arts, the habitual way of a hand or a school, its style in the lesser sense. The Du Bellay essay makes the word its own. The

old Gothic manner had one chance more in borrowing from Italy (BEL §1; see Gothic manner); after Ronsard's reform "only the elegance, the aerial touch, the perfect manner remain", and "this elegance, this manner, this daintiness of execution are consummate" (BEL §3; see Finesse; Æsthetic value). The thirteenth paragraph makes manner the interest of the whole school: the Pleiad's poetry is "part of the manner of a time—a time which made much of manner, and carried it to a high degree of perfection" (BEL §13; see À la mode). The same paragraph goes on to find "style there", one temper shaping the whole (BEL §13; see Style). Elsewhere the word is the painters' and the critics' plain one: Leonardo's own "Lombard manner" (LEO §8), the Hellenic manner that Winckelmann apprehended "by instinct or touch" (WIN §19; see Temperament), the "pagan manner" in which he dealt with the sensuous element in Greek art (WIN §43).

## See also

À la mode; Æsthetic value; Finesse; Gothic manner; Manner of apprehension; Matter and manner; Style; Temperament.

## Marble

*marble*, *marbles*

Attested: *marble* (ROB §§2, 12, twice there), and in nine further paragraphs (FRE §24; MIC §§3, 6, 7, 17; LEO §30; GIO §§12, 23; WIN §43). Crystalline limestone, the noble stone of sculpture, white from the quarries of Carrara in the Apuan Alps of north-western Tuscany. In the della Robbia essay marble is the measure against which clay is set. Luca "was first of all a worker in marble, and his works in terra cotta only transfer to a different material the principles of his sculpture" (ROB §2; see Finish of expression); he produced "many works in marble for the Duomo and the Campanile of Florence" before turning to pottery (ROB §12; see Homely art), and his first earthenware was "a mere rough imitation of the costly, laboriously wrought marble" (ROB §12; see Earthenware). The adjectives are exact: marble is costly and slow, clay cheap and quick, and the essay's argument is that the principles survived the change of material. The Michelangelo essay gives marble its other face, the material of a life: the child Michelangelo was nursed at Settignano, "where every other inhabitant is a worker in the marble-quarries" (MIC §6), and the David was cut from "a vast fragment of marble" that had long lain below the Loggia of Orcagna (MIC §7). The marbles of Saint Peter's stand for Michelangelo's followers, against the Tuscan tombs that are his true source (MIC §17; see Savour); Winckelmann "fingers those pagan marbles with unsinged hands" (WIN §43).

## See also

Earthenware; Finish of expression; Homely art; Rough-hewn; Savour; Terra cotta.

## Masque

*masques*

Attested: *masques* (GIO §22). The masque, from the French *masque* and the Italian *maschera*, a mask, was the court entertainment of the Renaissance, in which noble players, masked and splendidly dressed, acted a fable with music and dance; its English form flourished at the courts of James I and Charles I. Pater uses the word in his account of the subjects of Giorgione's school, which passes from music "to the play which is like music; to those masques in which men avowedly do but play at real life, like children 'dressing-up,' disguised in the strange old Italian dresses, parti-coloured, or fantastic with embroidery and furs, of which the master was so curious a designer, and which, above all the spotless white linen at wrist and throat, he painted so dexterously" (GIO §22; see Listening). "Avowedly" is the point: in the masque men play at life and say so, as children do when they dress up. The paragraph has just praised play as the time when everyday attentiveness is relaxed (GIO §22; see Listening). The masque is play made visible, and its costumes, embroidery, furs and white linen give the painter subjects that are all surface and colour. As Pater presents it, the masque is less a story than a pageant of dress, and so it can be read as lending itself wholly to painting (see Articulated story; Pageant).

## See also

Articulated story; Listening; Pageant.

## Master of live stone

*The old Florentine name for a sculptor, which Michelangelo's living rocks make literal · The Renaissance*

*master of live stone*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A master who works in living stone: a sculptor, the stone being "live" because it is quarried rock, and because under his hand it seems to live.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo seems "to realise the expression by which the old Florentine records describe a sculptor—master of live stone" (MIC §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §4.

## Meaning

Florence's sculptors belonged, with masons and woodcarvers, to the guild of the masters of stone and wood, the *Arte dei Maestri di Pietra e Legname*, and the old records name them by their trade. "Live" stone, in English as in Italian, is rock in its natural bed or fresh from it, as "live rock" is rock not yet quarried. Pater's phrase takes a craftsman's title and lets its second sense, stone that is alive, come forward.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the fourth and fifth sentences of the fourth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which follow the account of his incompleteness (see Half-emergent form): "And as his persons have something of the unwrought stone about them, so, as if to realise the expression by which the old Florentine records describe a sculptor—master of live stone—with him the very rocks seem to have life. They have but to cast away the dust and scurf that they may rise and stand on their feet" (MIC §4; see Scurf).

The sentence works by a crossing. The persons, who should be alive, have "something of the unwrought stone about them"; the rocks, which should be dead, "seem to have life". Figure and stone meet halfway, and the old phrase "master of live stone" names the man in whose hands they meet. "As if to realise the expression" makes the title literal: what the records meant as a trade name becomes, in Michelangelo, a description. His stone is live.

The second sentence turns the image to resurrection. The rocks "have but to cast away the dust and scurf that they may rise and stand on their feet", as the dead at the Last Judgment rise from their graves, shaking off the earth (see Resurrection). The paragraph has just made the Resurrection "the real subject" of the Last Judgment (MIC §4; see Resurrection), and the living rocks are the same subject in stone: life waiting to rise out of what seems dead.

The rest of the paragraph grounds the image in the quarries. Michelangelo "loved the very quarries of Carrara", and on the David's head a morsel of uncut stone remains, "as if by one touch to maintain its connexion with the place from which it was hewn" (MIC §4; see Rough-hewn mass). The master of live stone is a man who loves stone itself, not only what can be made of it; his figures keep their kinship with the rock.

The phrase, on this view, gathers the essay's first argument into a title. The creation of life "in the cold and lifeless stone" (MIC §3; see Creation of life), life coming "always as relief or recovery" out of "the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled" (MIC §4; see Relief or recovery): Michelangelo's

whole art, on Pater's account, is the making of stone live, and the old Florentine phrase, found in a record, says it in four words.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §4** As if to realise the old Florentine name for a sculptor, master of live stone, with Michelangelo the very rocks seem to have life.

## See also

Creation of life; Half-emergent form; Relief or recovery; Resurrection; Rough-hewn mass; Scurf.

# Matter and form

*The two elements of every work of art, which the understanding can always tell apart and which art constantly strives to make one · The Renaissance*

*matter and form*; *form and matter*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The matter of a work is its subject, what it is about; the form is its handling, how it is made.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For while in all other kinds of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, and the understanding can always make this distinction, yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it" (GIO §5).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §5 says that "Pater means the close union of a work's matter and its manner of expression".

**A place to read.** GIO §§5, 9–10, with BEL §23.

## Meaning

The pair is Aristotle's. In his philosophy every natural thing is matter, *hylē*, given shape by form, *morphē* or *eidos*: the bronze and the shape of the statue, the body and the soul.[307] Latin rhetoric had a related pair, *res* and *verba*: every speech, says Quintilian, consists of what is signified and what signifies, "that is, of things and words" (see Matter and manner).[308] Pater's use is aesthetic. The matter of a picture is "the actual circumstances of an event, the actual topography of a landscape"; its form is "the form, the spirit, of the handling" (GIO §5). He keeps the philosopher's sense that form is not a covering but what makes the matter what it is, and he adds a

[307] Aristotle, *Physics* II.1–3 (the bronze of the statue, II.3, 194b24); *Metaphysics* VII.3, 1029a2–5, and VII.8; on body and soul, *Metaphysics* VII.11, 1037a5–7, and *On the Soul* II.1, 412a19–21.

[308] Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* III.5.1; compare VIII, preface 6.

claim the philosopher did not make: that the best art abolishes the distinction itself.

## Use in the book

The fifth paragraph states the doctrine, under its claim that all art aspires towards the condition of music (GIO §5; see Condition of music): "For while in all other kinds of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, and the understanding can always make this distinction, yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it" (GIO §5). The examples follow: "That the mere matter of a poem, for instance, its subject, namely, its given incidents or situation—that the mere matter of a picture, the actual circumstances of an event, the actual topography of a landscape—should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling, that this form, this mode of handling, should become an end in itself, should penetrate every part of the matter: this is what all art constantly strives after, and achieves in different degrees" (GIO §5; see End in itself). Two verbs carry the doctrine. Form must "penetrate every part of the matter", and art strives to "obliterate" their distinction. The understanding will always separate them; the work strives to make the separation impossible.

The essay then tests the doctrine on each art. In poetry the distinction is easy where a poem carries moral aspiration, and least possible in the lyric (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). In everyday life the principle "holds good ... of the furniture of our houses, and of dress", which "for the wise" can have a charm "caught from the way in which they are done" (GIO §8; see Fashion). The ninth paragraph names the faculty that receives the union: in the ideal works "form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect" to the imaginative reason (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason). The tenth names the art that realises it, music, in whose consummate moments matter and form "inhere in and completely saturate each other" (GIO §10; see Artistic ideal). And Giorgione is typical of that aspiration (GIO §12; see Condition of music), whose attainment in painting "depends, of course, in great measure, on dexterous choice of that subject, or phase of subject" (GIO §20; see Interpenetration).

The doctrine has a close precedent in Friedrich Schiller. In the twenty-second of his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795), Schiller wrote that in a truly beautiful work of art the content should do nothing and the form everything, and that the real secret of the master's art lies in annihilating the matter by the form.[309] Pater's "obliterate" can be read as Schiller's annihilation softened into a striving, and his sentence on Du Bellay's song of the winnower as an echo of the Letter with one word added: the song is "a composition in which the matter is almost nothing, and the form almost everything" (BEL §23). "Almost" qualifies Schiller's

[309] Friedrich Schiller, *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen* (1795), letter 22.

absolute. The matter is never nothing; it is reduced until it serves the form without remainder.

The Winckelmann essay carries the pair into a definition of poetry. In its last paragraph poetry is "all literary production which attains the power of giving pleasure by its form, as distinct from its matter" (WIN §53). The definition seems to contradict the Giorgione essay, since it sets form apart from matter; read together, the two say that the pleasure of art comes from form, and that the highest art is the one in which the matter has become form entirely, so that the pleasure of form is the whole pleasure of the work.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which matter and form are named together, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Music presents no matter of sentiment or thought separable from the special form in which it is conveyed.

**GIO §5** It is the constant effort of art to obliterate the distinction of matter and form.

**GIO §7** In lyrical poetry we are least able to detach the matter from the form.

**GIO §9** Form and matter in their union or identity present one single effect to the imaginative reason.

**GIO §10** In music the form is not distinct from the matter; they inhere in and saturate each other.

**GIO §12** Giorgione is typical of the aspiration towards the perfect identification of matter and form.

**GIO §20** The interpenetration of matter and form is realised absolutely only in music.

**BEL §23** In Du Bellay's song the matter is almost nothing, and the form almost everything.

**WIN §27** The forms of medieval and oriental art are inadequate to the matter they clothe.

**WIN §53** Poetry gives pleasure by its form, as distinct from its matter.

## See also

Artistic ideal; Condition of music; End in itself; Fashion; Imaginative reason; Interpenetration; Lyrical poetry; Matter and manner.

# Meditative subtlety

*The inward fineness of the High Renaissance, found earlier in Botticelli · The Renaissance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Meditative subtlety is fineness of perception joined to a habit of inward reflection.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In the middle of the fifteenth century he had already anticipated much of that meditative subtlety, which is sometimes supposed peculiar to the great imaginative workmen of its close" (BOT §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BOT §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *meditari* is to ponder, and also to practise, as one rehearses a speech; meditation is the thought that turns a thing over. *Subtilis* is finely woven, thin, and so delicate and penetrating. The two words together describe a mind that looks long and sees fine distinctions. In the book "subtle" is a frequent word of praise, not least of Leonardo: his genius generates "a type of subtle and curious grace" (LEO §16).

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the essay's first paragraph, in the sentence quoted above, and it makes a historical claim (BOT §1). The workmen of the century's close are presumably Leonardo, Michelangelo and Giorgione, the subjects of the book's later essays. Their meditative subtlety is "sometimes supposed peculiar" to them, and Pater denies the supposition: Botticelli had it first, or much of it.

The claim is characteristic of the book's method. The first essay finds a Renaissance in twelfth-century France (see Medieval Renaissance); the Preface grants the Renaissance's "earliest phases" their own "freshness" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis); the Botticelli essay ends by praising "the freshness, the uncertain and diffident promise, which belong to the earlier Renaissance itself" (BOT §10; see New artistic sense). "Anticipated" is the verb of that history. Qualities that seem to belong to a moment are found to have been prepared, and the preparers become worth studying for themselves.

The adjective returns twice. The "prevailing tone" of Michelangelo's sonnets to Vittoria Colonna is "a calm and meditative sweetness" (MIC §12; see Meditative sweetness), and the Giorgione essay defines true poetry as "neither descriptive nor meditative merely" but the "element of song in the singing" (GIO §1). The two uses pull in different directions. In the sonnets meditation is the calm into which passion has been withdrawn; in the definition of poetry it is a mere element that song must transcend.

Botticelli's meditative subtlety can be read as the first of these, but in painting. His figures brood: the Madonna whose "choice is on her face" (BOT §7; see Middle world), the Venus who seems to think of "the whole

long day of love yet to come" (BOT §8; see Goddess of pleasure). The subtlety lies in the expression, the meditation in the figures, and Pater's claim is that a painter of the middle of the fifteenth century had already anticipated much of what is supposed peculiar to the workmen of its close.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "meditative" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §1** Botticelli had already anticipated much of the meditative subtlety supposed peculiar to the great workmen of the century's close.

**MIC §12** The prevailing tone of Michelangelo's sonnets is a calm and meditative sweetness.

**GIO §1** True poetry is neither descriptive nor meditative merely, but the element of song in the singing.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Ascêsis; Goddess of pleasure; Medieval Renaissance; Meditative sweetness; Middle world; New artistic sense.

# Miniature-painting

*miniature-painting*

Attested: *miniature-painting* (FRE §1; LEO §8). The painting of small pictures and ornaments in manuscripts; the word comes through the Italian *miniatura* from the Latin *miniare*, to colour with *minium*, red lead, and only later suggested smallness. The French writers tell "how Dante himself expressly connects the origin of the art of miniature-painting with the city of Paris" (FRE §1). In *Purgatorio*, Dante greets the illuminator Oderisi of Gubbio as the glory of Gubbio and of the art that in Paris they call *alluminar*.[310] The line ties the art's name, not its origin, to Paris. In the Leonardo essay the phrase names a manner that never left him: his lost cartoon of Paradise "was the perfection of the older Florentine style of miniature-painting, with patient putting of each leaf upon the trees and each flower in the grass" (LEO §8). The book can be read as using the art twice as a sign of patience and finish, in the French origin of a medieval Renaissance and in the Florentine style that Leonardo brought to perfection.

[310] Dante, *Purgatorio* 11.79–81.

## See also

Illumination; Illuminator; Medieval Renaissance.

# Minor tones

*Botticelli's taste for subdued colour and cold light · The Renaissance minor tones*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Minor tones are subdued colours and muted harmonies, named after the minor mode in music, which the ear hears as sad.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The imagery of the Venus was subdued partly by the limits of the art of its time; "his predilection for minor tones counts also" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BOT §8.

## Meaning

*Tonos* in Greek is the tension of a string and so a pitch; in painting a tone is the degree of light or dark in a colour, or the general colouring of a picture. "Minor" is the lesser, and in music the minor mode is the scale with the lowered third, which European ears have long heard as plaintive. Pater's phrase crosses the two arts on purpose, as the Giorgione essay will cross them in its doctrine that all art aspires toward music (see Anders-streben).

## Use in the book

The phrase closes Pater's explanation of why the Birth of Venus is not as joyful as its subject. "Botticelli meant all this imagery to be altogether pleasurable; and it was partly an incompleteness of resources, inseparable from the art of that time, that subdued and chilled it. But his predilection for minor tones counts also" (BOT §8). Two causes are named, and their order matters. The first is the age's, a limit of technique; the second is the painter's, a taste. "Predilection" is a love chosen before others, and Pater gives it the last word: the chill is partly the age's and partly Botticelli's own taste.

Earlier in the paragraph Pater has defended the result. "The light is indeed cold—mere sunless dawn; but a later painter would have cloyed you with sunshine; and you can see the better for that quietness in the morning air each long promontory, as it slopes down to the water's edge" (BOT §8). The cold light is a gain in clarity. Sunshine cloys, as sweetness does; the minor tone lets each shape be seen. The defence is the same as the one Pater makes for the colour that seemed cadaverous (see Imaginative colouring), and the two together make Botticelli's coldness a deliberate key.

The word "tone" runs through the book in both arts: music refines on passion "by its subtle range of tones" (WIN §33), and in the Conclusion "some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest" (CON §4). Pater's ear and eye share a vocabulary, and in it the minor is the mode of feeling held back.

The phrase can be read as a name for the book's own palette. Pater's essays prefer dawn to noon, the subdued to the brilliant, the wan Madonna to the Sistine one (see Abject), and the goddess of pleasure whose face is sad (see Goddess of pleasure). It is the taste of a critic who finds in restraint a fuller expression than in display, and the Botticelli essay is where the taste is first given its reasons.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §8** The imagery of the Venus was subdued by the incompleteness of the art's resources and by Botticelli's predilection for minor tones.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Abject; Anders-streben; Goddess of pleasure; Imaginative colouring; Lower in key; Meditative subtlety.

# Mixed lights

*The light of Leonardo's pictures, neither plain day nor night: an atmosphere made about things, rare but lawful · The Renaissance*
*mixed lights*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Light of more than one kind or source together, as at dusk, in an eclipse or under water.

**In *The Renaissance*.** He "preferred always the more to the less remote, what, seeming exceptional, was an instance of law more refined, the construction about things of a peculiar atmosphere and mixed lights" (LEO §18).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at LEO §18 ties the Virgin of the Rocks' rocky enclosure and distant water to "Pater's interest in gradations of light and distance".

**A place to read.** LEO §18.

## Meaning

Mixed light is light from more than one source, or light of more than one quality at once: daylight with lamplight, the sun through rain, the glow of evening. Later criticism calls Leonardo's soft passage of tone into tone without outline *sfumato*, "smoked". Pater does not use the word, but his phrase seems to name the light in which such painting lives.

## Use in the book

Pater states the principle before he gives the landscapes. "He who thus penetrated into the most secret parts of nature preferred always the more to the less remote, what, seeming exceptional, was an instance of law more refined, the construction about things of a peculiar atmosphere and mixed lights" (LEO §18). The sentence makes three claims. Leonardo preferred the remote to the near (see Remote beauty). What seems exceptional in nature is not lawless but "an instance of law more refined": the strange is the subtle working of the same law. And what he preferred was "the construction about things of a peculiar atmosphere", a light that can be read as made rather than simply found.

The paragraph ends by showing the light, as of eclipse, of rain at daybreak, of deep water, through Leonardo's "strange veil of sight" (LEO §18; see Veil of sight). Eclipse, rain at dawn and water are, it seems, the mixed lights the first sentence promised, each a light in which two states meet, sun and shadow, night and day, air and water. Between the two sentences the paragraph has followed water from its source through the Madonnas to "the seashore of the Saint Anne" (LEO §18; see Motion of great waters), and the light of that landscape is the same. La Gioconda sits in it "as in some faint light under sea" (LEO §30).

One may take "mixed lights" as the visual counterpart of the essay's account of Leonardo's mind. The science of his age was "all divination" (LEO §13; see Divination), and his philosophy kept the older alchemy's "confidence in short cuts and odd byways to knowledge" (LEO §13; see Alchemy). His light is a byway too, the hour no one else would choose. But the first sentence insists that the byway is lawful. The landscape is "not of dreams or of fancy", and its hours are "selected from a thousand with a miracle of finesse" (LEO §18; see Finesse). The Conclusion asks the same eye of every reader: "some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest" (CON §4), and the art of living is to catch it. Leonardo's mixed lights are such tones, chosen and then painted.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §18** Leonardo preferred the more remote, the exceptional that is an instance of law more refined, the construction about things of a peculiar atmosphere and mixed lights.

## See also

Alchemy; Divination; Finesse; Motion of great waters; Recherché; Remote beauty; Veil of sight.

## Mockery

*mockery*

Attested: *mockery* (LEO §11). Mockery is ridicule, the imitation that makes a thing absurd. Pater finds it in Leonardo's sketches of chance people, beside their "remote beauty": "But mingled inextricably with this there is an element of mockery also" (LEO §11; see Remote beauty), so that, "whether in sorrow or scorn", he caricatures even Dante (LEO §11; see Caricature). "Inextricably" is the essay's claim: the beauty and the mockery cannot be pulled apart, as there is "some interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror" in the same paragraph (LEO §11; see Interfusion of beauty and terror). Pater does not decide between "sorrow or scorn", and the doubt is part of the point: the same face may be drawn in grief or in contempt, and the line is the same. The element can be read as returning in the smiles of the later pictures, in the Saint John's "treacherous smile" (LEO §25) and the smile "always with a touch of something sinister in it" (LEO §30; see Unfathomable smile), where beauty seems to mock the one who looks.

## See also

Caricature; Grotesque; Interfusion of beauty and terror; Remote beauty; Unfathomable smile.

## Mode of handling

*The form of a work as the artist's way of working his material, the side of art that must penetrate every part of the matter · The Renaissance*

*mode of handling*; *handling*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The manner in which an artist works his material; in Pater, the form of a work as against its subject.

**In *The Renaissance*.** All art strives that the mere matter of a poem or a picture "should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling, that this form, this mode of handling, should become an end in itself, should penetrate every part of the matter" (GIO §5).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §6 says that Pater "asks the reader to imagine a plain road made solemn by the handling of a particular image".

**A place to read.** GIO §§3, 5.

## Meaning

"Handling" is first a workshop word: the way a hand treats a material, the touch of the brush or the chisel, the execution as distinct from the design. A "mode" is a manner or kind, and a mode of handling is the manner in which one art, or one artist, works. Pater keeps the workshop sense and widens it. Every art has a handling, poetry as well as painting, and the handling is not technique alone but the form of the work, what the artist makes of his material.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the centre of the Giorgione essay's doctrine, in an equation. All art strives that the mere matter of a picture or a poem "should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling, that this form, this mode of handling, should become an end in itself, should penetrate every part of the matter" (GIO §5; see Matter and form). Form, spirit and handling are named as one thing. The workshop word holds the abstract one down: the form of a work is not an idea hovering over it but the way it was done, and the spirit of a picture lives in its touch.

The essay has used the phrase two paragraphs earlier, of the arts' borrowings. Each art, "in its special mode of handling its given material", may be observed "to pass into the condition of some other art" (GIO §3; see Anders-streben). The handling is where an art is most itself and also where it leans toward another: a painter's handling may become musical, a poet's pictorial, without leaving its own material. The word "special" matters. There is no handling in general, only the handling of this art, this material.

The second paragraph had already set handling apart from mere skill: the true pictorial quality, which lies between technical acquirement and literary interest, is "that inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour" (GIO §2; see Pictorial quality; Pictorial gift). The first paragraph says the same of poetry, whose true quality "comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language" (GIO §1; see Rhythmical language). "Inventive" and "creative" are the distinguishing words. Touch can be learned; handling, in Pater's sense, is invented by the temperament that handles.

The Winckelmann essay keeps the word nearer its root. Goethe, Pater reports, held that in born antiquaries like Winckelmann "a constant handling of the antique, with its eternal outline" kept the mind as close to the concrete as a critical philosophy (WIN §7; see Limitation to the concrete), and Winckelmann's serenity marks his "handling of the sensuous side of Greek art" (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit). There the hand is the scholar's on the marble. Between the two essays the word can be read as completing a circle: the antiquary handles the work of art, and in doing so learns the handling that made it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "handling" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** True poetical quality comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language.

**GIO §2** The true pictorial quality is the inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour.

**GIO §3** In its special mode of handling its material each art may pass into the condition of another.

**GIO §5** The form, the spirit, of the handling should become an end in itself and penetrate every part of the matter.

**WIN §7** Goethe adds that in born antiquaries a constant handling of the antique maintains the limitation to the concrete.

**WIN §43** A serenity characterises Winckelmann's handling of the sensuous side of Greek art.

## See also

Anders-streben; End in itself; Heiterkeit; Limitation to the concrete; Matter and form; Pictorial gift; Pictorial quality; Rhythmical language.

# Modelling

*modelling*; *model*, *modelled*

Attested: *modelling* (LEO §§7, 19; WIN §29; WIN §41, twice; WIN §§42, 50); *model* (LEO §14); *modelled* (LEO §28). To model is to shape in clay or wax, and in painting to give a form the look of relief by light and shade. In the Leonardo essay the word belongs to the workshop. Verrocchio, "often, in the modelling of drapery, or of a lifted arm, or of hair cast back from the face", found "something of the freer manner and richer humanity of a later age" (LEO §7); Leonardo himself "was to model a colossal statue" of Francesco Sforza (LEO §14), and the Colleoni at Venice was "modelled by Leonardo's master" (LEO §28); and Leonardo's portraits have "faces of a modelling more skilful than has been seen before or since, embodied with a reality which almost amounts to illusion, on the dark air" (LEO §19). In the Winckelmann essay the word rises to a principle. Hegel, quoted there, speaks of "the consummate modelling of divine and human forms" as at home in Greece (WIN §41); Winckelmann brought to "the criticism of that consummate Greek modelling" his culture and his temperament (WIN §42); and for Goethe, Winckelmann "defines, in clearest outline, the eternal problem of culture—balance, unity with one's self, consummate Greek modelling" (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self). The last use can be read as the word's farthest reach: the shaping of a statue becomes the shaping of a self.

## See also

Human personality; Portraiture; Unity with one's self.

# Modulated unison

*The tuning of landscape and figures to one another in Venetian painting, described in the language of music · The Renaissance*

*modulated unison*; *modulated*, *modulating*, *modulation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Parts tuned to sound as one, each keeping its own voice.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Nowhere is a truer instance of that balance, that modulated unison of landscape and persons—of the human image and its accessories—already noticed as characteristic of the Venetian school, so that, in it, neither personage nor scenery is ever a mere pretext for the other" (GIO §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** GIO §24, with GIO §6.

## Meaning

Both words come from music. To modulate, from the Latin *modulari*, to measure or set to a measure, is to regulate a sound, and in music to pass from one key into another; unison, from the Latin *unisonus*, of one sound, is two voices on a single note. Put together, the words describe a harmony that is neither sameness nor contrast: voices kept distinct but adjusted until they sound as one.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the end of the essay's long description of Venetian landscape. The paragraph has passed over the "park scenery", the gold thread, the one peak of blue (GIO §24; see Park scenery; Gold thread), and then turns to a single picture. "Yet what real, airy space, as the eye passes from level to level, through the long-drawn valley in which Jacob embraces Rachel among the flocks!" (GIO §24). The sentence that follows names what the valley shows, "that balance, that modulated unison of landscape and persons" (GIO §24; see Human image). The picture of Jacob and Rachel is one that the critics had given to a pupil of Palma (GIO §16; see New Vasari); Pater takes his instance from it all the same, and the Venetian quality is in it whoever painted it.

"Already noticed" points back to the sixth paragraph, where the essay first described Venetian landscape in musical terms. The Venetian masters use the details of their Alpine country "but as the notes of a music which duly accompanies the presence of their men and women" (GIO §6; see Abstracted elements). The same paragraph gives the verb its other use: on a

quiet French river-side "mere light and shade have such easy work in modulating it to one dominant tone" (GIO §6; see Dominant tone). There light modulates a landscape into a single key; in the twenty-fourth paragraph landscape and persons are modulated to each other. The phrase completes a vocabulary the essay has been building, notes, tone, modulation, unison, in which painting is described as if it were heard.

That vocabulary can be read as the essay's argument carried into its descriptions. An essay that holds that all art aspires towards "the condition of music" (GIO §5; see Condition of music) describes the art it admires in the terms of music, and the description is itself a judgement: the Venetian picture is good because its parts are tuned. The Winckelmann essay uses the noun for what sculpture lacks. The colour of Greek sculpture "has always been more or less conventional, with no melting or modulation of tones" (WIN §34; see Colour). Modulation belongs to painting and to music, and the comparison places the Venetian school, with its tuned landscapes, at the opposite pole from the conventional colour of sculpture.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "modulated", "modulating" or "modulation" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §6** Mere light and shade have easy work in modulating a quiet landscape to one dominant tone.

**GIO §24** The valley of Jacob and Rachel is the truest instance of the modulated unison of landscape and persons.

**WIN §34** The colour of Greek sculpture was conventional, with no melting or modulation of tones.

## See also

Abstracted elements; Colour; Condition of music; Dominant tone; Gold thread; Human image; New Vasari; Park scenery; Venetian school.

# Monumental effigy

*monumental effigies*; *monumental*, *monument*, *monuments*

Attested: *monumental effigies* (ROB §3); *monumental* (LEO §26); *monument*, *monuments* (ROB §11, twice; WIN §30). A carved figure of a dead person on a tomb, usually lying on the sarcophagus. Effigy is the Latin *effigies*, a likeness, from *effingere*, to fashion; a monument, from *monere*, to remind, is a thing that keeps a memory. The phrase occurs in the sentence on Tuscan low relief, which gives "even" the effigies "something of its depression of surface" (ROB §3; see Depression of surface). "Even" can be read as marking the surprise: the effigy is the one kind of figure one would expect to be carved fully in the round, as a body lies on a bier. The eleventh

paragraph names two such tombs, in Florence and Bergamo, “monuments such as abound in the churches of Rome” (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait). In the Leonardo essay a drawing of the head of Christ for the Last Supper “reminds one of the monumental work of Mino da Fiesole” (LEO §26). In the passage of Winckelmann quoted at WIN §30 the citizens of Egesta raise a monument to a stranger “for his distinguished beauty”.

## See also

Depression of surface; Etherealise; Low relief; Pathetic; Sepulchral portrait.

# Mood

*The feeling a scene awakens in one temperament, given back to all · The Renaissance*

*mood*, *moods*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A mood is a state of feeling, coloured and passing, that governs how everything appears for a time.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The scene “awakes in him, moreover, by some subtle law of his own structure, a mood which it awakes in no one else” (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that “Pater’s contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects”.

**A place to read.** BOT §4, with CON §4.

## Meaning

The Old English *mōd* was the mind or spirit, and also courage and pride; English narrowed the word to a passing state of feeling. German aesthetics of the nineteenth century made *Stimmung*, the German word for mood, which comes from *stimmen*, to tune an instrument, a central term for the feeling a landscape or a work of art can hold. Pater’s “mood” carries something of that sense: a tuning of the whole person, in which things take on a single colour.

## Use in the book

The word’s chief passage ends the paragraph on the visionary painter, and it is the book’s most compact theory of expression: “To him, as to Dante, the scene, the colour, the outward image or gesture, comes with all its incisive and importunate reality; but awakes in him, moreover, by some subtle law of his own structure, a mood which it awakes in no one else, of

which it is the double or repetition, and which it clothes, that all may share it, with visible circumstance" (BOT §4).

The sentence moves in four steps. The scene comes with full reality (see Importunate); it awakens a mood; the mood is unique to this temperament, "by some subtle law of his own structure"; and the scene clothes it "with visible circumstance" (see Visible circumstance), "that all may share it". The scene is "the double or repetition" of the mood, its counterpart in the visible world, and it is the scene that clothes the mood. "Law" and "structure" make the process natural, not wilful: a temperament is built to respond in its own way, as a string is tuned to its own note.

The word returns in the book's account of what is most personal in art. The work of the della Robbia generation bears "the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension" (ROB §13; see Intimité); an etching by Legros has a solemnity "caught from his own mood perhaps" (GIO §6); Du Bellay's poetry, for Sainte-Beuve, portrays "his own most intimate moods" (BEL §21; see Intimité). And in the Conclusion the mood becomes the unit of life itself: "some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us,—for that moment only" (CON §4; see Weaving and unweaving).

The uses can be read as one doctrine at two scales. In the Conclusion every person is a succession of moods, each real for its moment and then gone. In the Botticelli essay the artist is a person whose moods are given a body by the scene that awakes them, so that they last and are shared. Art, on this reading, is the rescue of the mood from the flux: what passes in us is fixed in visible circumstance.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "mood" or "moods" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §4** The scene awakes in the visionary a mood it awakes in no one else, and clothes it, that all may share it, with visible circumstance.

**ROB §13** Intimité is the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods.

**GIO §6** Legros's etching has a solemnity caught from his own mood perhaps.

**BEL §21** Poésie intime aims at the portraiture of the writer's own most intimate moods.

**CON §4** Some mood of passion or insight is irresistibly real and attractive to us, for that moment only.

**C73 §5** In 1873, some mood of passion or insight is irresistibly real and attractive for us, for that moment only.

## Later readings

The Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy's definition of art as the passing on of a feeling the artist has lived through, so that others are infected by it, can be set beside Pater's sentence;[311] Pater's differs in insisting that the mood belongs to "no one else" until the work makes it common.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward. Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects."

## See also

Exponent; Expression; Importunate; Intimité; Temperament; Visible circumstance; Visionary painter; Weaving and unweaving.

# Moral ambition

*The aim to improve, which disturbs art's most sincere work · The Renaissance*

*moral ambition*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Moral ambition is the aim of doing or teaching good; in art, the purpose of improving those who look.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli "thus sets for himself the limits within which art, undisturbed by any moral ambition, does its most sincere and surest work" (BOT §6).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §6 says that Pater "turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically".

**A place to read.** BOT §6.

## Meaning

*Ambitio* was a Roman candidate's going round for votes, and ambition the desire for honour that drove him. To speak of a moral ambition is to suggest that the wish to do good may have something of the canvasser in it: a desire to be seen to improve. In Pater's England the moral claim on art was strong. John Ruskin had taught a generation that the art of any country is "an exact exponent of its ethical life".[312]

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[311] Leo Tolstoy, *What Is Art?* (1897), chapter 5.

[312] John Ruskin, *Lectures on Art* (Oxford, 1870), lecture I, §27.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the paragraph on the middle world, between Botticelli's acceptance of those who take no side and his interest in mixed natures, in the sentence quoted above (BOT §6; see Middle world). Three words carry the claim. "Limits" makes it a self-limitation, the painter choosing a narrower field. "Undisturbed" makes moral ambition a disturbance, something that troubles the work from outside. And "sincere" makes the surprising point: art without moral ambition is not less honest but more. The next sentence names what Botticelli turns from, "the untempered goodness of Angelico's saints" and "the untempered evil of Orcagna's Inferno" (BOT §6; see Untempered); he shows men and women as they are.

The paragraph does not leave art without morality. It ends: "His morality is all sympathy" (BOT §6; see Sympathy). Moral ambition is replaced, not abolished (see Sympathy).

The word "ambition" elsewhere in the book is a word of reaching. Verrocchio, beneath the craftsman's exterior, had "the ambitious desire to expand the destiny of Italian art by a larger knowledge and insight into things" (LEO §7); the face of La Gioconda bears the marks of "the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves" (LEO §31); Ronsard has "the ambition not only of being a courtier and a lover, but a great scholar also" (BEL §14). In each, ambition is a reaching beyond the present work. Moral ambition is the reaching that Pater would have art forgo.

The sentence can be read as the most open statement of the book's aesthetic before its Conclusion. The painter it describes has no moral ambition, but his morality is "all sympathy", and the essay is the work of a critic who feels with the people his painter will not judge.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §6** Botticelli sets the limits within which art, undisturbed by any moral ambition, does its most sincere and surest work.

## Later readings

Oscar Wilde's preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) has an aphorism that can be set beside Pater's sentence: "No artist has ethical sympathies."[313] Wilde's formula is sharper than Pater's, and narrower: Pater's painter lacks moral ambition, not ethical sympathy.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §6, on "make great refusals", reads: "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III. Pater

[313] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (London, 1891), preface.

turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically."

## See also

Middle world; Sympathy; Untempered.

# Musical charm

*The charm proper to music, which presents nothing that can be separated from the form in which it is heard · The Renaissance*

*musical charm*; *essential music*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The particular delight of music, which belongs to its sound and cannot be stated in other terms.

**In *The Renaissance*.** One of the functions of æsthetic criticism is "to note in music the musical charm, that essential music, which presents no words, no matter of sentiment or thought, separable from the special form in which it is conveyed to us" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that "Pater opens with a theory he rejects", and that a paraphrase of a subject "therefore leaves something specific to its medium behind".

**A place to read.** GIO §1.

## Meaning

Charm comes, through the French *charme*, from the Latin *carmen*, a song or an incantation; a charm was first a sung spell. Pater's phrase gives the word back its first object. "Essential music" is music in its essence: what remains when everything that could be said in words is taken away, and what makes a piece of music music rather than a setting of a sentiment.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the first paragraph of the Giorgione essay, which sets out the three charms that criticism must learn to tell apart: the pictorial charm, the poetical quality, and "the musical charm, that essential music, which presents no words, no matter of sentiment or thought, separable from the special form in which it is conveyed to us" (GIO §1; see Pictorial charm; Poetical quality). Each charm is defined against what could be detached from it, the picture's against thought and skill, the poem's against description and meditation. Music's definition is the purest of the three: it presents nothing at all that can be separated from its form.

The paragraph opened with the error this definition answers. Popular criticism regards the arts "as but translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought", with "certain

technical qualities" added, "of sound, in music" (GIO §1; see Untranslatable charm). On that view music would be a thought with sound laid over it, and its charm a matter of technique. Pater's definition reverses the order: the sound is not added to the music, it is the music, and no thought stands behind it to be translated.

The first paragraph thus states, of one art, what the rest of the essay claims for all. Music is the art in which matter cannot be separated from form, and so all art aspires towards "the condition of music" (GIO §5; see Condition of music); in its consummate moments "the end is not distinct from the means" (GIO §10; see Artistic ideal). The musical charm of the first paragraph can be read as the condition of music before it has been named. The essay later finds the same charm in pictures of music, which catch "the waves of wandering sound" (GIO §15; see Wandering sound) and show people listening, "ear and finger refining themselves infinitely, in the appetite for sweet sound" (GIO §21; see Listening).

The definition has a close parallel in the criticism of music itself. The Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick had argued, in *On the Musically Beautiful* (1854), that music cannot represent definite feelings, only their motion, and that its content is forms moved in sound, the musical ideas themselves and nothing behind them.[314] Twenty-three years before the Giorgione essay, and from within the art, Hanslick reached the conclusion that the essay draws from outside it: that in music there is no matter to be separated from the form, and that this is music's charm, not its poverty. Pater does not name him, and the parallel is one of conclusion, not of source.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "musical charm" and "essential music" occur, with four paragraphs of the Giorgione essay on music as the measure of the arts and on pictures of music, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Criticism is to note in music the musical charm, that essential music, which presents nothing separable from its form.

**GIO §5** All art aspires towards the condition of music.

**GIO §10** In music's consummate moments the end is not distinct from the means.

**GIO §15** The Concert has caught the waves of wandering sound and fixed them on the lips and hands.

**GIO §21** In the school's pictures of listening, ear and finger refine themselves infinitely in the appetite for sweet sound.

## See also

Artistic ideal; Condition of music; Listening; Pictorial charm; Poetical quality; Untranslatable charm; Wandering sound.

[314] Eduard Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (Leipzig, 1854), chapters 2–3.

*The law or condition of music, which the other arts approach and by which criticism measures them · The Renaissance*

*musical law*; *law or principle of music*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The law that music obeys and the other arts strive after, taken as a measure of all art.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Therefore, although each art has its incommunicable element, its untranslatable order of impressions, its unique mode of reaching the 'imaginative reason,' yet the arts may be represented as continually struggling after the law or principle of music, to a condition which music alone completely realises; and one of the chief functions of æsthetic criticism, dealing with the products of art, new or old, is to estimate the degree in which each of those products approaches, in this sense, to musical law" (GIO §10).

**In this edition.** The Key Words entry on music says that in this essay "music is the art in which form and subject are most fully at one".

**A place to read.** GIO §10.

## Meaning

A law, in the language of the arts, is a principle that governs a practice, as the laws of perspective govern a drawing or the laws of harmony a composition. Pater's musical law is not a rule of composition but a condition: the law that music obeys by its nature, the complete union of form and matter, set up as the measure toward which every other art is moving.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the tenth paragraph, which turns the doctrine of the essay into a method. The paragraph has said that music "most completely realises this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form" (GIO §10; see Artistic ideal), and draws the conclusion in a short sentence: "In music, then, rather than in poetry, is to be found the true type or measure of perfected art" (GIO §10). The long sentence that follows makes the measure the critic's tool. The arts "may be represented as continually struggling after the law or principle of music", and one of the chief functions of criticism is "to estimate the degree in which each of those products approaches, in this sense, to musical law" (GIO §10).

The sentence is built on a concession. Each art keeps "its incommunicable element, its untranslatable order of impressions, its unique mode of reaching the 'imaginative reason'" (GIO §10; see Incommunicable faculty; Order of impressions; Imaginative reason). The

law does not abolish the differences of the arts, which the first paragraph made "the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material). It gives the differences a common direction. "May be represented" and "in this sense" keep the claim modest: the struggle after music is a way of seeing the arts, offered as a measure, not a history of what they have done.

"Rather than in poetry" is pointed. Hegel's ranking of the arts put poetry at the top: in his lectures on aesthetics poetry is the universal art, the most spiritual and least bound to matter, and the series of the arts rises to it.[315] Pater's measure can be read as reversing that order. Poetry ranks high in Hegel because it is least sensuous; music ranks highest in Pater because in it sense and meaning cannot be told apart. The Winckelmann essay, written ten years earlier, had followed Hegel in ranging the arts in a series (WIN §32; see Ultimate differences of the arts); the Giorgione essay sets a new measure beside it.

The law is applied at once. The next paragraph opens with the Venetian painters, by whom the limitations of painting were "so unerringly though instinctively apprehended" (GIO §11; see Venetian school), and Giorgione is "typical of that aspiration of all the arts towards music" (GIO §12; see Condition of music). The twenty-first paragraph names the law again, "the law or condition of music" to which all art like this is aspiring (GIO §21; see Condition of music). Between the tenth paragraph and the twenty-first the law has passed from theory to the school that obeys it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater speaks of the law of music, in the order of the book.

**GIO §4** All the arts in common aspire towards the principle of music.

**GIO §10** The arts may be represented as struggling after the law or principle of music; criticism estimates how far each approaches musical law.

**GIO §21** All art like that of Giorgione's school is aspiring to the law or condition of music.

## See also

Artistic ideal; Condition of music; Development; Imaginative reason; Incommunicable faculty; Order of impressions; Sensuous material; Ultimate differences of the arts; Venetian school.

[315] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, part III, section 3, chapter 3, introduction, where poetry is called the universal art.

# Netteté d'exécution

*Clean precision of execution, the native quality of French work in paint, stone and verse · The Renaissance*

*une netteté remarquable d'exécution*; *nicety*; *clearness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Netteté of execution: the clean, exact finish of a thing well made, with nothing blurred or superfluous.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The native gift of French work in paint, carving and verse: "a certain nicety, a remarkable daintiness of hand, une netteté remarquable d'exécution" (BEL §2).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §2 renders the phrase "A remarkable precision of execution" and says that "Netteté emphasizes the clarity and clean precision of the execution."

**A place to read.** BEL §§2–3.

## Meaning

*Net*, in French, is clean, clear, neat, from the Latin *nitidus*, shining; *netteté* is cleanness, clarity, sharpness of outline. *Exécution* is the carrying out of a work, its making as distinct from its design. A *netteté d'exécution* is the clarity of a work in the making: clean lines, exact detail, a finish that leaves nothing vague. Pater sets beside it the English "nicety", fineness of distinction, and, as the note at BEL §2 says, he "has already paraphrased this quality as daintiness of hand".

## Use in the book

Pater gives the French phrase twice in the second paragraph of the Du Bellay essay, and both times as a definition. The first defines the native gift of French work: "a certain nicety, a remarkable daintiness of hand, une netteté remarquable d'exécution" (BEL §2; see Daintiness). The second, three sentences later, defines the qualities of old French poetry: "A light, aerial delicacy, a simple elegance—une netteté remarquable d'exécution" (BEL §2; see Aerial delicacy). The French phrase is repeated, while the English beside it changes, and the repetition can be read as the point: the same precision is found in the hand of the painter and in the verse of the poet, and only a French phrase will name it for both.

Between the two comes the example that shows it in painting. "In the paintings of François Clouet, for example, or rather of the Clouets—for there was a whole family of them—painters remarkable for their resistance to Italian influences, there is a silveriness of colour and a clearness of expression which distinguish them very definitely from their Flemish neighbours, Hemling or the Van Eycks" (BEL §2). "Hemling" is an old spelling of Hans Memling, the painter of Bruges who died in 1494; the Van

Eycks are Jan van Eyck and his brother Hubert, the painters of the Ghent altarpiece. Clearness of expression is the netteté of a portrait, and its mark is a native one: the Clouets resisted Italy, and their clearness distinguishes them from Flanders too. The next sentence carries it to poetry: this nicety, Pater says, "is not less characteristic of old French poetry" (BEL §2), and the third paragraph joins them: "Now Villon's songs and Clouet's painting are like these" (BEL §3; see Ennoble). The essay's account of French precision is thus an account of a national quality, found in the portrait, the poem, the book of hours and the carving alike.

The book's other "nicety" belongs to the critic. In the Preface the æsthetic critic's task is to disengage the virtue of a work, and often, Pater says, "it will require great nicety to disengage this virtue from the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination" (PRE §5; see Disengage). The critic needs the same quality as the French workman: an exactness of hand that can separate the fine thing from its surroundings. The Preface's nicety and the Du Bellay essay's netteté can be read as the same virtue on two sides of the work, in its making and in its appreciation.

The book's "clearness" keeps the sense. Giorgione keeps "that old Venetian clearness or justice, in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art" (GIO §12; see Pictorial design), and the Venetian landscape is "full of clearness, of the effects of water" (GIO §23; see Presence of water). The Florentine masters, following death "perhaps one stage further", discerned "with no clearness a new body" (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction). Clearness is, through the book, the quality of a mind or a hand that sees exactly; in the Du Bellay essay it is the quality of a nation's work.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "netteté", "nicety" or "clearness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §5** It will often require great nicety to disengage a work's virtue from its commoner elements.

**MIC §19** Following death perhaps one stage further, the Florentine masters discerned with no clearness a new body.

**GIO §12** Giorgione keeps the old Venetian clearness in the apprehension of the limitations of painting.

**GIO §23** The Venetian landscape is full of clearness and of the effects of water.

**BEL §2** French work had always a netteté remarquable d'exécution, and the Clouets a clearness of expression.

## See also

Aerial delicacy; Daintiness; Death in its distinction; Disengage; Ennoble; Pictorial design; Presence of water; Silveriness.

## Nimbus

*rosy nimbus*; *nimbus*

Attested: *nimbus* (WIN §27, twice). *Nimbus* is Latin for a rain-cloud, and so for the bright cloud that surrounds a god; in Christian art it is the disc or ring of light round the head of Christ or a saint. Pater uses it in his description of Angelico's Coronation of the Virgin at San Marco, the example of an art that points beyond itself. "In some strange halo of a moon Jesus and the Virgin Mother are seated, clad in mystical white raiment, half shroud, half priestly linen. Jesus, with rosy nimbus and the long pale hair—tanquam lana alba et tanquam nix—of the figure in the Apocalypse, with slender finger-tips is setting a crown of pearl on the head of Mary, who, corpse-like in her refinement, is bending forward to receive it, the light lying like snow upon her forehead" (WIN §27). The Latin is the Vulgate's description of the figure like a son of man, whose hair was white "like white wool and like snow" (Revelation 1:14), as the note at WIN §27 says. The nimbus returns at once as an instance of the symbol: the hair like wool, "the rosy nimbus", the crown of pearl, are for Angelico "only the symbol or type of a really inexpressible world" (WIN §27; see Symbol). The word can be read as the essay's emblem of medieval art: a light that belongs to no body, drawn round a head to say that the head is more than it appears. The Greek statue, in the next paragraph, needs no such sign (WIN §28; see Finite image). "Corpse-like" and "shroud" anticipate the essay's later judgement that Greek impassivity itself has "a touch of the corpse in it" (WIN §45; see Impassivity).

### See also

Finite image; Impassivity; Symbol; Symbolism.

## Objective painter

*The cheerful painter Leonardo ceased to be, through whose soul the world passed as through clear glass · The Renaissance*

*objective painter*; *objective*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A painter who renders the world as it is, without the colour of his own mind.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "He was no longer the cheerful, objective painter, through whose soul, as through clear glass, the bright figures of Florentine life, only made a little mellower and more pensive by the transit, passed on to the white wall" (LEO §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §10.

## Meaning

"Objective", in the philosophy that came into English from Germany through Coleridge, means belonging to the object rather than the thinking subject.[316] An objective artist gives the thing itself; a subjective one gives his own feeling about it. The pair was common in the criticism of Pater's century, and it can be set beside Friedrich Schiller's distinction between the naive poet, who is at one with nature, and the sentimental poet, who seeks it.[317]

## Use in the book

Pater describes the objective painter only to say that Leonardo had ceased to be one. The study of nature has given him "the art of going deep" and "the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled" (LEO §10; see Intimate presence). "He did not at once or entirely desert his art; only he was no longer the cheerful, objective painter, through whose soul, as through clear glass, the bright figures of Florentine life, only made a little mellower and more pensive by the transit, passed on to the white wall" (LEO §10).

The image is exact. The objective painter's soul is a window, and the figures of the street pass through it to the fresco wall. The passage changes them only a little, "a little mellower and more pensive", as if even clear glass softened what passed through it. The painter Leonardo becomes is no window: his own presence enters the things he handles. The contrast can be read as the essay's account of a change in art itself: from the Florentine painters of the street, with their cheerful truth to the figures of the city, to an art of depth in which the world comes through the painter's own nature, "through Leonardo's strange veil of sight" (LEO §18; see Veil of sight). "Cheerful" is the word Pater used of Verrocchio's exterior three paragraphs earlier (LEO §7; see Chasing), and the objective painter belongs to that earlier Florentine type.

The adjective returns in the Winckelmann essay as an ideal. Winckelmann "was ever jealously refining his meaning into a form, express, clear, objective" (WIN §42). There objectivity is the achievement of a Greek clarity; in the Leonardo essay it is what is given up for depth. Between them the two uses suggest the book's two loyalties. Pater admires the clear and objective form of the Greeks and of Winckelmann's style, and he admires the modern art of depth that the objective painter could not reach. Leonardo stands where the second begins.

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[316] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (1817), chapter 12.

[317] Friedrich Schiller, *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (*Die Horen*, 1795–96).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "objective" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §10** Leonardo was no longer the cheerful, objective painter through whose soul, as through clear glass, the figures of Florentine life passed to the wall.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann refined his meaning into a form, express, clear, objective.

## See also

Chasing; Intimate presence; Mellowing decay; Return to nature; Veil of sight.

# Oils

*oils*, *oil*

Attested: *oils* (LEO §26); *oil* (GIO §17). To paint in oils is to grind colours in a drying oil, linseed or walnut, which dries slowly and can be worked over, glazed and corrected. The method came into Italian painting in the fifteenth century. Pater sets it against fresco in his account of the Last Supper: Leonardo painted it "not in fresco, where all must be impromptu, but in oils, the new method which he had been one of the first to welcome" (LEO §26; see After-thought; Fresco). The choice suited a painter of endless re-touchings, and on a plastered wall it proved the least durable of processes (LEO §26). The note at LEO §26 reports the Cenacolo museum's description of the painting as executed on dry wall preparation, and says that "the phrase 'in oils' simplifies the technique". The Giorgione essay has the singular, of the small study for the warrior-saint of Castelfranco, "the original little study in oil, with the delicately gleaming, silver-grey armour", in the National Gallery (GIO §17).

## See also

After-thought; Elixir; Fresco.

# Oriental pottery

*oriental pottery*; *pottery*

Attested: *oriental pottery*, *pottery* (ROB §12, three times); *oriental* elsewhere (WIN §§27, 28). Glazed ware from the East and from the Islamic world, including the lustred pottery of Spain. Pater makes it, together with the Roman pottery of Tuscany, the inspiration of Luca's colour: "The fame of the oriental pottery, with its strange, bright colours—colours of art, colours not to be attained in the natural stone—mingled with the tradition of the old Roman pottery of the neighbourhood. The little red, coral-like

jars of Arezzo, dug up in that district from time to time, are much prized. These colours haunted Luca's fancy" (ROB §12; see Colours of art). The jars of Arezzo are the Roman red-gloss ware called Arretine; Vasari, describing the flattest kind of relief, gave the vases of Arezzo among his examples (see Low relief). The note at ROB §12 says that Pater invokes Arretine ware "as a local precedent for color in fired clay", and that "His claim about what haunted Luca's imagination is an inference". The sentence brings East and West, the strange and the local, into Luca's workshop, and can be read as one more of the book's meetings of traditions. In the Winckelmann essay "oriental art" and "oriental thought" stand for the vague and the overcharged, against Greek definition (WIN §§27–28); here the oriental is a source of colour, and nothing in it is vague.

## See also

Colours of art; Earthenware; Garland; Homely art; Low relief; Terra cotta.

# Ostensible subject

*The subject a picture shows, behind which Pater looks for its real matter · The Renaissance*

*ostensible subject*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The subject a work professes or appears to have, as distinct from what it is really about.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "We recognise one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music" (LEO §25).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §25, with BOT §1.

## Meaning

"Ostensible" comes from the Latin *ostendere*, to show: what is shown, what appears. The word often carries a doubt, as in an "ostensible reason" that hides a real one. An ostensible subject is the subject on the surface of a work, the one the title names, and the phrase implies another subject beneath it.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs twice, and both times Pater looks through the ostensible subject to another. In the Botticelli essay, when Botticelli painted religious incidents, he "painted them with an under-current of original

sentiment, which touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject" (BOT §1). The ostensible subject is a veil; the real matter is a sentiment that touches the viewer through it.

In the Leonardo essay the phrase comes at the end of the history of the Saint John of the Louvre, whose likeness to the Bacchus the copies make plain (LEO §25; see Decayed gods; Symbolical invention). "We recognise one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music" (LEO §25; see Symbolical invention). The sentence describes two ways of using a subject. One treats it as "matter for definite pictorial realisation", the story to be shown clearly (see Realisation); the other treats it as a "starting-point", from which a train of feeling sets off and goes where it will. "Subtle and vague as a piece of music" makes the comparison that the Giorgione essay turns into doctrine, in which all art aspires to the condition of music, where subject and form cannot be told apart (GIO §5; see Condition of music).

The distinction between the ostensible and the real subject can be read as one of Pater's working methods. He uses it without the phrase elsewhere. In the Sistine Chapel, "Not the Judgment but the Resurrection is the real subject" of Michelangelo's last work (MIC §4; see Resurrection); the real subject of Vasari's story of the shield "is not the serious work of a man, but the experiment of a child" (LEO §12; see Legend). In each case the critic asks what a work is about beneath what it says it is about, and the answer is a feeling or a theme rather than a story. The Leonardo essay draws the conclusion for its painter, who ruled the mere subject in hand "more entirely" than anyone and bent it "to purely artistic ends" (LEO §25; see Conventional associations).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ostensible" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §1** Botticelli's original sentiment touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject.

**LEO §25** In Leonardo's symbolical inventions the ostensible subject is the starting-point of a train of sentiment.

## See also

Condition of music; Conventional associations; Decayed gods; Legend; Realisation; Resurrection; Symbolical invention; Theme or motive.

# Outward image

*The visible appearance of things, transcribed by some painters and felt by others · The Renaissance*

*the outward image*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The outward image is the visible appearance of a thing or a scene, as distinct from what it means or awakens.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandajo "do but transcribe, with more or less refining, the outward image" (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that "Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects".

**A place to read.** BOT §4, with BOT §3.

## Meaning

*Imago* is the Latin for a likeness, and "outward" sets the likeness on the surface of things. The phrase recalls the oldest charge against painting. In Plato's *Republic* the painter imitates not the thing but its appearance, a copy of a copy, standing third from the truth.[318] Pater's contrast can be read as accepting the distinction and refusing the charge: some painters copy appearances, and some make appearances speak.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs twice in one paragraph, once on each side of the essay's central contrast. On the first side are the transcribers, who "do but transcribe, with more or less refining, the outward image" (BOT §4; see Dramatic painter). On the second is Botticelli: "To him, as to Dante, the scene, the colour, the outward image or gesture, comes with all its incisive and importunate reality" (BOT §4; see Mood).

The second use corrects a likely misreading of the first. The visionary, on this reading, does not see the outward image less clearly than the transcriber; he sees it more sharply. It comes to him "with all its incisive and importunate reality", cutting and pressing (see Importunate). What differs is what follows: in him it "awakes" a mood. The transcriber receives the image and passes it on; the visionary receives it, is moved, and gives back the movement. The outward image is the same for both, and the difference is in the person.

The paragraph before prepares the claim: Giotto and his followers "had not learned to put that weight of meaning into outward things" that Dante's poetry involves (BOT §3; see Poetical painter). Outward things can carry weight; the question is whether a painter knows how to lay it on them. And in the same paragraph Botticelli keeps "that alert sense of outward things" which fills the lawns with creatures and the pools with reeds (BOT §4; see Naturalist). The visionary is built on the naturalist.

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[318] Plato, *Republic* X, 597e–598b.

The phrase can be read as Pater's answer to Plato's charge. A painter who only transcribes the outward image is indeed a copier of appearances; but the outward image, felt by a temperament, becomes the exponent of something inward (see Exponent), and the picture is then not third from the truth but a truth of its own, the truth of a mood. The book's whole criticism depends on that answer. It reads pictures not as copies of things but as outward images of what their painters felt.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph on the weight of meaning in outward things, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Giotto and his followers had not learned to put the weight of meaning into outward things that Dante's poetry involves.

**BOT §4** The dramatic painters transcribe the outward image; to Botticelli the outward image comes with incisive and importunate reality and awakes a mood.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward. Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects."

## See also

Dramatic painter; Exponent; Importunate; Mood; Naturalist; Poetical painter; Visionary painter.

# Painted idyll

*painted idylls*

Attested: *painted idylls* (GIO §§14, 20). The idyll was the short pastoral poem of Theocritus and his followers, scenes of shepherds, singing and country ease; the Greek *eidyllion*, a diminutive of *eidos*, form or kind, is found only of short poems, and the gloss "little picture", though often repeated, has no ancient warrant. "Painted idyll" carries the word over to painting. Pater uses the phrase first of the doubtful works that gathered round Giorgione's name: "The exact relationship to him of many works—drawings, portraits, painted idylls—often fascinating enough, which in various collections went by his name, was from the first uncertain" (GIO §14). The second time he puts it in quotation marks, which can be read as marking a term already current: Giorgione's school "is the school of genre, and employs itself mainly with 'painted idylls'" (GIO §20; see Genre). The idyll is the natural subject of a school that wants poetry without a story (see Articulated story): music in the open air, water drawn from a well, figures

resting in a landscape, the Fête Champêtre that the critics had taken from Giorgione (GIO §16; see New Vasari). The two uses can be read as one history. The painted idylls were the works most easily attributed to Giorgione and most easily taken away, because they were the kind of picture his name had come to mean.

## See also

Articulated story; Genre; New Vasari.

# Painter's vision

*The illustrator's invention that goes beyond the poet's words · The Renaissance*

*a true painter's vision*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A painter's vision is what a painter sees in the terms of his own art, as distinct from what a text gives him.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the scene of the simoniacs "there is an inventive force about the fire taking hold on the upturned soles of the feet, which proves that the design is no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision" (BOT §3).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §3 says that "The fire on the soles of the upturned feet identifies the punishment of the simoniacs in Inferno XIX".

**A place to read.** BOT §3.

## Meaning

"Vision" has two senses in the Botticelli essay, and this phrase holds the plainer one. A visionary painter sees what is before him through a mood of his own (see Visionary painter); a painter's vision is what he sees as a painter, the visible form an episode takes in his imagination. The phrase sets the painter beside the poet as an equal, with his own way of seeing the same matter.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the paragraph on Botticelli's illustrations to Dante, after a judgement against them. His grotesques are excessive, since a poet's words "must be lowered in key when translated into visible form" (BOT §3; see Lower in key). Then Pater turns, in the sentence quoted above, which goes on: "while the scene of the Centaurs wins one at once, for, forgetful of the actual circumstances of their appearance, Botticelli has gone off with delight on the thought of the Centaurs themselves, bright, small creatures

of the woodland, with arch baby faces and mignon forms, drawing tiny bows" (BOT §3).

The two examples show the vision working in opposite directions. In the first it intensifies. Dante's simoniacs are thrust head down into holes in the rock with their burning feet in the air;[319] Botticelli seizes the one detail a painter can make terrible, the fire "taking hold" on the soles, a detail already in Dante, which he renders with "an inventive force" (see Inventive force). In the second it departs. Dante's Centaurs are grim archers who guard the river of blood and shoot any soul that rises from the blood further than its guilt allows;[320] Botticelli, "forgetful of the actual circumstances", makes them small, bright and baby-faced, "drawing tiny bows". The edition's note on "mignon", "dainty", says that "Their daintiness is precisely what interests Pater, since it exceeds the illustrative demands of the episode".

"No mere translation" is the key. An illustration that only translated the words would add nothing to them, and in this paragraph translation fails by excess in the grotesques. The painter's vision succeeds by doing what a translator may not: it adds and it forgets. Pater praises Botticelli precisely where he adds to Dante or forgets him, and the praise anticipates the next paragraph, where the visionary "plays fast and loose" with the data before him (BOT §4; see Data).

The phrase can be read as the book's account of the relation between the arts in small. Each art has its own vision, and its best work on another art's subject is the work that sees the subject anew. The Giorgione essay will make the principle general, but the Botticelli essay already holds its two parts: that painting must lower the key of poetry, and that it must also find in poetry what poetry did not contain.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §3** The fire on the upturned soles of the simoniacs shows a true painter's vision; the Centaurs become bright, small creatures with arch baby faces.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §3 says that "'Quick' means alive, as in Psalm 55:15. The fire on the soles of the upturned feet identifies the punishment of the simoniacs in Inferno XIX. The centaurs occur in Inferno XII." The next note glosses "mignon" as "dainty" and says that "Their daintiness is precisely what interests Pater, since it exceeds the illustrative demands of the episode".

[319] Dante, *Inferno* XIX.22–30.

[320] Dante, *Inferno* XII.55–75.

## See also

Data; Inventive force; Lower in key; Pictorial propriety; Visible form; Visionary painter.

### Painting on glass

*painting on glass*; *glass-painters*

Attested: *painting on glass* (BEL §1); *glass-painters* (BEL §1); *glass*, otherwise, in three further paragraphs (LEO §10; GIO §2; BEL §9). Painting on glass is the art of the stained-glass window, in which pieces of coloured glass are painted with line and shading, fired and leaded, so that light passes through them; later glass-painters added colour painted and fired on the glass itself. Pater uses the phrase of the Italian painters who came to France under Francis the First: "it was characteristic of these painters that they were most successful in painting on glass, an art so essentially medieval" (BEL §1; see Attemper). The paradox is the essay's: Italian painters of the Renaissance excelled in the most medieval of arts, and made it new by keeping to its nature (BEL §1; see Limits of material). Their refinements on colour were "never dreamed of by those older workmen, the glass-painters of Chartres or Le Mans" (BEL §1), the cathedrals whose windows of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are the great achievements of the art. The art suits Pater's account of the French Renaissance, a medieval form taking a new surface; and glass, a medium that light passes through, can be read as suiting an essay that ends on a sudden light that "transfigures some trivial thing" (BEL §28; see Winnowing-fan). The book's other glass is figurative: the cheerful painter through whose soul, "as through clear glass", the figures of Florentine life passed to the wall (LEO §10; see Objective painter), and the relics seen "through a little pane of glass" (BEL §9; see Relic).

## See also

Attemper; Limits of material; Objective painter; Relic; Renaissance in France; Winnowing-fan.

### Partial alienation

*Pater's English for the Anders-streben: an art's passing beyond its own limitations without leaving its own material · The Renaissance*

*partial alienation*; *alienation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A going over, in part, into what belongs to another: the lending of one art's powers to another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Each art may pass into the condition of some other art "by what German critics term an Anders-streben—a partial alienation from its own limitations, through which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces" (GIO §3).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §3 says that Pater uses the German compound "for the way an art strains toward the conditions of another while continuing to work through its own material".

**A place to read.** GIO §3.

## Meaning

The Latin *alienare*, from *alienus*, belonging to another, is to make a thing another's. In law, alienation is the transfer of property; in common speech it is estrangement, the turning of what was one's own into what is foreign. Pater's "alienation from" is the sense of estrangement, a turning away from what was one's own, and he qualifies it twice. The alienation is "partial", and it is "from its own limitations", not from itself: an art does not give itself away but lets part of its boundary go.

## Use in the book

The phrase is Pater's English gloss on the German *Anders-streben* (GIO §3; see Anders-streben), and it changes the emphasis of the German word. *Anders-streben* is a striving toward the other, a motion; "partial alienation" names what the motion costs and what it keeps. The rest of the sentence says what is gained: through it the arts are able, "not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces" (GIO §3). "Not indeed to supply the place" excludes the error of the first paragraph, which made the arts translations of one another (GIO §1; see Untranslatable charm). An art cannot become another; it can borrow from another and repay.

The object of the alienation is the key to the phrase. What an art moves away from, in part, is "its own limitations", and the Giorgione essay treats limitations as the ground of art, not its defect. One of the critic's functions is "to define these limitations" (GIO §1; see Responsibilities to its material); the Venetian school apprehended the necessary limitations of painting more surely than any other (GIO §11; see Venetian school), and Giorgione keeps its clearness in apprehending them (GIO §12; see Pictorial design). The same school that knows its limits best can be read as the one that comes nearest to music. The essay's paradox can be read as resolved by the phrase: only an art that knows exactly where its limits lie can go partly beyond them, because only such an art knows what it is lending and what it must keep.

The idea had a precedent in the book. The della Robbia essay found that for Luca della Robbia and the sculptors of his school "this system of low

relief is the means by which they meet and overcome the special limitation of sculpture" (ROB §5; see Special limitation). The Winckelmann essay holds the opposite emphasis for Greek sculpture, which "gains more than it loses by this limitation to its own distinguishing motives" (WIN §34; see Pure form). Between them the Giorgione essay can be read as holding both: limitation is the condition of an art's power, and partial alienation from it is the condition of its growth.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "alienation" occurs, with the paragraphs of the Giorgione essay on the limitations of the arts, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** One of the functions of æsthetic criticism is to define the limitations of each art.

**GIO §3** The *Anders-streben* is a partial alienation of each art from its own limitations.

**GIO §4** Sculpture aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form towards colour, or its equivalent.

**GIO §11** No school apprehended the necessary limitations of painting so unerringly as the school of Venice.

**GIO §12** Giorgione keeps the old Venetian clearness in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art.

## See also

Anders-streben; Pictorial design; Pure form; Responsibilities to its material; Special limitation; Untranslatable charm; Venetian school.

# Parti-coloured

*parti-coloured*

Attested: *parti-coloured* (GIO §22). Parti-coloured is coloured differently in different parts, from the French *parti*, divided, the word heralds use of a shield cut into fields of two tinctures; in medieval and Renaissance dress it described hose and doublets made in two colours, one for each side. Pater uses it in his account of the masques that Giorgione's school painted, in which men "do but play at real life" in "the strange old Italian dresses, parti-coloured, or fantastic with embroidery and furs, of which the master was so curious a designer" (GIO §22; see Masque). A costume divided into colours is already a design. The sentence also makes Giorgione "so curious a designer" of such dresses (GIO §22), and dress is one of the "differences of personal type, manner, and even of dress" into which he was initiated among people of courtesy (GIO §17; see Personal type). The "spotless white linen at wrist and throat" that he painted so dexterously (GIO §22) returns

to the Concert, whose "very threads of the fine linen" fix themselves on the memory (GIO §15; see Wandering sound).

## See also

Masque; Personal type; Wandering sound.

# Perfect finish

*Michelangelo's incompleteness declared complete: finish as the right point to stop · The Renaissance*

*perfect finish*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Finish carried to perfection: a work completed so that nothing should be added.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Of Michelangelo's incompleteness: "And it was in reality perfect finish" (ROB §10).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §10 says that what Pater "takes to be a recurring expressive quality should be distinguished from the separate historical question of why a given sculpture remained unfinished".

**A place to read.** ROB §10.

## Meaning

Finish is the last stage of work, and "perfect" in its Latin sense, *perfectus*, is "done through", completed. "Perfect finish" in ordinary speech is a tautology of praise, the surface flawless. Pater uses it as a paradox, of works that are visibly unfinished.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in a sentence of seven words in the tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay. Pater has explained Michelangelo's incompleteness twice: as his "equivalent for colour in sculpture" (see Equivalent of colour), and as a characteristic that "fell in with his peculiar temper" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness). Then: "And it was in reality perfect finish" (ROB §10).

"In reality" answers the second explanation. The incompleteness may have had its cause in the man's disappointments, but in its effect it is complete: the work has reached the point at which nothing more should be done. The sentence redefines finish. Finish is not the surface polished to the last detail, which in the same paragraph is "so delicately finished there" against the "rough-hewn here" (ROB §10; see Rough-hewn), but the state of a work that does all it can do. By that measure the half-realised form is finished (see Half-realised form), and a form fully cut would be overdone.

The book's other uses of the word show what the paradox opposes. The Tuscan sculptors have "finish of expression" (ROB §2; see Finish of

expression), the Pleiad "grace and finish, perfect in minute detail" (BEL §17), Leonardo "a microscopic sense of finish" (LEO §17). These are finishes of detail; Michelangelo's is a finish of effect, perfect as a whole.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's incompleteness was in reality perfect finish.

## Elsewhere in Pater

The essay "Style" (1888) turns the paradox into a rule of all art: "all art does but consist in the removal of surplusage", from "the last finish of the gem-engraver" back to the first sight of the work "lying somewhere, according to Michelangelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone".[321] Finish, there as here, is a matter of what is taken away.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §10 says that the quality is "Often discussed under the Italian term non finito, 'unfinished.' What Pater takes to be a recurring expressive quality should be distinguished from the separate historical question of why a given sculpture remained unfinished."

## See also

Equivalent of colour; Finish of expression; Half-realised form; Incompleteness; Rough-hewn; The perfect.

# Phase of subject

*The aspect or moment of a subject chosen so that it can pass wholly into pictorial form, one of the secrets of Giorgione's school · The Renaissance*

*phase of subject*; *phase*, *phases*

## At a Glance

**The word.** One aspect or moment of a subject, as a phase of the moon is one of its appearances.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "While he interfuses his painted work with a high-strung sort of poetry, caught directly from a singularly rich and high-strung sort of life, yet in his selection of subject, or phase of subject, in the subordination of mere subject to pictorial design, to the main purpose of a picture, he is typical of that aspiration of all the arts towards music, which I have endeavoured to explain,—towards the perfect identification of matter and form" (GIO §12).

[321] Walter Pater, "Style", *Fortnightly Review*, December 1888; reprinted in *Appreciations* (1889).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §12 says that Pater uses "genre" for "portable pictures of apparently ordinary activities with an unusually heightened atmosphere".

**A place to read.** GIO §§12, 20.

## Meaning

The Greek *phasis* is an appearance, and the word entered English with the phases of the moon, the shapes in which the same body appears in turn. A phase of a subject is not a different subject but one of its appearances: the moment, aspect or side under which it is shown. The phrase "subject, or phase of subject" is a correction in passing. What a painter chooses may be a whole subject, or only the one face of it that can become a picture.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs twice, both times in the same correcting form. Giorgione, "in his selection of subject, or phase of subject, in the subordination of mere subject to pictorial design, to the main purpose of a picture", is typical of the aspiration of all the arts towards music (GIO §12; see Pictorial design); and in painting the perfect interpenetration of subject and design "depends, of course, in great measure, on dexterous choice of that subject, or phase of subject" (GIO §20; see Interpenetration). The repeated "or" is careful. The painter chooses not only among subjects but within them, taking the phase that lends itself to colour and line. The concert can be read as a subject, and the singer's wait upon "the true interval for beginning to sing" as a phase of it (GIO §15; see Harpsichord).

The doctrine can be read against the book's other painters. The Botticelli essay describes illustrations "crowded with incident, blending, with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety, three phases of the same scene into one plate" (BOT §3; see Pictorial propriety). Botticelli joins phases; Giorgione chooses one. The older practice tells a story in a single picture by showing its moments side by side, and Pater calls it naïve; the Venetian practice gives up the story for the phase that can be seen at once. The choice is the art, "one of the secrets of Giorgione's school" (GIO §20), and it is what the same paragraph calls the selection of "ideal instants" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant).

The word "phase" runs through the book in a historical sense, and the two senses can be read as related. The Renaissance ends in France "in a phase of which the writings of Joachim du Bellay are in many ways the most perfect illustration" (PRE §6); the French Renaissance is "the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself" (BEL §1); the Greek ideal "could not have arisen out of a phase of life that was uncomely or poor" (WIN §29). An age, like a subject, has its phases, and the critic, like the painter, chooses the one in which its quality is most fully seen. The first paragraph of the Giorgione essay uses the word of the arts themselves: the sensuous material

of each art "brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material). Each art is a phase of beauty, and each picture a phase of its subject.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "phase" or "phases" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The Renaissance ends in France in a phase of which Du Bellay's writings are in many ways the most perfect illustration; its earliest phases have the freshness of growth.

**PIC §3** A modern scholar might observe that religions arise as expressions of the varying phases of the mind's sentiment concerning the unseen world.

**BOT §3** Botticelli's illustrations blend three phases of the same scene into one plate.

**GIO §1** The sensuous material of each art brings a special phase or quality of beauty.

**GIO §12** Giorgione's selection of subject, or phase of subject, makes him typical of the aspiration towards music.

**GIO §20** The attainment of the perfect interpenetration of subject and design depends in great measure on dexterous choice of subject, or phase of subject.

**BEL §1** The French Renaissance is a new phase of taste, the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself.

**BEL §28** Du Bellay's song has the qualities of the whole phase of taste from which the Pleiad derives.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann's mind seems one that was lover and philosopher in some phase of pre-existence.

**WIN §29** The Greek ideal could not have arisen out of a phase of life that was uncomely or poor.

**WIN §32** One art may be more adequate than another for the expression of one phase of the mind's development.

**WIN §51** To Goethe pietism seemed a phase of life that a man might feel all round, and leave behind him.

## See also

Harpsichord; Ideal instant; Interpenetration; Pictorial design; Pictorial propriety; Sensuous material.

# Pictorial charm

*The charm proper to a picture, neither a poetical thought nor a technical skill, which criticism must learn to note · The Renaissance*

*pictorial charm*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The delight that a picture gives as a picture, by its colour and line, and not by its story or its skill.

**In *The Renaissance*.** One of the functions of æsthetic criticism is "to note in a picture that true pictorial charm, which is neither a mere poetical thought or sentiment, on the one hand, nor a mere result of communicable technical skill in colour or design, on the other" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that for Pater color, sound and rhythm "are part of the work's meaning and pleasure".

**A place to read.** GIO §1, with GIO §16.

## Meaning

Charm is the power to delight that cannot be accounted for by listing the parts that delight. "Pictorial" restricts it to pictures: a pictorial charm is one that a picture has and that a poem or a piece of music describing the same scene would not have. "True" in Pater's phrase sets it against counterfeits, the charm of a story told in paint or of a skill displayed.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that closes the first paragraph of the Giorgione essay and sets out the duties of criticism. "One of the functions of æsthetic criticism is to define these limitations; to estimate the degree in which a given work of art fulfils its responsibilities to its special material; to note in a picture that true pictorial charm, which is neither a mere poetical thought or sentiment, on the one hand, nor a mere result of communicable technical skill in colour or design, on the other; to define in a poem that true poetical quality, which is neither descriptive nor meditative merely, but comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing; to note in music the musical charm, that essential music, which presents no words, no matter of sentiment or thought, separable from the special form in which it is conveyed to us" (GIO §1; see Poetical quality; Musical charm). Each art's charm is defined by two exclusions, and the picture's are the most exact. On one side is the poetical thought or sentiment, which could be put in words; on the other the technical skill, which is "communicable", that is, teachable. The charm lies between, in what can be neither said nor taught.

The second paragraph gives the same region its fuller name, "that true pictorial quality which lies between" technical acquirement and literary

interest (GIO §2; see Pictorial quality; Literary interest), and its examples follow: the drawing that is a temperament's vision, the colouring that weaves light through dress and flesh (GIO §2; see Drawing; Colouring). Pictorial charm is felt before it is analysed, and the analysis finds it in these two things.

The phrase has a consequence that the rest of the essay draws out. A charm that belongs to colour and line does not depend on a name. When the critics take the Holy Family of the Louvre from Giorgione for "certain points where it comes short of this standard", such shortcoming "will hardly diminish the spectator's enjoyment of a singular charm of liquid air" (GIO §16; see Liquid air), and the Ordeal and the Finding of Moses are given up "whatever their charm" (GIO §16; see New Vasari). Pictorial charm survives reattribution. That can be read as the ground of the Giorgionesque, a type of art whose charm outlived the catalogue of authentic works (see Giorgionesque).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "pictorial charm" occurs, with the paragraph of the Giorgione essay in which a picture's charm survives its reattribution, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Criticism is to note in a picture that true pictorial charm, neither a poetical thought nor a communicable skill.

**GIO §16** A singular charm of liquid air fills the Holy Family; other pictures are given up whatever their charm.

## See also

Colouring; Drawing; Giorgionesque; Liquid air; Literary interest; Musical charm; New Vasari; Pictorial quality; Poetical quality.

# Pictorial definition

*pictorial definition*

Attested: *pictorial definition* (GIO §4). Definition, from the Latin *definire*, to set bounds to, is here not a statement of meaning but sharpness of outline, the quality of a thing clearly bounded and seen. Pater uses the phrase in his first example of the *Anders-streben*: some of the most delightful music "seems to be always approaching to figure, to pictorial definition" (GIO §4; see Anders-streben). The example runs against the essay's main current. Elsewhere painting aspires to music, subordinating mere subject to design; here music aspires to painting, seeking the figure and the clear image that sound by itself cannot give. "Always approaching" keeps it a striving, never an arrival. The opposite of definition is the lyric's "suppression or vagueness of mere subject" (GIO §7; see Vagueness of subject), and the pair

can be read as the two directions of the *Anders-streben*: music moves toward definition, poetry and painting toward a fruitful vagueness, and each borrows what the other has.

## See also

Anders-streben; Vagueness of subject.

# Pictorial design

*The design of a picture as its own purpose, to which Giorgione subordinated mere subject when he freed painting from the wall · The Renaissance*

*pictorial design*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The arrangement of a picture's colour and line, taken as the picture's main purpose.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Giorgione is typical of the aspiration of all the arts towards music "in the subordination of mere subject to pictorial design, to the main purpose of a picture" (GIO §12).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §12 says that the claim that Giorgione invented genre "helps him tell a story of Venetian painting turning toward private collecting and sustained contemplation".

**A place to read.** GIO §12.

## Meaning

Design is the Italian *disegno*, the shaping of a work by line and composition (see Drawing). "Pictorial design" is design that belongs to the picture itself: the order of its colours and lines, considered as an end and not as a means of telling something. Pater's phrase sets it against "mere subject", the story or object represented, and names it "the main purpose of a picture".

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the twelfth paragraph, which tells the history of Venetian painting as a history of what it served. At first painting served the building. The work of the Venetian school was "always subordinate to architectural effect" (GIO §12; see Architectural effect), and the earlier painters "seem never for a moment to have been so much as tempted" to forget that painting "must be before all things decorative" (GIO §12; see Decorative). Giorgione changes its master. "Those spaces of more cunningly blent colour, obediently filling their places, hitherto, in a mere architectural scheme, Giorgione detaches from the wall" (GIO §12). The

picture becomes portable, and its design, which had been part of a larger scheme, becomes its own.

Three sentences later the essay names the result. “Yet in him too that old Venetian clearness or justice, in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art, is still undisturbed” (GIO §12). And though he fills his work with “a high-strung sort of poetry”, he is typical of the aspiration towards music “in his selection of subject, or phase of subject, in the subordination of mere subject to pictorial design, to the main purpose of a picture” (GIO §12; see Phase of subject). The paragraph can be read as turning on its two subordinations. The Venetian picture was first subordinate to architecture; in Giorgione the subject is subordinate to the design. The habit of subordination survives the move, and what was once the building’s rule becomes the picture’s own: the design governs, and the subject serves it.

“Mere subject” is the essay’s recurring phrase for what the design must master. The “mere matter” of a picture, “the actual circumstances of an event, the actual topography of a landscape”, should be “nothing without the form” (GIO §5; see Matter and form); the lyric depends on “a certain suppression or vagueness of mere subject” (GIO §7; see Vagueness of subject). The twentieth paragraph gives the method: the perfect interpenetration of “the subject with the elements of colour and design” depends on the choice of subject (GIO §20; see Interpenetration). Design is the art; subject is what the art consents to carry. The word “design” has a lower use in the essay as well, which shows what the phrase “pictorial design” adds. The pictorial charm of the first paragraph is not “a mere result of communicable technical skill in colour or design” (GIO §1; see Pictorial charm). Design as skill can be taught; pictorial design as purpose is what the picture is for, and it belongs to the painter’s choice, not to his training.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which “pictorial design” occurs, with GIO §20, where the elements of design are set against the subject, in the order of the book.

**GIO §12** Giorgione detaches the spaces of colour from the wall and subordinates mere subject to pictorial design.

**GIO §20** The attainment of the interpenetration of the subject with the elements of colour and design depends in great measure on dexterous choice of subject.

## See also

Architectural effect; Decorative; Drawing; Interpenetration; Matter and form; Partial alienation; Phase of subject; Pictorial charm; Vagueness of subject.

## Pictorial gift

*pictorial gift*

Attested: *pictorial gift* (GIO §2). A gift is an endowment given, not acquired, a talent in the old sense. Pater uses the phrase in the sentence that defines the true quality of a picture: it is "that true pictorial quality which lies between, unique pledge, as it is, of the possession of the pictorial gift, that inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour" (GIO §2; see Pictorial quality). The quality is the evidence and the gift is what it proves: "pledge" makes the visible work a guarantee of an inward power. The quality that pledges the gift is set against "mere technical acquirement in delineation or touch" (GIO §2), as the pictorial charm is set against "communicable technical skill in colour or design" (GIO §1; see Pictorial charm). The next sentence names its seat as "that peculiar pictorial temperament or constitution, in which ... all poetry, all ideas however abstract or obscure, float up as visible scene or image" (GIO §2; see Drawing; Temperament). The pictorial gift can be read as the painter's form of the temperament that the Preface asks of the critic, a power of being moved in a particular way, here the way that turns everything into sight.

### See also

Drawing; Mode of handling; Pictorial charm; Pictorial quality; Temperament.

## Pictorial poetry

*Poetry made in paint, which Pater admits into painting only after the eye has been satisfied · The Renaissance*

*pictorial poetry*; *painted poems*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Poetry that a picture has as a picture, in its colour and design, rather than in a story it illustrates.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Giorgione's school, "in the production of this pictorial poetry, exercises a wonderful tact in the selecting of such matter as lends itself most readily and entirely to pictorial form", and "although its productions are painted poems, they belong to a sort of poetry which tells itself without an articulated story" (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §2 on Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* says that the sweep of Bacchus's drapery and the meeting of their eyes "give the story its momentary form".

**A place to read.** GIO §§2, 20.

## Meaning

The comparison of painting and poetry is as old as criticism. The Greek poet Simonides, as the biographer and moralist Plutarch reports, called painting silent poetry and poetry painting that speaks, and the Roman poet Horace's phrase *ut pictura poesis*, "as painting, so poetry", became the motto of a long tradition that judged pictures as poems.[322] "Pictorial poetry" belongs to that tradition and corrects it. The poetry is pictorial: it is made of the means proper to painting, and it is felt through the eye.

## Use in the book

The Giorgione essay begins by refusing the old equation. "Now painting is the art in the criticism of which this truth most needs enforcing, for it is in popular judgments on pictures that the false generalisation of all art into forms of poetry is most prevalent" (GIO §2; see Literary interest). The "truth" is the first paragraph's, that each art has its own order of impressions (see Order of impressions), and the false generalisation can be read as *ut pictura poesis* in its popular form: every picture a poem in disguise, to be read for its story. Against it Pater sets the true pictorial quality of drawing and colour, which "must first of all delight the sense" (GIO §2; see Colouring).

Poetry is not banished. "And this primary and essential condition fulfilled, we may trace the coming of poetry into painting, by fine gradations upwards" (GIO §2; see Abstract colour), from Japanese fan-painting to Titian, "his poetry in the Ariadne" (GIO §2). The order is the point. Poetry comes into painting after the eye has been satisfied, and by gradations, as a further thing the picture can carry; it is never the picture's ground. Giorgione "interfuses his painted work with a high-strung sort of poetry, caught directly from a singularly rich and high-strung sort of life" (GIO §12; see Phase of subject), and yet he subordinates subject to design (GIO §12; see Pictorial design). The poetry is real, and it is held inside the painting's own law.

The twentieth paragraph names the result. Giorgione's school is "the school of genre", its subjects "painted idylls", and in "the production of this pictorial poetry" it chooses the matter that lends itself most entirely to pictorial form (GIO §20; see Genre; Painted idyll). Its pictures are "painted poems" which "belong to a sort of poetry which tells itself without an articulated story" (GIO §20; see Articulated story). The phrase can be read as Pater's resolution of the quarrel of the arts. Lessing had separated painting from poetry to save each from the other (see Art-casuistry); Pater lets them meet again, on condition that the poetry be the kind a picture can hold, the poetry of a moment and a mood. The Botticelli essay had made Botticelli "a poetical painter, blending the charm of story and sentiment,

[322] Plutarch, *De gloria Atheniensium* 3 (*Moralia* 346f), reporting Simonides; Horace, *Ars poetica* 361.

the medium of the art of poetry, with the charm of line and colour" (BOT §3; see Poetical painter); the Giorgione essay lets the story go.

## Places to read

Four paragraphs in which Pater speaks of poetry in painting, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli is before all things a poetical painter.

**GIO §2** Popular judgment generalises all art into forms of poetry; poetry comes into painting by fine gradations upwards.

**GIO §12** Giorgione interfuses his painted work with a high-strung sort of poetry.

**GIO §20** The school's pictorial poetry gives painted poems that tell themselves without an articulated story.

## See also

Abstract colour; Art-casuistry; Articulated story; Colouring; Genre; Literary interest; Order of impressions; Painted idyll; Phase of subject; Pictorial design; Poetical painter.

# Pictorial propriety

*The fitness proper to a picture, which Botticelli naïvely ignored · The Renaissance*

*pictorial propriety*; *pictorial*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Pictorial propriety is what is fitting to a picture as a picture, above all the rule that it shows a single moment.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Botticelli's illustrations are crowded with incident, blending, with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety, three phases of the same scene into one plate" (BOT §3).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §3 says that "Different surviving copies contain different numbers and placements of impressions".

**A place to read.** BOT §3, with GIO §20.

## Meaning

Propriety is from *proprius*, one's own: what properly belongs to a thing. Classical criticism called it decorum, the fitting, and Horace asked that each kind hold the seemly place that has fallen to it.[323] For painting, Lessing's *Laocoön* gave the rule its classic form: a picture shows one instant and must choose the most "pregnant" one, from which what comes before and after is

[323] Horace, *Ars poetica* 92.

most easily understood.[324] To show the same figure three times in one picture, as the older painters did in telling a story, broke the rule.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the judgement on Botticelli's engravings for the Florentine Dante of 1481 quoted above (BOT §3). The method was usual in Botticelli's century: his own frescoes in the Sistine Chapel tell several episodes of one story in a single field. Pater names it as a fault and excuses it in the same breath. "Naïve" makes the carelessness innocent, the mark of an art that had not yet learned its own limits, and the word belongs with the "freshness" and "diffident promise" of the earlier Renaissance that the essay ends by praising (BOT §10; see New artistic sense).

The Giorgione essay shows what pictorial propriety becomes when it is learned. The Venetian painters, above all, conceived "the essence of what is pictorial in a picture" (GIO §11), and Giorgione's school "exercises a wonderful tact in the selecting of such matter as lends itself most readily and entirely to pictorial form" (GIO §20). Its subjects are "animated instants", single moments into which a long history has condensed (GIO §20; see Concrete terms). That can be read as Lessing's pregnant moment in Pater's words. The crowded plate that blends three phases is its opposite: a story spread across a surface rather than condensed into a moment.

"Pictorial" is a word of the later essays, and especially of the Giorgione. In the Leonardo essay it marks a lower aim: Leonardo uses his subjects "not as matter for definite pictorial realisation" but as the start of "a train of sentiment" (LEO §25; see Realisation). In the Giorgione essay it marks the highest: "true pictorial charm" (GIO §1), "the essential limitations of the pictorial art" (GIO §12). Pater's vocabulary shows the book's own development, from the poetical painter of the Botticelli essay to the pictorial poetry of Giorgione's school (see Poetical painter).

The phrase can be read as a small instance of Pater's historical tact. He holds the rule, and he does not hold it against the painter who did not know it. Botticelli's impropriety is part of the charm of an age that was still finding out what a picture could do; Giorgione's propriety is the reward of the finding out.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pictorial" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli's illustrations blend, with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety, three phases of a scene into one plate.

**MIC §18** The medieval mind gave an independent traditional existence to a special pictorial conception.

**LEO §25** Leonardo uses the ostensible subject not as matter for definite pictorial realisation.

[324] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon* (Berlin, 1766), chapters 3 and 16.

**LEO §29** Leonardo uses sacred story not as mere subjects for pictorial realisation.

**GIO §1** Criticism must note in a picture the true pictorial charm.

**GIO §2** Great painting is drawing projected from a peculiar pictorial temperament.

**GIO §4** Some music seems always to be approaching to figure, to pictorial definition.

**GIO §11** The Venetian school conceived most justly the essence of what is pictorial in a picture.

**GIO §12** In Giorgione the old Venetian apprehension of the limits of the pictorial art is undisturbed.

**GIO §20** Giorgione's school selects matter that lends itself to pictorial form.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §3 says that "The Florentine printing of Dante's Commedia included Cristoforo Landino's commentary and copper engravings based on designs associated with Botticelli. Different surviving copies contain different numbers and placements of impressions."

## See also

Anders-streben; Concrete terms; Engraved plate; Lower in key; New artistic sense; Painter's vision; Poetical painter; Realisation.

# Pictorial quality

*The quality that makes a picture a picture, lying between technique and literary interest, which most spectators never see · The Renaissance*

*pictorial quality; pictorial qualities*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What belongs to a picture as a picture: its drawing and its colour, felt before its subject.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Most spectators "have never caught sight all the time of that true pictorial quality which lies between, unique pledge, as it is, of the possession of the pictorial gift, that inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour" (GIO §2).

**In this edition.** The Introduction, presenting the Concert, says: "Look at those details before reading his account of what the painting makes audible."

**A place to read.** GIO §2.

## Meaning

"Quality" is the Latin *qualitas*, the kind or nature of a thing (see Peculiar quality of pleasure). A pictorial quality is what makes a picture the kind of thing it is, as against the qualities it shares with a story or a treatise. Pater's "true" pictorial quality is the one that cannot be found in anything but a picture.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the long sentence of the second paragraph that describes how most people look at pictures. "To suppose that all is mere technical acquirement in delineation or touch, working through and addressing itself to the intelligence, on the one side, or a merely poetical, or what may be called literary interest, addressed also to the pure intelligence, on the other:—this is the way of most spectators, and of many critics, who have never caught sight all the time of that true pictorial quality which lies between, unique pledge, as it is, of the possession of the pictorial gift, that inventive or creative handling of pure line and colour, which, as almost always in Dutch painting, as often also in the works of Titian or Veronese, is quite independent of anything definitely poetical in the subject it accompanies" (GIO §2; see Literary interest; Pictorial gift). The sentence places the quality by elimination. Technique and literary interest both address "the intelligence"; the pictorial quality addresses the eye, and it lies "between" them, unseen by those who look only for skill or for meaning.

The last clause sets the quality apart from the subject. The handling is "independent of anything definitely poetical in the subject it accompanies": it goes with a subject but owes nothing to the subject's poetry. In Dutch painting, the art of tavern and kitchen, the handling is "almost always" independent of anything definitely poetical in the subject; in Titian or Veronese, the great colourists of Venice, "often". The next sentences name its two parts, the drawing projected from the pictorial temperament and the colouring that weaves light through the whole (GIO §2; see Drawing; Colouring), and say that "these essential pictorial qualities must first of all delight the sense" (GIO §2).

"Never caught sight all the time" is the sentence's quiet reproach. The failure is a failure of looking, and the cure is to look first. The ninth paragraph gives the ideal: art strives "to become a matter of pure perception" (GIO §9; see Pure perception). The eleventh finds the quality where it is best understood, in the school of Venice, by which "the essence of what is pictorial in a picture" was most "justly conceived" (GIO §11; see Venetian school). The pictorial quality can be read as the essay's whole criterion in two words, and Giorgione's school as its proof.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pictorial quality" or "pictorial qualities" occurs, with GIO §11, in the order of the book.

**GIO §2** Most spectators never catch sight of the true pictorial quality, which lies between technique and literary interest.

**GIO §11** The school of Venice most justly conceived the essence of what is pictorial in a picture.

## See also

Colouring; Drawing; Literary interest; Mode of handling; Peculiar quality of pleasure; Pictorial charm; Pictorial gift; Pure perception; Venetian school.

### Picturesque union of contrasts

*picturesque union of contrasts*

Attested: *picturesque union of contrasts* (PIC §16); *picturesque* (GIO §§6, 17); *contrast* or *contrasts* in seven further paragraphs. "Picturesque", like a picture, became in the eighteenth century the name of a taste for the irregular and varied in landscape. The phrase opens the essay's last paragraph and gathers what came before: "This picturesque union of contrasts, belonging properly to the art of the close of the fifteenth century, pervades, in Pico della Mirandola, an actual person, and that is why the figure of Pico is so attractive" (PIC §16; see Analogue). The contrasts are those of the Doni Madonna, fauns behind the Holy Family, and of Pico's own life, the Dominican habit and the thoughts of the older gods (see Artistic reconciliation; Dominican habit). "Belonging properly" to art, the union appears in Pico in a person. The Giorgione essay uses "picturesque" in its landscape sense, preferring "for most conditions of the picturesque" a French river-side to a Swiss valley (GIO §6), and of a soldier, "a picturesque remnant of medieval manners" (GIO §17).

## See also

Analogue; Artistic reconciliation; Dominican habit.

### Plastic art

*Sculpture, the art of moulding, in which the Winckelmann essay finds the Greek ideal expressed and by whose self-limitation it defines that ideal · The Renaissance*

*plastic art*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The art of shaping form in a material: sculpture and modelling, as against the arts of line, colour, sound and word.

**In *The Renaissance*.** At Dresden Winckelmann meets Greek life in "the relics of plastic art" (WIN §9).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §34 says that ancient marbles could bear painted details or extensive colour, and that Pater gives priority to "an ideal of pure form shaped by the condition in which many works reached his age".

**A place to read.** WIN §34.

## Meaning

"Plastic" comes from the Greek *plastikos*, fit for moulding, from *plassein*, to mould or form, the verb used of the potter and of the god who shaped man from clay. The plastic arts are those that shape a material into a solid form, chiefly sculpture. Hegel, whom Pater quotes on the point (WIN §41; see Plastic character), made sculpture the art of the classical ideal and "plastic" a word for the Greeks themselves.[325] Pater uses the English phrase once, but its matter fills a third of the essay.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the moment of discovery. Winckelmann, who had known Greek life only through its poetry, sees the antiquities at Dresden: "Suddenly he is in contact with that life, still fervent in the relics of plastic art" (WIN §9). The sculpture can be read as a "relic" in the sacred sense (see Relic), and the life in it is still warm. Pater then sets the theory beside the experience. "Lessing, in the Laocoon, has theorised finely on the relation of poetry to sculpture; and philosophy may give us theoretical reasons why not poetry but sculpture should be the most sincere and exact expression of the Greek ideal" (WIN §9); Winckelmann settles the question by sight and touch (WIN §9; see Concrete terms).

The thirty-second paragraph states the thesis outright: "It followed that the Greek ideal expressed itself pre-eminently in sculpture" (WIN §32). The following paragraphs explain why, and the explanation is by renunciation. Sculpture limits itself to pure form (WIN §34; see Pure form). "It therefore renounces all those attributes of its material which do not forward that motive. It has had, indeed, from the beginning an unfixed claim to colour; but this element of colour in it has always been more or less conventional, with no melting or modulation of tones, never permitting more than a very limited realism. It was maintained chiefly as a religious tradition. In proportion as the art of sculpture ceased to be merely decorative, and subordinate to architecture, it threw itself upon pure form" (WIN §34).

[325] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), part III, section 2, "Die Skulptur", chapter 1.

The body itself is levelled: “In it, no member of the human form is more significant than the rest; the eye is wide, and without pupil; the lips and brow are hardly less significant than hands, and breasts, and feet” (WIN §34). The limitation of its resources “is part of its pride” (WIN §34; see Special limitation): no background, no sky, only “a little of suggested motion, and much of pure light on its gleaming surfaces, with pure form” (WIN §34; see Pure form). By this limitation sculpture “gains more than it loses”, unveiling man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics (WIN §34; see Unveiled human form), and what it unveils is “the tranquil godship in him” (WIN §34; see Godship).

The argument is Pater’s own version of a German doctrine, and its strength is its paradox. The plastic art is the poorest in means and the richest in result; its poverty is its pride. The edition’s note marks the historical limit of the argument: ancient sculpture was often painted, and the white marble Pater praises is partly the work of time. Pater knew of the colour and calls it “conventional” and “religious”, a survival rather than a resource, so that the pure form of his theory is the form the Greeks were moving toward, not merely the form that weather left.

The plastic art, in the essay, is also a way of seeing life. Hegel’s “plastic character” gives the word to the men of Periclean Athens (WIN §41; see Plastic character), and Pater’s last pages measure modern culture by “consummate Greek modelling” (WIN §50). The phrase can be read as naming the book’s own ideal of form: a clear outline, purged of the accidental, that holds its meaning without pointing beyond itself.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with WIN §§32 and 34, where sculpture is made the pre-eminent expression of the Greek ideal and its limits are set out, in the order of the book.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann is suddenly in contact with Greek life, still fervent in the relics of plastic art.

**WIN §32** The Greek ideal expressed itself pre-eminently in sculpture.

**WIN §34** Sculpture limits itself to pure form, holds colour only by convention, gives up background, and gains more than it loses by the limitation.

## See also

Concrete terms; Godship; Law of restraint; Plastic character; Pure form; Relic; Special limitation; Unveiled human form.

*Hegel's name for the Greeks of the age of Pericles, who shaped their own lives as sculptors shape a figure, and whose key Winckelmann carried in his own nature · The Renaissance*
*this plastic character*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A character moulded like a statue: whole, clear in outline, and shaped by its own will.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Hegel says that in the beautiful days of Greece "those who act, as well as those who create and think" have "this plastic character" (WIN §41).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§41–42.

## Meaning

"Plastic" is the quality of what is moulded (see Plastic art). Applied to character it means a person formed as a sculptor forms a figure, with a single clear outline and nothing accidental. The phrase is a translation from Hegel, who used *plastisch* of the great individuals of classical Greece in the section of his lectures on sculpture.[326]

## Use in the book

The forty-first paragraph is a single long quotation from Hegel, and Pater lets it stand without comment. "This sense," says Hegel, "for the consummate modelling of divine and human forms was pre-eminently at home in Greece. In its poets and orators, its historians and philosophers, Greece cannot be conceived from a central point, unless one brings, as a key to the understanding of it, an insight into the ideal forms of sculpture, and regards the images of statesmen and philosophers, as well as epic and dramatic heroes, from the artistic point of view. For those who act, as well as those who create and think, have, in those beautiful days of Greece, this plastic character" (WIN §41). They are great and free and have created themselves out of themselves (WIN §41; see Individuality). "The age of Pericles was rich in such characters; Pericles himself, Pheidias, Plato, above all Sophocles, Thucydides also, Xenophon and Socrates, each in his own order, the perfection of one remaining undiminished by that of the others. They are ideal artists of themselves, cast each in one flawless mould, works of art, which stand before us as an immortal presentment of the gods. Of this modelling also are those bodily works of art, the victors in the Olympic games; yes! and even Phryne, who, as the most beautiful of women,

[326] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), part III, section 2, "Die Skulptur".

ascended naked out of the water, in the presence of assembled Greece" (WIN §41).

The list is the point. The statesman Pericles, the sculptor Pheidias, the philosophers Plato and Socrates, the tragedian Sophocles, the historians Thucydides and Xenophon, and a courtesan stand together as works of art, and none diminishes the others: each is perfect "in his own order". The plastic character is not a single type but a way of being a type, wholly and without remainder. The athletes and Phryne close the list because they are the literal case of what the others are figuratively, bodies made into statues.

The forty-second paragraph turns the key on Winckelmann. "This key to the understanding of the Greek spirit, Winckelmann possessed in his own nature, itself like a relic of classical antiquity, laid open by accident to our alien, modern atmosphere" (WIN §42). The critic is himself a plastic character, and that is why he understood the statues: the leading motive of his culture, "like some central root-fibre", held his life together (WIN §42; see Centrality). The essay's portrait of Winckelmann, single-minded, narrow and entire (see Intellectual integrity; Narrow perfection), can be read as the portrait of such a character, "complete in the ancient sense" as Goethe says (WIN §10).

The phrase also marks what the modern world has lost. The last paragraphs find the Greek ways hardly possible now, "as in Pericles or Pheidias, by the direct exercise of any single talent", or as in Phryne by perfection of bodily form (WIN §51; see Bodily form; Exigent intellectualism): the same names, from Hegel's list, return as examples of what can no longer be done. The plastic character, admired in the forty-first paragraph, is set aside in the fifty-first, and the essay can be read as moving from Hegel's sculptural Greece to Goethe's many-sided modernity without denying that the first was greater in its kind.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with WIN §42, where Winckelmann is said to possess its key in his own nature, in the order of the book.

**WIN §41** Hegel: in the beautiful days of Greece those who act, create and think have this plastic character; they are ideal artists of themselves.

**WIN §42** Winckelmann possessed this key to the Greek spirit in his own nature, itself like a relic of classical antiquity.

## See also

Bodily form; Centrality; Exigent intellectualism; Ideal art; Individuality; Intellectual integrity; Narrow perfection; Plastic art; Relic.

# Play of life

*The flicker of movement over a surface, which colour gives the painter and sculpture must find another way · The Renaissance*
*play of life*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Play in the sense of light movement, as the play of light on water; the play of life is the movement of life over a surface.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The great styles of sculpture seek "to get not colour, but the equivalent of colour; to secure the expression and the play of life" (ROB §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** ROB §6, with WIN §38.

## Meaning

"Play" in English has, besides the sense of game, the sense of quick, light, unpredictable movement: the play of light on water, the play of a fountain, the play of features in a face. The play of life is life seen in that kind of movement, flickering and passing over a form rather than fixed in it.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the sentence that sets sculpture its problem: the three great styles must get "not colour, but the equivalent of colour", and "secure the expression and the play of life" (ROB §6; see Equivalent of colour). Expression and play of life can be read as the two things colour gives a painting and stone denies a statue. Expression is the inner state shown; the play of life is the movement that shows it is alive. A statue is still, and "only motion can relieve" its solid frame (ROB §6; see Hard realism); the play of life is the appearance of motion where there is none.

The essay's examples are all of play in this sense: the essence of Tuscan work is expression, "the passing of a smile over the face of a child" (ROB §4; see Passing of a smile). Michelangelo's incompleteness communicates "breath, pulsation, the effect of life" (ROB §10; see Breath; Pulsation), and the sense of "a yielding and flexible life" (ROB §10; see Flexible life). In each, life is something that passes over the surface, a smile, a ripple, a breath.

The Winckelmann essay uses the same verb for the Greek solution. The Hellenic ideal allows passion "to play lightly over the surface of the individual form" without losing its depth (WIN §38; see Impassivity). Play is at the surface; repose is in the depth. Discourse and action, on the other hand, show man "more directly than the play of the muscles and the moulding of the flesh" (WIN §33), which are sculpture's means. The Leonardo essay finds the same movement in the smile "which plays over all Leonardo's work" (LEO §30; see Unfathomable smile), and in the

Giorgione essay a great picture, in its primary aspect, "has no more definite message for us than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow" (GIO §2).

The phrase can be read as naming the quality Pater values most in any work of art, and the one hardest for sculpture to give. The Conclusion's world of impressions is a world of play, of things that pass; the della Robbia essay asks how the art of stone, the most permanent of arts, can show it, and its answer is that it can show it only at the surface, lightly, without fixing it.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once; the paragraphs listed with it are those in which life, feeling or light is said to play over a surface, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** The great styles of sculpture seek to secure the expression and the play of life.

**LEO §14** Some charm of voice and aspect had played about the young Leonardo.

**LEO §30** The unfathomable smile plays over all Leonardo's work.

**GIO §2** A great picture in its primary aspect has no more definite message than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow.

**WIN §33** Sculpture's means are the play of the muscles and the moulding of the flesh.

**WIN §38** The Hellenic ideal lets passion play lightly over the surface of the individual form.

## See also

Breath; Equivalent of colour; Flexible life; Hard realism; Impassivity; Passing of a smile; Pulsation; Unfathomable smile.

# Poetical painter

*Botticelli's kind: the painter who blends the charms of poetry and of painting · The Renaissance*

*poetical painter*; *poetical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A poetical painter is one whose pictures carry the charms proper to poetry, story and sentiment, together with those proper to painting.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "He is before all things a poetical painter, blending the charm of story and sentiment, the medium of the art of poetry, with the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting" (BOT §3).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §3 says that the Florentine printing of Dante "included Cristoforo Landino's commentary and copper engravings based on designs associated with Botticelli".

**A place to read.** BOT §3, with GIO §2.

## Meaning

The kinship of the two arts is one of the oldest commonplaces of criticism. It had its classical formulas in Simonides and Horace (see Pictorial poetry). Lessing's *Laocoön* (1766) attacked the commonplace, arguing that the two arts have different means and must not borrow each other's effects. Pater's phrase can be read as standing between the commonplace and its critic: it accepts that a painter may be poetical, but it names the two media and calls the result a blend.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the essay's third paragraph and governs it; the sentence quoted above goes on: "So he becomes the illustrator of Dante" (BOT §3; see Abstract painting; Line and colour). The second sentence follows from the first: a painter who blends poetry with painting is the natural illustrator of a poet. Pater then explains why Dante had to wait for him. "Giotto, and the followers of Giotto, with their almost childish religious aim, had not learned to put that weight of meaning into outward things, light, colour, everyday gesture, which the poetry of the Divine Comedy involves, and before the fifteenth century Dante could hardly have found an illustrator" (BOT §3; see Outward image). Dante's poetry lays meaning on light and gesture; only a painter who could do the same could answer it.

The rest of the paragraph tests the claim and qualifies it. The illustrations are crowded (see Pictorial propriety), the grotesques too strong (see Lower in key), but the simoniacs' burning feet and the dainty Centaurs show "a true painter's vision" (BOT §3; see Painter's vision). The poetical painter is best when he is most a painter.

The Giorgione essay returns to the word with a warning. It is "the way of most spectators, and of many critics" to see in a picture either technical skill "or a merely poetical, or what may be called literary interest, addressed also to the pure intelligence" (GIO §2). There the poetical is a misreading, the spectator's attention to the story rather than to the picture. The two essays can be read as a correction. Botticelli is a poetical painter in the good sense, because his story and sentiment are blended with the charm of line and colour, and reach the viewer through the cold light and the wan faces as much as through the subject. The spectator who reads only the story is poetical in the bad sense. Giorgione's school makes "pictorial poetry" (GIO §20), in which the poetry has been wholly absorbed into the painting (see Anders-streben).

The phrase can be read as Pater's own position in the quarrel between the commonplace and Lessing. He grants Lessing that the arts have different media and different responsibilities; he keeps from the commonplace the belief that a painter's best work may still be poetry. The poetical painter is the one who has found poetry in painting's own means.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the two paragraphs of the Giorgione essay on the poetical in painting, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli is before all things a poetical painter, and so the illustrator of Dante.

**GIO §1** True pictorial charm is neither a mere poetical thought or sentiment nor mere technical skill.

**GIO §2** Most spectators look for a merely poetical or literary interest in a picture.

## In this edition

The note at GIO §1 says that "Pater opens with a theory he rejects. Color, sound and rhythm are part of the work's meaning and pleasure. A paraphrase of a subject therefore leaves something specific to its medium behind." The note at BOT §3 says that the Florentine printing of Dante "included Cristoforo Landino's commentary and copper engravings based on designs associated with Botticelli".

## See also

Abstract painting; Anders-streben; Line and colour; Lower in key; Outward image; Painter's vision; Pictorial poetry; Pictorial propriety.

# Pointed architecture

*pointed architecture*

Attested: *pointed architecture* (FRE §1). Gothic architecture, named from its pointed arch, which spread from the Île-de-France in the twelfth century. Pater names it first of the three places where, "under rare and happy conditions", the rude strength of the middle age turns to sweetness (FRE §1; see Sweetness; Romantic love), and the next paragraph names the period's most characteristic work, "the sculpture of Chartres, the windows of Le Mans" (FRE §2; see Medieval Renaissance). "Pointed" was the word of the Gothic revival in England, as in A. W. N. Pugin's *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841).[327] The note at FRE §1 calls it "An older English name for Gothic architecture, referring to its use of

[327] A. W. N. Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (London, 1841).

pointed arches", and says that Pater "takes its refinement as one sign of a change in medieval feeling".

## See also

Medieval Renaissance; Romantic love; Sweetness.

## Poise

*poise*

Attested: *poise* (LEO §22; WIN §44). The word came through the Old French *pois*, weight, from the Latin *pensum*, a weight of wool: poise is weight held in balance. Pater uses it twice, once of a body and once of a temper. Among the things Pater asks us to note in Leonardo's drawings, "as that which especially belongs to art", is "the poise of the slave's arm above his head" (LEO §22; see Abstract grace): the arm's weight held in the air, caught by the line. In the Winckelmann essay the word describes the Greek spirit in Theocritus, above its discouragements: "But what a blithe and steady poise, above these discouragements, in a clear and sunny stratum of the air!" (WIN §44). The first is a draughtsman's word and the second a moralist's, and they can be read as one quality, the balance that keeps a weight from falling, seen first in a limb and then in a people.

## See also

Abstract grace.

## Portraiture

*portraiture*

Attested: *portraiture* (LEO §30; BEL §21). Portraiture is the making of likenesses, the art of the portrait. Pater uses the word twice, once of a face and once of a mind. Of La Gioconda he writes that "the picture is a portrait", and asks, "By what strange affinities had the dream and the person grown up thus apart, and yet so closely together?" (LEO §30). "That there is much of mere portraiture in the picture is attested by the legend that by artificial means, the presence of mimes and flute-players, that subtle expression was protracted on the face" (LEO §30; see Legend). "Mere portraiture" is the likeness of a particular sitter, whose expression music prolonged while the painter worked; the rest is the image "present from the first incorporeally in Leonardo's brain" (LEO §30). In the Du Bellay essay the word turns inward. Sainte-Beuve, Pater says, ranked the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets* as *poésie intime*, "that intensely modern sort of poetry in which the writer has for his aim the portraiture of his own most intimate moods" (BEL §21; see Poésie intime). Together the two uses make, in effect,

the two halves of the modern portrait: the face of another, made to carry the painter's dream, and the poet's own moods, painted as a likeness. The note at LEO §30 on the sitter says that "Pater's account moves from portraiture into imaginative criticism".

## See also

Human personality; Legend; Lineaments; Poésie intime; Unfathomable smile.

# Pregnancy of expression

*The fullness of meaning that the Creation of Man gathered as it passed through the hands of the medieval sculptors · The Renaissance*

*pregnancy of expression*; *pregnancy*, *pregnant*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Pregnancy is fullness of meaning; pregnancy of expression is the quality of an image that seems to hold more than it states.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Italian sculptors "had early impressed upon it that pregnancy of expression which seems to give it many veiled meanings" (MIC §18).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §18.

## Meaning

"Pregnant", from the Latin *praegnans*, with child, was used figuratively from the sixteenth century of words or signs heavy with meaning: a pregnant phrase is one that implies more than it says. The figure keeps its first sense close: the meaning is not yet born, but carried.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the second sentence of the eighteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "The Creation of Man had haunted the mind of the middle age like a dream; and weaving it into a hundred carved ornaments of capital or doorway, the Italian sculptors had early impressed upon it that pregnancy of expression which seems to give it many veiled meanings" (MIC §18).

The sentence explains how an image acquires depth. No single sculptor gave the Creation its meaning; it gathered meaning by repetition, woven into a hundred ornaments, each carver adding a little, until the image seemed to hold "many veiled meanings". That the subject "had haunted the mind of the middle age like a dream" makes the process involuntary: the subject returned to the medieval mind as a dream returns, and each return

deepened it. “Veiled” is the important word. The meanings are not stated; they are felt behind the image, as the meaning of a dream is felt.

The next sentences draw the consequence. The treatment became “almost conventional”, the conception came to have “almost an independent and abstract existence of its own” (MIC §18; see Medievalism; Conventionalism), and Michelangelo received it so, and added “the last touches” (see Discipleship). The pregnancy of expression is what he inherited: an image already full, which he did not need to fill.

“Pregnant” and “pregnancy” return in the Winckelmann essay, always of fullness. Goethe’s fragments contain “a few pages of strange pregnancy on the character of Winckelmann” (WIN §2); Goethe himself, awaiting Winckelmann at Leipzig, was “in all the pregnancy of his wonderful youth” (WIN §21); Hellenic breadth comes of a culture “concentrating its impressions into certain pregnant types” (WIN §35; see Pregnant type); and the Greek ideal of youth is “pregnant with the possibilities of a whole world closed within it” (WIN §40). In each, something holds more than it shows: a page, a youth, a type, a figure.

The Greek “pregnant types” and the medieval Creation are two forms of one process, a concentration of experience into a figure (see Tradition of sentiment); Michelangelo’s Adam, on this reading, owes its power to the centuries of dreaming that went into it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which “pregnancy” or “pregnant” occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §18** The Italian sculptors impressed on the Creation of Man a pregnancy of expression that seems to give it many veiled meanings.

**WIN §2** Goethe’s fragments contain a few pages of strange pregnancy on the character of Winckelmann.

**WIN §21** Goethe was in all the pregnancy of his wonderful youth.

**WIN §35** Hellenic breadth comes of a culture concentrating its impressions into pregnant types.

**WIN §40** The Greek ideal of youth is pregnant with the possibilities of a whole world.

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Conventionalism; Discipleship; Medievalism; Pregnant type; Tradition of sentiment.

# Pregnant type

*pregnant types*

Attested: *pregnant types* (WIN §35). *Pregnant* is the Latin *praegnans*, with child, and of a word or form, full of meaning not yet brought out; a *type* is the general form of a kind (see Type). Pater joins them at the end of his account of Greek breadth. *Heiterkeit* and *Allgemeinheit*, blitheness and generality, are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal (WIN §35; see Allgemeinheit), but the generality is not the vagueness that has sometimes passed for breadth in art. "Hellenic breadth and generality come of a culture minute, severe, constantly renewed, rectifying and concentrating its impressions into certain pregnant types" (WIN §35). The type is general because it is full, not because it is empty: many observed particulars have been concentrated into it, and it carries them as a seed carries the plant. The next paragraphs say what sculpture does with such types. It chooses "from a select number of types intrinsically interesting", and presents them "in their broad, central, incisive lines" (WIN §37; see Centrality; Situation). And the essay's highest example is a figure of the same kind, the youths of the Panathenaic frieze, whose purity of life is "pregnant with the possibilities of a whole world closed within it" (WIN §40; see Interpenetration; Relative).

## See also

Abstract type; Allgemeinheit; Centrality; Character; Impression; Interpenetration; Pregnancy of expression; Relative; Situation; Type.

# Presentment

*A likeness that makes its subject present: mere form in stone, or an immortal image · The Renaissance*

*presentment*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A presentation or representation; a likeness, picture or image of something.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Sculpture tends to "a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form" (ROB §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §6, with WIN §§26, 41.

## Meaning

The Old French *presentement*, a presenting, gave English "presentment", the act of presenting or the thing presented, and especially a portrait or likeness. Shakespeare's Hamlet, showing his mother two pictures, calls them "The counterfeit presentment of two brothers" (*Hamlet* III.iv).[328] It differs

[328] Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act III, scene iv.

from "representation" in its emphasis: a presentment makes its subject present, rather than standing for it.

## Use in the book

The word occurs twice in the sixth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, both times with "mere form". Sculpture tends "to a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form" (ROB §6; see Hard realism), and noble sculpture struggles "against this tendency to the hard presentment of mere form trying vainly to compete with the reality of nature itself" (ROB §6). The word's sense of making present can be read as the point. A statue presents a body, in three dimensions, in the same space as the viewer; it does not represent it at a distance as a picture does. That is why it competes "vainly" with nature: a presentment of mere form is a second body, and always a poorer one. "One-sided" adds that it presents only form, the outside, without the life that colour, atmosphere or motion would give (see Play of life).

The Michelangelo essay shows the word in a better sense: Michelangelo's Bacchus is "that unique presentment", expressing not the god's mirth but "his sleepy seriousness" (MIC §7; see Inspired sleep). Here the presentment is unique and expressive: Michelangelo's Bacchus presents the god's inner life, not merely his body. The Winckelmann essay gives two more scenes. "Athenæus tells the story of one who, coming to a temple of Latona, had expected to find some worthy presentment of the mother of Apollo, and laughed on seeing only a shapeless wooden figure" (WIN §26). In Athenaeus the visitor is a man who had lost the power to laugh and was told by the oracle that "the mother" would restore it; the shapeless image did.[329] And the long quotation from Hegel calls the Greeks of the age of Pericles works of art "which stand before us as an immortal presentment of the gods" (WIN §41).

The uses can be read as a scale. At the bottom is the shapeless wooden figure, a presentment so unworthy it is comic; then the "mere form" of hard realism, accurate and dead; then Michelangelo's Bacchus, a form that presents a mind; and at the top Hegel's Greeks, whose lives themselves are presentments of the gods. What rises along the scale is the presence of spirit in the image, and the della Robbia essay's problem is how stone can climb from the second rung to the third.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "presentment" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** Sculpture tends to a one-sided presentment of mere form trying vainly to compete with nature.

[329] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XIV.614a–b.

**MIC §7** Michelangelo's Bacchus is a unique presentment of the god's sleepy seriousness.

**WIN §26** A visitor laughed on finding only a shapeless wooden figure, not a worthy presentment of Latona.

**WIN §41** Hegel: the great Greeks stand before us as an immortal presentment of the gods.

## See also

Hard realism; Individuality; Inspired sleep; Play of life; Pure form; Special limitation.

# Pure form

*Form without colour, background or atmosphere: sculpture's medium, its limit and its pride · The Renaissance*

*pure form*; *pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Form unmixed with anything else: shape alone, without colour, texture or setting.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan sculptors partake of the Greek way "of extracting certain select elements only of pure form and sacrificing all the rest" (ROB §11).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §11 says that "Pater's ideal of Tuscan relief combines the breadth he assigns to Greek sculpture with the individual expression he finds in Michelangelo".

**A place to read.** ROB §11, with WIN §34.

## Meaning

"Pure" is the Latin *purus*, clean, unmixed. Pure form is form taken alone, as a white statue has it: the shape of a body without the colour of its skin, the light of its setting or the movement of its life. The phrase names the sculptor's medium in its strictest sense.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the first sentence of the eleventh paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which places the Tuscan sculptors between the two great systems: "Midway between these two systems—the system of the Greek sculptors and the system of Michelangelo—comes the system of Luca della Robbia and the other Tuscan sculptors of the fifteenth century, partaking both of the *Allgemeinheit* of the Greeks, their way of extracting certain select elements only of pure form and sacrificing all the rest, and the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo, relieving that sense of intensity,

passion, energy, which might otherwise have stiffened into caricature" (ROB §11; see Allgemeinheit; Incompleteness; Caricature).

The essay's other uses of the phrase all treat pure form as a problem. The great styles must expand "the too firmly fixed individuality of pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form" (ROB §6; see Individuality); the Greek way relieved "the hardness and unspirituality of pure form" (ROB §9; see Relieve); Michelangelo's incompleteness is "his way of etherealising pure form, of relieving its stiff realism" (ROB §10; see Etherealise). Pure form is hard, unspiritual, fixed: a shape cut off from everything that would make it live. The Giorgione essay gives the same verdict in one phrase, "the hard limitation of pure form", out of which sculpture "aspires ... towards colour, or its equivalent" (GIO §4; see Equivalent of colour).

The Winckelmann essay reverses the value, and the reversal completes the thought. "But why should sculpture thus limit itself to pure form? Because, by this limitation, it becomes a perfect medium of expression for one peculiar motive of the imaginative intellect" (WIN §34). Greek sculpture "threw itself upon pure form" as it ceased to be decorative; it has "no backgrounds, no sky or atmosphere", only "a little of suggested motion, and much of pure light on its gleaming surfaces, with pure form—only these"; and "the limitation of its resources is part of its pride" (WIN §34; see Special limitation). Pure form is the limit and the glory at once.

The phrase can be read as the place where the book's two accounts of sculpture meet. Seen from the modern side, from the demand for expression, pure form is hard and must be relieved; seen from the Greek side, it is the medium of a calm that no other art can give. The Tuscan sculptors take from it only what can carry feeling and leave the rest in the stone.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pure form" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** The styles must expand the fixed individuality of pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form.

**ROB §9** The Greek way relieved the hardness and unspirituality of pure form.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness is Michelangelo's way of etherealising pure form.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors extract certain select elements only of pure form.

**GIO §4** Sculpture aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form toward colour or its equivalent.

**WIN §34** Sculpture limits itself to pure form, and so becomes a perfect medium of expression.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §11 glosses *Allgemeinheit* as "The universality of the Greeks", and says that "Pater's ideal of Tuscan relief combines the breadth he assigns to Greek sculpture with the individual expression he finds in Michelangelo".

## See also

Allgemeinheit; Caricature; Equivalent of colour; Etherealise; Incompleteness; Individuality; Relieve; Special limitation.

### Quaint conceit

*a quaint conceit of daisies*; *quaint conceits*; *quaint*, *quaintness*

Attested: *a quaint conceit of daisies* (BOT §8); *quaint conceits* (PIC §5); *quaint* in five further paragraphs (FRE §§3, 23; LEO §18; GIO §2; BEL §14), once more in PIC §5 and once more in BOT §8; *quaintness* (BOT §8, twice; MIC §2; see Quaintness). "Quaint" comes through Old French from the Latin *cognitus*, known, and first meant skilled or ingenious before it came to mean curious and old-fashioned; a conceit is a fanciful device (see Conceit). The phrase describes the draperies of the Birth of Venus: "What is strangest is that he carries this sentiment into classical subjects, its most complete expression being a picture in the Uffizii, of Venus rising from the sea, in which the grotesque emblems of the middle age, and a landscape full of its peculiar feeling, and even its strange draperies, powdered all over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies, frame a figure that reminds you of the faultless nude studies of Ingres" (BOT §8). The daisies are medieval, the figure classical, and "frame" makes the medieval the setting of the Greek. The next sentences turn on the word: "At first, perhaps, you are attracted only by a quaintness of design"; "afterwards you may think that this quaintness must be incongruous with the subject"; but "the more you come to understand what imaginative colouring really is", the better you will like the colour, "and you will find that quaint design of Botticelli's a more direct inlet into the Greek temper" than Greek work itself (BOT §8; see Greek temper).

## See also

Conceit; Emblematical; Greek temper; Grotesque; Quaintness.

### Realist

*The visionary who tells the truth about mixed human nature · The Renaissance*

*realist*; *realism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A realist is an artist who represents things as they are, including their imperfections, rather than as they ought to be.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's sympathy "makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist" (BOT §6).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §6 says that Pater "turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically".

**A place to read.** BOT §6, with ROB §6.

## Meaning

In philosophy a realist held that universals are real; in the painting of Pater's own generation the word had become a banner. In 1855, when the jury of the Exposition Universelle refused his *Burial at Ornans* and *The Painter's Studio*, the French painter Gustave Courbet showed forty of his paintings in a pavilion of his own under the sign "Du Réalisme", and "realism" came to mean an art of ordinary subjects painted without idealisation.[330] Pater's book uses the word in both an older and a newer way, as a danger in sculpture and as a virtue in a painter who sees men truly.

## Use in the book

The noun appears in four paragraphs, and in three of them realism is a weight. Sculpture tends "to a hard realism" (ROB §6; see Hard realism). Michelangelo's unfinished surfaces avoid "a too heavy realism" and relieve pure form of "its stiff realism" (ROB §10; see Incompleteness). Greek sculpture's colour, more or less conventional, never permitted "more than a very limited realism" (WIN §34). In sculpture realism is the stone's own tendency, toward the heavy and the fixed, and art must lighten it. In the Leonardo essay the word belongs to history: the fifteenth century's movement was partly the Renaissance and partly "the coming of what is called the 'modern spirit,' with its realism, its appeal to experience" (LEO §17).

The one use of "realist" reverses the value. At the end of the paragraph on the middle world Pater says that Botticelli's sympathy "makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist" (BOT §6; see Sympathy). "Visionary as he is" grants the paradox. The visionary paints his mood, not the scene (see Visionary painter); yet this visionary is a realist, and "forcible" makes him a strong one.

The paradox dissolves when one sees what Botticelli is realist about. Not about surfaces: his flesh is grey, his colour cold, his Venus framed in medieval ornament. About people: "men and women, in their mixed and uncertain condition" (BOT §6; see Complexion of humanity). Botticelli's

[330] Gustave Courbet, *Exhibition et vente de 40 tableaux et 4 dessins de l'œuvre de M. Gustave Courbet* (Paris, 1855), with his statement on realism.

figures are true to the mixture of which most of humanity is made (see Complexion of humanity; Untempered). His realism is of the moral complexion, and its instrument is sympathy (see Sympathy).

The word can be read as Pater's quiet answer to the realism of his own day. Courbet's realism was of subject and surface, the stone-breakers and the burial at Ornans; Pater finds a deeper realism in a fifteenth-century visionary whose surfaces are anything but literal. The truth that counts, on this reading, is the truth of feeling about human beings, and a painter who sees through a mood may see it better than one who only looks.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "realist" or "realism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §6** Botticelli's sympathy makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist.

**ROB §6** Sculpture tends to a hard realism, a one-sided presentment of mere form.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's incompleteness relieves the stiff realism of pure form.

**LEO §17** The fifteenth century saw the coming of the modern spirit, with its realism, its appeal to experience.

**WIN §34** The colour of Greek sculpture never permitted more than a very limited realism.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §6, on "make great refusals", reads: "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III. Pater turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Hard realism; Incompleteness; Middle world; Sympathy; Untempered; Visionary painter.

Refinements of shadow

*The faint shadows of low relief, almost invisible, by which the Tuscan sculptors draw · The Renaissance*

*refinements of shadow*; *refinement*, *refinements*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A refinement is a subtle distinction or improvement, a gradation made finer; refinements of shadow are the faintest gradations of dark on a surface.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan sculptors "seek their means of delineation among those last refinements of shadow, which are almost invisible except in a strong light, and which the finest pencil can hardly follow" (ROB §4).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §4 says that Pater treats the variation of shadow in low relief "as a means of suggesting movement".

**A place to read.** ROB §4.

## Meaning

To refine is to make fine, to purify by removing what is coarse, as metal is refined in the fire. A refinement is either the process or its product: a subtlety, a delicacy, a nicety of distinction. In the plural the word often carries a hint of excess, refinements upon refinements, and Pater's uses keep that hint.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the first sentence of the fourth paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "They are haters of all heaviness and emphasis, of strongly-opposed light and shade, and seek their means of delineation among those last refinements of shadow, which are almost invisible except in a strong light, and which the finest pencil can hardly follow" (ROB §4; see Light and shade; Delineation).

The sentence describes the physics of low relief with an observer's care. A surface raised a fraction from its ground casts shadows so faint that they appear only "in a strong light". "Last" means the finest possible, the end of the scale. "The finest pencil can hardly follow" sets them beyond the draughtsman: the sculptor draws with gradations that a drawing could not record. The next sentence names what they serve, expression, "the passing of a smile over the face of a child" (ROB §4; see Passing of a smile). A smile and a ripple are both faint movements of a surface; low relief, which works by faint changes of surface, is fitted to show them.

The noun "refinement" elsewhere in the book often leans toward death. The Tuscan tombs have "a kind of sacred grace and refinement" (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait); Leonardo painted a young woman "full of the refinement of the dead" (LEO §19); Angelico's Mary is "corpse-like in her refinement" (WIN §27); and the abstraction of the Greek gods foreshadows "the fleshless, consumptive refinements of the pale, medieval artists" (WIN §45; see Abstraction). The Pleiad's poetry has "the grace which comes of long study and reiterated refinements" and "a certain premature agedness" (BEL §17). In other places refinement is simply a grace: the Provençal poets

wrote for "people of much leisure and great refinement" (FRE §24), and the painters of the French Renaissance, working on glass, "felt their way to refinements on colour never dreamed of" (BEL §1).

The two leanings of the word can be read as Pater's warning to himself. Refinement is the quality he most admires and practises, the last gradation that the coarse eye misses; it is also the road to the bloodless, the over-subtle, the dead. The Tuscan relief is refinement in the service of life, a smile made visible; the medieval Madonna is refinement past life's edge.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "refinement" or "refinements" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §4** Pater asks where the refinement of an age's sentiment found its receptacle.

**FRE §10** The twin cups, kept constantly before the eye, give an air of refinement to every scene they enter.

**FRE §22** Fauriel was surprised by the mixture of simplicity and refinement in Aucassin and Nicolette.

**FRE §24** The Provençal poets wrote for people of much leisure and great refinement.

**ROB §4** The Tuscan sculptors draw with the last refinements of shadow.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan tombs have a kind of sacred grace and refinement.

**LEO §19** Leonardo painted a young woman full of the refinement of the dead.

**GIO §24** An elusive refinement is felt about the park scenery of the school of Giorgione.

**BEL §1** Painters working on glass in France felt their way to refinements on colour never dreamed of before.

**BEL §17** The Pleiad's poetry has the grace of long study and reiterated refinements.

**WIN §26** Greek mythology brought to the ritual the power of the wing, an element of refinement and ascension.

**WIN §27** Angelico's Mary is corpse-like in her refinement.

**WIN §45** The abstraction of the gods foreshadows the consumptive refinements of medieval artists.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §4 says that "Low relief projects only slightly from its ground. On a work like Luca's marble choir loft, the strength of a shadow

varies with the depth of carving and direction of light. Pater treats that variation as a means of suggesting movement."

## See also

Abstraction; Delineation; Light and shade; Low relief; Passing of a smile; Sepulchral portrait.

# Relief or recovery

*Life in Michelangelo's work as a return, not a beginning: the release of something held, the regaining of something lost · The Renaissance*

*relief or recovery*; *relief*; *recovery*, *recover*, *recovering*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Relief is release from pain or pressure; recovery is the regaining of health or of something lost.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This creation of life—life coming always as relief or recovery, and always in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled—is in various ways the motive of all his work" (MIC §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §4, with MIC §3.

## Meaning

"Relief", through the Old French *relief* from *relever*, to raise up, is the lifting of a weight: release from pain, anxiety or pressure. The same word, in a sense borrowed through French from the Italian *rilievo*, names sculpture that stands out from its ground, and the della Robbia essay uses it in that sense throughout (see Low relief). "Recovery" is from the Latin *recuperare*, to get back: the return of health, or of something lost. Both words describe a second state, after a first: one is relieved from something, recovers after something.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that opens the fourth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: the creation of life, "life coming always as relief or recovery", is the motive of all Michelangelo's work (MIC §4; see Creation of life; Rough-hewn mass).

The phrase gathers the paragraph before it. There the beginning of life is "like the recovery of suspended health or animation" (MIC §3; see Animation). "Relief or recovery" names the same pattern in two words. Life, in Michelangelo, does not simply begin; it comes as release, as from a weight, or as regaining, as from a swoon. The first sense is the relief of a body from pressure, the figure freed from the block; the second is the recovery of a sick man, the Adam brought round.

"Always" makes the pattern universal, and the sentence holds to it in the hardest case: the creation of life is the motive of all his work, "and this, although at least one-half of his work was designed for the adornment of tombs" (MIC §4). Two examples follow, the Resurrection that Pater makes the real subject of the Last Judgment and the legend of Leda, "the delight of the world breaking from the egg of a bird" (MIC §4; see Resurrection). The motive holds even in an art so much given to death.

The two words keep their senses elsewhere in the book. In Heine's tale the people wished to stake the singer they took for a vampire, "that the sick women would by this means recover", but found the grave empty (PIC §2; see Vampire); the love-songs Pico destroyed "would have been so great a relief to us, after the scholastic prolixity of his Latin writings" (PIC §11). In the essay's first paragraph recovery is a recovering of beauty: the Michelangelesque energy of conception "recovering, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things" (MIC §1; see Energy of conception). The two Michelangelo uses can be read as one: in his art both life and loveliness are recovered, never simply made.

On one reading, the phrase gives Pater's reason for finding sweetness in Michelangelo's strength. Life that comes as relief carries gratitude with it; recovery is tender, after danger. The sweetness of his figures, on this reading, is the sweetness of things that have come back.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "relief" means release, or a word formed from "recover" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** The people hoped the sick women would recover if a stake were driven through the vampire.

**PIC §11** Pico's lost love-songs would have been so great a relief after his scholastic prolixity.

**MIC §1** The Michelangelesque recovers, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things.

**MIC §3** With Michelangelo the beginning of life is like the recovery of suspended health or animation.

**MIC §4** Life comes in his work always as relief or recovery.

## See also

Animation; Creation of life; Energy of conception; Low relief; Resurrection; Rough-hewn mass; Vampire.

# Relieve

*To lighten the weight of stone: the verb that names what relief does · The Renaissance*

*relieve*, *relieved*, *relieving*; *unrelieved*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To lighten, to ease a burden; also, in art, to set off one thing against another so that it stands out.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "That was the Greek way of relieving the hardness and unspirituality of pure form" (ROB §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §§6, 9, 10.

## Meaning

The Latin *relevare* is to lift up again, to lighten, and the verb kept that sense in English: to relieve pain is to lighten it, to relieve a guard is to lift his duty from him. The same root gave the Italian *rilievo*, a raising, the word for carved relief.

## Use in the book

The verb stands in the first sentence of the ninth paragraph: "That was the Greek way of relieving the hardness and unspirituality of pure form" (ROB §9; see Pure form). The sentence sums up the two paragraphs before, the law of *Allgemeinheit* and its breadth (see Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity), and opens the account of its cost (see Abstraction). Relieving is the essay's word for what each great style does with the weight of stone.

The sixth paragraph introduces the verb and its negative. The solid frame of sculpture is one "which only motion can relieve" (ROB §6; see Hard realism); each great system resists the tendency to hardness "in its own way, etherealising, spiritualising, relieving, its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6; see Etherealise; Spiritualise); and the problem is to expand "the too firmly fixed individuality of pure, unrelieved, uncoloured form" (ROB §6). Michelangelo's incompleteness is "his way of etherealising pure form, of relieving its stiff realism" (ROB §10; see Equivalent of colour), and the Tuscans, partaking of "the studied incompleteness of Michelangelo", relieve "that sense of intensity, passion, energy, which might otherwise have stiffened into caricature" (ROB §11; see Pure form). What is relieved widens: the hardness of form, and with it the intensity of feeling.

Elsewhere the verb keeps its ordinary senses. One almost wishes a document might "relieve one, in thinking of him", of Botticelli's dejected old age (BOT §2); nothing less than the thought that the great whole itself should perish "can relieve" Du Bellay's weariness (BEL §22). Victor Hugo has "relieved conceptions of merely moral or spiritual greatness" by "lovely accidents or accessories" (MIC §2; see Accident), and the qualities of great masters "moderate, support, relieve each other" (MIC §21). In the last two the sense is the painter's: one quality sets off and lightens another.

The verb can be read as the essay's quiet pun. Sculpture is heavy; relief, *rilievo*, raises a form; and to relieve is to lift a weight. The Tuscan sculptors, working "for the most part in low relief" (ROB §3; see Low relief), relieve by relief, and the word joins the technique to its effect.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "relieve" or its family occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §2** One almost wishes some document might relieve one of the thought of Botticelli's dejected old age.

**ROB §6** Only motion can relieve the solid frame of sculpture; each great system relieves its stiffness; pure form is unrelieved.

**ROB §9** That was the Greek way of relieving the hardness of pure form.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness is Michelangelo's way of relieving the stiff realism of pure form.

**ROB §11** The studied incompleteness the Tuscans share relieves an intensity that might have stiffened into caricature.

**MIC §2** Victor Hugo has relieved conceptions of moral greatness by lovely accidents.

**MIC §21** The qualities of the great masters moderate, support, relieve each other.

**BEL §22** Nothing less than the thought that the great whole too should perish can relieve Du Bellay's weariness.

## See also

Abstraction; Accident; Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity; Equivalent of colour; Etherealise; Hard realism; Low relief; Pure form; Spiritualise.

# Responsibilities to its material

*The duties each art owes to the material it works in, which criticism must define and estimate · The Renaissance*

*responsibilities to its material*; *responsibilities to its special material*; *responsibilities to its subject or material*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What an art is answerable for to its medium: the use of its own powers and the respect of its own limits.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Each art, therefore, having its own peculiar and untranslatable sensuous charm, has its own special mode of reaching the imagination, its own special responsibilities to its material" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The Glossary defines æsthetic criticism as "The study of how an object produces a distinctive effect in experience."

**A place to read.** GIO §§1, 9.

## Meaning

Responsibility, from the Latin *respondere*, to answer, is being answerable. The word belongs to morals and law, and Pater carries it into art, as he carries the casuist's word into "art-casuistries" (GIO §2; see Art-casuistry): an art is answerable to its material as a person is to his duties. The phrase gives each art a conscience. It owes its material the use of what the material can do and the refusal of what it cannot.

## Use in the book

The phrase states the conclusion of the first paragraph's argument. Because each art has "its own peculiar and untranslatable sensuous charm", it has "its own special mode of reaching the imagination, its own special responsibilities to its material" (GIO §1; see Untranslatable charm). The next sentence makes the responsibilities a measure: one of the functions of æsthetic criticism is "to define these limitations; to estimate the degree in which a given work of art fulfils its responsibilities to its special material" (GIO §1; see Pictorial charm). The critic judges a work as one judges a person, by how well it has met its obligations, and the obligations are set by the material, not by the subject.

The ninth paragraph seems to say the opposite. Art is "always striving to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception, to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject or material" (GIO §9; see Pure perception). The two sentences can be read as using "material" in two senses. In the first paragraph the material is the medium, colour, sound, words, the "sensuous material of each art" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material); in the ninth it is joined to "subject", and means the matter a work represents. Art must answer to its medium and strives to be free of its subject. The phrase thus divides the essay's doctrine in two: duty toward the means, freedom from the theme.

The doctrine runs back through the book. The della Robbia essay found that the "special limitation" of sculpture "results from the material, and other necessary conditions, of all sculptured work" (ROB §§5–6; see Special limitation), and that Luca's terra cotta transfers "to a different material the principles of his sculpture" (ROB §2). The Winckelmann essay holds that one art, "by the very limitations of its material", may express one phase of the mind better than another (WIN §32; see Development). In each case the limits of the material are what the art must meet, and meeting them gives an art its power.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "responsibilities" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Each art has its own special responsibilities to its material, and criticism estimates how far a work fulfils them.

**GIO §9** Art strives to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject or material.

## See also

Art-casuistry; Development; Pictorial charm; Pure perception; Sensuous material; Special limitation; Untranslatable charm.

# Rhetoric in architecture

*a kind of rhetoric in architecture*; *rhetoric*

Attested: *a kind of rhetoric in architecture* (BEL §17); *rhetoric* (FRE §32). Rhetoric is the art of persuasive speech, and by extension ornament of speech that is more display than substance. Pater uses the phrase at the end of his account of the Pleiad's jaded audience: "They love a constant change of rhyme in poetry, and in their houses that strange, fantastic interweaving of thin, reed-like lines, which are a kind of rhetoric in architecture" (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise). The sentence sets the poetry and the building side by side, as the essay's first paragraph had set "the poems of Ronsard" beside "the traceries of the house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges", the house of the merchant and treasurer of Charles VII of France, built between 1443 and the early 1450s (BEL §1; see Tracery). The "thin, reed-like lines" can be read as the late Gothic and early Renaissance tracery of French houses, its slender ribs and mouldings weaving across a surface; Pater's "rhetoric" can be read as ornament speaking for its own sake, as a change of rhyme is. The phrase is not wholly praise. The book's other "rhetoric" is the "world of flowery rhetoric" in which obscure prophetical writers like Joachim of Flora, the Calabrian abbot Joachim of Fiore (about 1135–1202), dreamed (FRE §32), and here too the word marks a delight in figures that has outrun the thing they serve.

## See also

Rhyme; Tracery; Une fadeur exquise.

# Rococo

*rococo*

Attested: *rococo* (BEL §13). Rococo is the light, florid style of ornament of eighteenth-century France, all shells, scrolls and asymmetry; the word was

coined in France in the early nineteenth century, half in mockery, from *rocaille*, rockwork and shellwork, and meant from the first anything old-fashioned and over-ornate. Pater uses it for the reader's first impression, shared with Malherbe: "At first, with Malherbe, you may think it, like the architecture, the whole mode of life, the very dresses of that time, fantastic, faded, rococo" (BEL §13; see À la mode). The word is an anachronism, a style of two centuries later applied to the sixteenth, and Pater's sentence uses it as a reader of his own day would, for whatever seems fussy and stale. The next sentence answers it: a longer look finds that "those wanton lines have a spirit guiding their caprices" (BEL §13; see Style; Wantonness). Rococo is the first impression; style is what the longer look finds. The word can be read as Pater's name for the judgement he sets out to correct.

## See also

À la mode; Pensive pleasure; Style; Wantonness.

## Romantic arts

*romantic arts*; *the special arts of the romantic and modern ages*

Attested: *romantic arts* (WIN §33, twice); *the special arts of the romantic and modern ages* (WIN §33). The phrase is Hegel's, whose lectures on aesthetics close with three "romantic arts", *die romantischen Künste*, painting, music and poetry, after the symbolic art of architecture and the classical art of sculpture (see Ultimate differences of the arts).[331] Pater keeps the scheme and the name. "Again, painting, music, and poetry, with their endless power of complexity, are the special arts of the romantic and modern ages" (WIN §33). Into them may be translated every delicacy of "a consciousness brooding with delight over itself" (WIN §33; see Brooding spirit of life). "Through their gradations of shade, their exquisite intervals, they project in an external form that which is most inward in passion or sentiment" (WIN §33). The romantic arts are thus defined by materials that can be divided without end and by a subject, the inward life, that needs such division to be shown. Sculpture comes between them and architecture, and differs from them "because it is not self-analytical" (WIN §33; see Self-analytical). The paragraph then turns the expected ranking round. Sculpture seems more real and full than "the faint, abstract world of poetry or painting", but "the fact is the reverse" (WIN §33): discourse and action show man as he is more directly than the moulding of the flesh, and painting and music can refine on "a single moment of passion, unravelling its subtlest threads" (WIN §33). Poetry and painting are the arts of the situation (WIN §37; see Situation), and the essay's last pages give painting to

[331] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), Part III, section 3, "Die romantischen Künste".

the middle age and music and poetry to the modern world (WIN §52; see Correspondence).

## See also

Brooding spirit of life; Correspondence; Romantic spirit; Self-analytical; Self-reflexion; Sensuous form; Situation; Ultimate differences of the arts.

## Rough-hewn

*rough-hewn*; *hewn*

Attested: *rough-hewn* (ROB §10; MIC §4; BEL §22); *hewn* (MIC §4). Cut roughly, shaped with the first strokes of the axe or chisel and left unfinished. Hamlet's "There's a divinity that shapes our ends, / Rough-hew them how we will" (*Hamlet* V.ii) gave the word its best-known figurative use, as an image of human intention against providence. In the della Robbia essay it describes Michelangelo's unfinished marbles, viewed by those who would lose something "if the half-realised form ever quite emerged from the stone, so rough-hewn here, so delicately finished there" (ROB §10; see Half-realised form). The contrast of rough and finished in one work is the incompleteness the essay calls "perfect finish" (see Perfect finish). The Michelangelo essay makes the rough stone the ground of life: the creation of life comes "always in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled" (MIC §4), and on the crown of the David's head "a morsel of uncut stone" remains, "as if by one touch to maintain its connexion with the place from which it was hewn" (MIC §4). The real France, which Du Bellay's homesick fancy passes over, has "its dark streets and roofs of rough-hewn slate" (BEL §22). Pater's "Style" (1888) places the first sight of a finished work in "the rough-hewn block of stone", according to "Michelangelo's fancy" (see Perfect finish).

## See also

Half-realised form; Incompleteness; Marble; Perfect finish.

## Rough-hewn mass

*The unworked stone from which life is kindled in Michelangelo's art, and which he loved for itself · The Renaissance*

*rough-hewn mass*; *uncut stone*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A mass of stone cut only roughly from the quarry, before the sculptor has shaped it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The creation of life comes "always in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled" (MIC §4).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §4 says that Michelangelo "left several sculptures at different stages of completion".

**A place to read.** MIC §4.

## Meaning

To hew is to cut with heavy blows, as with an axe; rough-hewn is cut in the first rough shaping (see Rough-hewn). A rough-hewn mass is the block as it comes from the quarry or from the first strokes of the chisel, the stone before it is form.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that opens the fourth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: life comes "always in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled" (MIC §4; see Creation of life; Relief or recovery). "Kindled" makes the life a fire struck in the stone, and "contrast" makes the stone essential to it: the life shows because the mass around it is rough.

The paragraph's last sentence turns from the mass in the work to the mass in the mountain: "He loved the very quarries of Carrara, those strange grey peaks which even at mid-day convey into any scene from which they are visible something of the solemnity and stillness of evening, sometimes wandering among them month after month, till at last their pale ashen colours seem to have passed into his painting; and on the crown of the head of the David there still remains a morsel of uncut stone, as if by one touch to maintain its connexion with the place from which it was hewn" (MIC §4; see Marble).

The sentence makes the rough mass an object of love. Michelangelo did not only work against the stone; he loved its source. In the quarries of the Apuan Alps he spent months choosing marble for the tomb of Julius II and for the façade of San Lorenzo, and there the blocks were roughed out before they travelled. Pater gives the peaks the solemnity and stillness of evening even at mid-day, and has their "pale ashen colours" pass into his painting. The David, a finished work, keeps a morsel of the rough mass on its head. "As if by one touch to maintain its connexion" makes the morsel seem a deliberate tie: the statue remembers the mountain.

The two uses can be read together. The rough-hewn mass is the ground from which life is kindled and the place to which the finished figure stays bound. Between them lie the unfinished works, "half-emergent" from their blocks (MIC §4; see Half-emergent form), and the very rocks, which "have but to cast away the dust and scurf that they may rise" (MIC §4; see Master of live stone). In every case the rough mass is not discarded but kept in sight.

The phrase can be read as the material side of the essay's argument about sweetness and strength. The rough mass is the strength, the life kindled in it the sweetness, and Michelangelo's art keeps both visible. The della Robbia essay had found in the same contrast, "so rough-hewn here, so delicately finished there" (ROB §10; see Half-realised form), the charm of his incompleteness.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the rough-hewn or uncut stone of Michelangelo's work occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §10** Michelangelo's marbles are so rough-hewn here, so delicately finished there.

**MIC §4** Life comes in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled; a morsel of uncut stone remains on the David's head.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §4 says that "Pater treats the appearance of emergence from stone as an aesthetic resource. Michelangelo left several sculptures at different stages of completion, so the effect on a viewer and the circumstances in which carving stopped are separate questions."

## See also

Creation of life; Half-emergent form; Half-realised form; Marble; Master of live stone; Relief or recovery; Rough-hewn.

# Satyr-like

*satyr-like*

Attested: *satyr-like* (MIC §3). Like a satyr, the half-wild companion of Dionysus in Greek myth, part man and part goat or horse, a figure of rude nature and appetite. Pater uses the word of the Adam of the Sistine ceiling, in whom there is "something rude and satyr-like" (MIC §3; see Expectancy and reception). The word sets the first man among the creatures of the earth. Michelangelo's Adam, "Fair as the young men of the Elgin marbles" (MIC §3), is unlike them in lacking their balance and completeness; he is "rude", unformed, of a piece with the rugged hillside on which he lies, as a satyr is of a piece with the woods. The satyr can be read as Pater's word for the earth in Adam, the matter not yet fully quickened by the touch that will give him life. The same essay notes, in Michelangelo's boyhood, the head of a faun to which he gave "the look of age" by chipping a tooth from its jaw (MIC §14; see Faun), and the edition's note at MIC §7 points to the small satyr stealing grapes behind the Bacchus.

## See also

Expectancy and reception; Faun.

## Scurf

*scurf*

Attested: *scurf* (MIC §4). A crust of flakes on a surface: in medicine, the scales shed by the skin; more generally, any thin rough coating. Pater uses the word once, of the rocks that with Michelangelo "seem to have life": they have but to cast away "the dust and scurf" to rise and stand on their feet (MIC §4; see Master of live stone). The word can be read as bodily. Scurf is what the skin sheds, and to give rocks scurf is to give them skin; the image makes the stone a sleeping body, crusted over, that needs only to shake itself to wake. The rising and standing on their feet may be taken, on this reading, as the language of resurrection, the dead getting up from the dust (see Resurrection). It is one of Pater's most physical words: in a paragraph about the life in stone, it makes the stone flesh.

## See also

Master of live stone; Resurrection.

## Sensible embodiment

*sensible embodiment*; *embodiment*

Attested: *sensible embodiment* (WIN §29); *embodiment* (LEO §31). "Sensible" here has the old sense, perceptible by the senses, as in *the sensible world*; an embodiment is an idea given a body. Pater uses the phrase in his definition of Greek art: Greek art is an ideal art "in which the thought does not outstrip or lie beyond the proper range of its sensible embodiment" (WIN §29; see Ideal art), and it could arise only from a comely and rich phase of life. The thought fits its body as the Greek mind, a paragraph before, kept within its stage of self-reflexion (see Self-reflexion). The book's only other embodiment is the opposite case. Leonardo's Lady Lisa might stand as "the embodiment of the old fancy" and the symbol of the modern idea (LEO §31; see Perpetual life): the old fancy is embodied in her, but the modern idea, of humanity summing up in itself all modes of thought and life, is only symbolised. The two sentences can be read as marking the two ends of the book's history of art: an embodiment that holds its thought, and a face that holds more thought than any body can, and so becomes a symbol (see Symbol).

## See also

Ideal art; Perpetual life; Self-reflexion; Sensible form; Sensuous form; Symbol; Symbolism.

### Sensible form

*sensible form*

Attested: *sensible form* (WIN §27). A sensible form is a form that can be seen or touched, as against the thought it carries. Pater uses the phrase of Fra Angelico's Coronation of the Virgin, in the twenty-seventh paragraph, which sets medieval against Greek art. Pater denies that the fresco throws "into a sensible form our highest thoughts about man", even for Angelico (WIN §27; see Sensible analogue). The sentence records a double failure. The fresco does not give our highest thoughts a sensible form, and it did not give Angelico's either, for whom all that is outward in it "is only the symbol or type of a really inexpressible world" (WIN §27; see Symbol). The verb is exact: to throw a thing into a form is to cast it, as metal is cast in a mould, and what the medieval painter wanted to cast would not go into the mould. The next paragraph gives the Greek success in another phrase, the motive that "saturates and is identical with" the sensuous form (WIN §28; see Sensuous form).

## See also

Finite image; Nimbus; Sensible analogue; Sensible embodiment; Sensuous form; Symbol; Symbolism.

### Sensuous form

*The form that the senses apprehend, in which the Greek artist sank his ideas until they were one with it · The Renaissance*

*sensuous form*; *sensuous expression*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Form as the senses meet it: shape, colour and sound, as against the idea they carry.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Greek sculpture the spiritual motive is not loosely attached to "the sensuous form" as its meaning to an allegory, but "saturates and is identical with it" (WIN §28).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§28, 32, 43, 46.

## Meaning

*Sensuous* means belonging to the senses, without the reproach of *sensual* (see Sensuousness). "Sensuous form" answers to the *sinnliche Gestalt* of German aesthetics, the shape in which an idea appears to sense, and in Hegel's lectures the measure of each art is how far its sensuous form is adequate to its content (see Sensible analogue; Ultimate differences of the arts).[332] Pater uses the phrase in that tradition, three times, and each time of an idea so held in its form that the form is not its dress but its body.

## Use in the book

The phrase first comes in the account of the Venus of Melos. The mind "begins and ends with the finite image" (WIN §28; see Finite image), and the spiritual motive "is not lightly and loosely attached to the sensuous form, as its meaning to an allegory, but saturates and is identical with it" (WIN §28). An allegory has a meaning and a form that can be told apart; the statue has a form that is its meaning, as water is saturated with a salt.

The second use makes the relation a law of the arts. Different attitudes of the imagination, Pater says, have "a native affinity with different types of sensuous form", and combine with them "with completeness and ease" (WIN §32; see Ultimate differences of the arts). Each phase of the mind finds the form fitted to it, as an element finds its compound, and the arts can be ranged in a series answering to the series of the mind's developments (see Development). Sculpture is the form of the Greek moment, as painting, music and poetry are the forms of the modern (see Romantic arts).

The third use says how the identity is made. Art may be an escape from the tyranny of the senses for the spectator (WIN §43; see Tyranny of the senses). "But this is possible for the spectator only because the artist, in producing those works, has gradually sunk his intellectual and spiritual ideas in sensuous form" (WIN §43). "Gradually" and "sunk" make the making a slow descent, and the paragraph's own figure for it, a few sentences on, is the dyer's. The spiritualist watches the sensuous elements escape from his conceptions, "as the dyed garment bleaches in the keener air", but the artist steeps his thought again and again "into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). The artist may live, as Keats lived, a pure life, but his soul, like that of Plato's false astronomer, becomes "more and more immersed in sense" (WIN §43; see Sensuous element).

The last use is in the history of Christian art, which had to find a "sensuous expression of ideas which unreservedly discredit the world of sense" (WIN §46; see Christian art). The problem can be read as the exact reverse of the Greek success. The Greek artist sank his ideas in the senses and they became one; the Christian had to sink in the senses ideas that refused them, and medieval painting, as it ranges "from the early German schools,

[332] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), Introduction, the division of the subject.

still with something of the air of the charnel-house about them, to the clear loveliness of Perugino", shows, Pater says, how that problem was solved (WIN §46).

The phrase gathers the book's doctrine of art into two words. Pater's critic asks what the sensuous form gives him, not what idea it illustrates, and the Giorgione essay's claim that all art aspires to the condition of music, where the matter cannot be told from the form (see Condition of music; Matter and form), is the same principle stated for the modern arts. The Winckelmann essay finds it first in the Greeks, and finds it at a price: Pater asks whether an artist immersed in sense could ever again endure the "greyness" of the spiritual world (WIN §43; see Spiritual). Pater does not quote it, but Keats, whom the paragraph names, had written to a friend in 1817, "O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts!"[333]

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sensuous form" occurs, with the paragraph on the sensuous expression of Christian ideas, in the order of the book.

**WIN §28** The spiritual motive of the Venus of Melos is not loosely attached to the sensuous form but saturates it.

**WIN §32** Different attitudes of the imagination have a native affinity with different types of sensuous form.

**WIN §43** The artist has gradually sunk his intellectual and spiritual ideas in sensuous form.

**WIN §46** The sensuous expression of ideas which discredit the world of sense was the delicate problem of Christian art.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Christian art; Condition of music; Development; Finite image; Matter and form; Romantic arts; Sensible analogue; Sensible embodiment; Sensible form; Sensuous element; Sensuousness; Spiritual; Spiritualise; Tyranny of the senses; Ultimate differences of the arts.

# Sensuous material

*The medium of each art as it reaches the senses, which brings with it a beauty untranslatable into any other · The Renaissance*

*sensuous material*; *material*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The stuff of an art as the senses meet it: colour seen, sound heard, words spoken.

[333] John Keats, letter to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that a paraphrase of a subject "leaves something specific to its medium behind".

**A place to read.** GIO §1.

## Meaning

Material, from the Latin *materia*, timber or stuff, is what a thing is made of. The material of an art is its medium: pigment and canvas, marble, sound, words. "Sensuous" turns the medium toward the one who receives it. The sensuous material of painting is not paint as a chemist knows it but colour as the eye knows it, and of poetry not words in a dictionary but words heard in their rhythm.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that states the essay's first principle, against the popular error of translation. "In this way, the sensuous element in art, and with it almost everything in art that is essentially artistic, is made a matter of indifference; and a clear apprehension of the opposite principle —that the sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind—is the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism" (GIO §1; see Sensuous element; Order of impressions). The material "brings" the beauty with it: the beauty is not imposed on the material by a thought but arrives with it, as a property of the medium. Each phrase that follows says the same from another side. The beauty is "a special phase or quality", "untranslatable", "an order of impressions distinct in kind".

"The beginning of all true æsthetic criticism" gives the principle its rank. The Preface had made the critic's first step the knowing of one's own impression (PRE §2; see Æsthetic criticism); the Giorgione essay adds the knowing of the material that produces it, since what a work does to the critic depends, it can be read, on what it is made of.

The rest of the essay keeps the material in view even when it argues for the arts' borrowings. It is "in its special mode of handling its given material" that each art "may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art" (GIO §3; see Mode of handling); the critic estimates how a work "fulfils its responsibilities to its special material" (GIO §1; see Responsibilities to its material). The *Anders-streben* never leaves the material; it finds in it powers that seemed to belong elsewhere. The glass-painters of the Du Bellay essay, workmen come from Italy like Maître Roux and the masters of the school of Fontainebleau, show the result in another art: "keeping within the true limits of their material, they got quite a new order of effects from it" (BEL §1; see Limits of material). The order of effects is new because the material is

respected, and the sentence can be read as the Giorgione essay's principle stated as history.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "material" names the medium of an art, in the order of the book.

**ROB §2** Luca's terra cotta only transfers to a different material the principles of his sculpture.

**ROB §6** The special limitation of sculpture results from the material.

**ROB §12** Luca wished to realise the spirit of sculpture in a humbler material.

**GIO §1** The sensuous material of each art brings a special phase of beauty; each art has its responsibilities to its material.

**GIO §3** In its special mode of handling its given material each art may pass into the condition of another.

**BEL §1** Keeping within the true limits of their material, the glass-painters from Italy got a new order of effects from it.

**WIN §32** One art, by the very limitations of its material, may be more adequate than another for one phase of the mind.

**WIN §33** In sculpture spirituality takes up the whole given material and penetrates it with an imaginative motive.

**WIN §34** Sculpture renounces all those attributes of its material which do not forward its motive.

**WIN §37** Sculpture is excluded by the proper limitation of its material from the development of exquisite situations.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Limits of material; Mode of handling; Order of impressions; Phase of subject; Responsibilities to its material; Saint Martin's summer; Sensuous element; Special limitation; Untranslatable charm.

# Sepulchral portrait

*The tomb likeness of a particular person, where individual expression and the repose of death meet · The Renaissance*

*sepulchral portrait*; *sepulchral*, *sepulchres*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A portrait made for a tomb: the carved likeness of the dead person on his monument.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Their noblest works are the careful sepulchral portraits of particular persons" (ROB §11).

**In this edition.** The notes at ROB §11 identify the tomb of Count Ugo as Mino da Fiesole's in the Badia Fiorentina, and the tomb of Medea Colleoni as in the Colleoni Chapel at Bergamo.

**A place to read.** ROB §11.

## Meaning

"Sepulchral" is the Latin *sepulcralis*, belonging to a grave, from *sepelire*, to bury. A sepulchral portrait is the likeness on a tomb, which in fifteenth-century Italy was usually an effigy of the dead lying on the sarcophagus. It is both a portrait, true to one person, and a monument, set apart for remembrance and rest.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the third sentence of the eleventh paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "Their noblest works are the careful sepulchral portraits of particular persons—the monument of Conte Ugo in the Badía of Florence, of the youthful Medea Colleoni, with the wonderful, long throat, in the chapel on the cool north side of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore at Bergamo—monuments such as abound in the churches of Rome, inexhaustible in suggestions of repose, of a subdued sabbatic joy, a kind of sacred grace and refinement" (ROB §11; see Repose; Sabbatic joy; Refinements of shadow).

The tomb of Ugo, margrave of Tuscany, who died in 1001 and was a benefactor of the Badia, was carved by Mino da Fiesole between 1469 and 1481. The tomb of Medea Colleoni, daughter of the condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni, who died young in 1470, was made by the Lombard sculptor Giovanni Antonio Amadeo of Pavia for the church of the Basella near Urgnano, and moved into her father's chapel at Bergamo only in 1842.[334] Pater's second example is thus not Tuscan; it stands, with the monuments "such as abound in the churches of Rome", for a kind rather than a school.

The sentence places the Tuscan system at its height in the tomb, and the reason is in its words. "Careful" and "particular persons" are the language of portraiture, of individual expression (see Individual expression); "repose", "sabbatic joy" and "sacred grace" are the language of death and rest. The sepulchral portrait is where the two demands of the essay meet: it must be true to one face, and it must be at peace. The next sentence says how the Tuscans managed both: they "unite" repose "to an intense and individual expression by a system of conventionalism" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism). The detail Pater chooses, Medea's "wonderful, long

[334] Lombardia Beni Culturali, "Monumento funebre a Medea Colleoni", catalogue record BG150-00009; JoAnne G. Bernstein, "Medea Colleoni: A Renaissance Tomb of Her Own by G. A. Amadeo", *Artibus et Historiae* 76 (2017), 113–128.

throat", is the proof: in a monument of repose, a single individual feature is kept.

The tombs return in the Michelangelo essay as the source of his art. To distinguish "the peculiar savour of his work", one must approach him "through the work of the sculptors of the fifteenth century over the tombs and altars of Tuscany" (MIC §17; see Savour), and "at least one-half of his work was designed for the adornment of tombs—the tomb of Julius, the tombs of the Medici" (MIC §4). In the Leonardo essay a head of Christ "reminds one of the monumental work of Mino da Fiesole" (LEO §26). The noun's one use is figurative: to read one of Pico's forgotten books "is like a glance into one of those ancient sepulchres", with the ornaments of an unlike world "still fresh in them" (PIC §10).

Read as an emblem, the Tuscan tomb shows what art can do with death. The Tuscan tomb neither denies death, like the Greek ideal of youth, nor dwells on its horror, like the Michelangelo of the Pietàs; it shows a particular person at rest, with a joy that is "subdued" and a grace that is "sacred". The effigy's low relief gives it "a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3; see Depression of surface), and its portrait keeps the person.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "sepulchral" or "sepulchres" occurs, with the paragraphs on the tombs of Tuscany and of Michelangelo and on Mino's monumental work, in the order of the book.

**PIC §10** To read one of Pico's books is like a glance into an ancient sepulchre.

**ROB §3** Low relief gives the Tuscan effigies a pathetic suggestion of the wasting of death.

**ROB §11** The noblest Tuscan works are the careful sepulchral portraits of particular persons.

**MIC §4** Half of Michelangelo's work was designed for tombs, the tomb of Julius and the tombs of the Medici.

**MIC §17** Michelangelo must be approached through the work of the sculptors over the tombs and altars of Tuscany.

**MIC §19** Antonio Rossellino carves the young cardinal's tomb at San Miniato, and Luca della Robbia puts his skyiest works there.

**MIC §20** The tombs in the sacristy of San Lorenzo are memorials of the dead in general, not of the Medici as men.

**LEO §26** A head of Christ reminds one of the monumental work of Mino da Fiesole.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §11 says that "The monument in the Badia Fiorentina is Mino da Fiesole's tomb of Ugo, Margrave of Tuscany. Its inclusion makes clear that Pater's category of Florentine relief includes individual portraits and tombs as well as devotional works." Another note says that "The marble tomb of Bartolomeo Colleoni's daughter is in the Colleoni Chapel beside Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo".

## See also

Conventionalism; Depression of surface; Individual expression; Monumental effigy; Refinements of shadow; Repose; Sabbatic joy; Savour.

### Silveriness

*silveriness*; *silvery*

Attested: *silveriness* (BEL §2); *silvery* (BEL §§1, 28); *silver*, of the metal, in five further paragraphs (FRE §32; PIC §12; LEO §§5, 14; GIO §17); *quicksilver* (LEO §34). Silveriness is the quality of silver, its pale, cool brightness. Pater uses the word three times in the Du Bellay essay, always of a French quality. The Italian painters at Fontainebleau had their voluptuousness attempered "by the naïve and silvery qualities of the native style" (BEL §1; see Attemper); the Clouets have "a silveriness of colour and a clearness of expression" (BEL §2; see Netteté d'exécution); and the winnower's song has "a certain silvery grace of fancy" (BEL §28; see Pure effect). Silver can be read as set against gold, coolness against heat: the French quality tempers the Italian richness, and the essay's palette for France is pale. The word is used of painting, of a style and of a poem's fancy, and it can be read as Pater's single colour for the French Renaissance, a light that is clear but not warm. Elsewhere silver is plainly the metal, Pico's "silver vessel" (PIC §12), Leonardo's "strange harp of silver" (LEO §14), the "silver-grey armour" of Giorgione's warrior-saint (GIO §17).

## See also

Attemper; Netteté d'exécution; Pure effect.

### Snow-image

*snow-image*; *snow*

Attested: *snow-image*, *snow* (ROB §10); *snow* elsewhere (BOT §7; WIN §27). A statue of snow. Pater's sentence: "Something of the wasting of that snow-image which he moulded at the command of Piero de' Medici, when the snow lay one night in the court of the Pitti palace, almost always lurks about it, as if he had determined to make the quality of a task, exacted from

him half in derision, the pride of all his work" (ROB §10). Piero de' Medici (1472–1503), son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, ruled Florence from 1492 until his expulsion in 1494. Michelangelo's biographers Vasari and Ascanio Condivi tell that Piero had the young Michelangelo make a statue of snow in his courtyard; the courtyard was that of the Medici palace, for the Pitti became a Medici residence only in the middle of the sixteenth century.[335] "Half in derision" is Pater's addition. The image joins two of the essay's themes: the "wasting" recalls the "wasting and etherealisation of death" of the Tuscan effigies (ROB §3; see Depression of surface), and the melting form is the extreme of incompleteness, a statue that is always on its way to losing its shape (see Incompleteness). Michelangelo, on this reading, made a humiliation into a method. The note at ROB §10 says that "Pater makes the ephemeral material into an image for the quality he sees in sculpture that seems on the point of losing its form again".

## See also

Depression of surface; Etherealise; Half-realised form; Incompleteness.

## Sound its stops

*sound its stops*

Attested: *sound its stops* (LEO §19). The stops of a wind instrument are the holes or keys that the player covers to change the note, and "to sound" is both to make a note and, in the sailor's sense, to measure a depth with a line. Pater's phrase can be read in both senses at once. Leonardo, having "plunged also into human personality" (LEO §19; see Human personality), became above all a painter of portraits, and "To take a character as it was, and delicately sound its stops, suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention" (LEO §19). The character is an instrument to be played, and a depth to be measured. The figure can be read as an echo of *Hamlet*, where the prince, handed a recorder, accuses Guildenstern of trying to play on him: "you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass".[336] Hamlet resents what Pater admires. The portraits that follow in the paragraph are sounded so: Ludovico's "pale, anxious face", and Beatrice d'Este, "precise and grave, full of the refinement of the dead" (LEO §19).

## See also

Human personality; Modelling; Portraiture.

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[335] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (1568), "Life of Michelangelo"; Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* (Rome, 1553).

[336] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III.ii.

*The limit proper to each art, which the greatest artists choose and turn to strength · The Renaissance*

*special limitation*; *limitation*, *limitations*, *limits*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A limitation is a restriction, a boundary; a special limitation is the one belonging to a particular art or material.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Low relief "is the means by which they meet and overcome the special limitation of sculpture" (ROB §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** ROB §§1, 5, with WIN §34 and GIO §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *limes* is a boundary, a path between fields, and to limit is to set bounds. "Special" here has its old sense of particular, belonging to one kind (see Special manifestation). A special limitation is the bound that belongs to an art because of its material: sculpture cannot move, painting cannot be walked round, poetry cannot be seen.

## Use in the book

The della Robbia essay begins with the idea before it names it. Its first sentence states it: "The Italian sculptors of the earlier half of the fifteenth century are more than mere forerunners of the great masters of its close, and often reach perfection, within the narrow limits which they chose to impose on their work" (ROB §1). The limits are chosen. The Tuscan sculptors are not lesser Michelangelos who could not do more; they set themselves bounds and reached perfection inside them. The fifth paragraph, where the phrase stands, names the limitation of the art itself, "the special limitation of sculpture", which low relief meets and overcomes (ROB §5; see Low relief), and the sixth describes it: "That limitation results from the material, and other necessary conditions, of all sculptured work" (ROB §6; see Hard realism). The essay thus distinguishes two limits, the art's, which is imposed, and the school's, which is chosen to answer it.

The Giorgione essay makes limitation the business of criticism. "One of the functions of æsthetic criticism is to define these limitations" (GIO §1), the sensuous conditions of each art; yet each art passes at times into the condition of another, by "a partial alienation from its own limitations" (GIO §3; see Anders-streben), and "sculpture aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form towards colour, or its equivalent" (GIO §4; see Pure form). The Venetians apprehended the necessary limitations of painting "unerringly though instinctively" (GIO §11; see Venetian school), and

Giorgione kept the old Venetian clearness in apprehending them (GIO §12; see Pictorial design).

The Winckelmann essay turns limitation into pride. Sculpture limits itself to pure form, "Because, by this limitation, it becomes a perfect medium of expression"; "the limitation of its resources is part of its pride"; it "gains more than it loses by this limitation"; and the Greeks "apprehended and remained true to these exquisite limitations" (WIN §34). Sculpture is "excluded by the proper limitation of its material from the development of exquisite situations" (WIN §37; see Situation). The same essay knows the cost: Winckelmann's insight into Greek repose "seems to have involved limitation in another direction" (WIN §45), and Goethe found in Kant "a severe limitation to the concrete" (WIN §7; see Limitation to the concrete).

The phrase can be read as the book's account of how art becomes excellent. The Preface asks for beauty in its "special manifestation" (PRE §1); the della Robbia essay finds excellence in the "special limitation" accepted and used. The two "specials" belong together: each beauty is particular because each art is bounded, and the critic's task, in the Giorgione essay's words, is "to define these limitations" and to see what each art makes of its own.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "limitation" or "limitations" occurs, with the "narrow limits" of ROB §1, in the order of the book.

**ROB §1** The Tuscan sculptors often reach perfection within the narrow limits which they chose to impose.

**ROB §5** Low relief is the means by which they overcome the special limitation of sculpture.

**ROB §6** That limitation results from the material and other necessary conditions of sculptured work.

**GIO §1** One function of æsthetic criticism is to define the limitations of each art.

**GIO §3** Each art passes into another by a partial alienation from its own limitations.

**GIO §4** Sculpture aspires out of the hard limitation of pure form.

**GIO §11** The Venetians apprehended the necessary limitations of painting.

**GIO §12** Giorgione keeps the Venetian justice in the apprehension of the essential limitations of the pictorial art.

**WIN §7** Goethe found in Kant a severe limitation to the concrete.

**WIN §32** One form of art, by the very limitations of its material, may be more adequate than another.

**WIN §34** The limitation of sculpture's resources is part of its pride.

**WIN §37** Sculpture is excluded by the proper limitation of its material from exquisite situations.

**WIN §45** Winckelmann's insight into Greek repose involved limitation in another direction.

## See also

Anders-streben; Ascêsis; Hard realism; Limitation to the concrete; Low relief; Pictorial design; Pure form; Situation; Special manifestation; Venetian school.

## Spectral

*spectral*; *spectres*

Attested: *spectral* (LEO §27); *spectres* (WIN §45). The Latin *spectrum*, an appearance or image, from *specere*, to look, gave English "spectre", a ghost, and "spectral", ghostly, faint and seen through. Pater uses the adjective once, at the end of his paragraph on the Last Supper. The whole company of the apostles is a gathering of "ghosts through which you see the wall" (LEO §27; see Mellowing decay), and the head of Jesus sums up their sentiment. "This figure is but the faintest, the most spectral of them all" (LEO §27). The decay of the picture can be read as becoming its meaning: the central figure is most a ghost because the sentiment of farewell is most concentrated in him. The plural noun returns in the Winckelmann essay, of the Greek gods of the sculptors, whose abstraction already forecasts their exile: they "seem already to feel that bleak air, in which, like Helen of Troy, they wander as the spectres of the middle age" (WIN §45; see Decayed gods). In both passages a figure of perfect form thins toward a ghost.

## See also

Decayed gods; Mellowing decay; Outward type.

## Stringless instrument

*stringless instrument*

Attested: *stringless instrument* (GIO §21). Pater uses the phrase in his list of the musical subjects of Giorgione's school, among people with intent faces, as if listening, or "feeling for music in thought on a stringless instrument, ear and finger refining themselves infinitely" (GIO §21; see Listening). A stringless instrument gives no sound: the music is "in thought", fingered by a player who hears it inwardly. The image can be read as the essay's limit case, music with no sensuous element at all except the finger's touch and the ear's attention. It can be read as a figure for the

painted music of Giorgione's school, which also makes no sound and is heard only by the spectator who supplies it, as in the Concert the master's skill "has caught the waves of wandering sound, and fixed them for ever on the lips and hands" (GIO §15; see Wandering sound). Pater does not cite it, but Keats had praised the unheard music of the pipes carved on a marble urn: "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard / Are sweeter".[337]

## See also

Listening; Musical interval; Wandering sound.

## Subordinate but significant detail

*subordinate but significant detail*; *subordinate*

Attested: *subordinate but significant detail* (WIN §37); *subordinate* (GIO §12; WIN §34); *subordination* (GIO §12). Pater lists the means by which painting produces the effects of the situation, the moment of passion thrown into relief. "To produce such effects at all requires all the resources of painting, with its power of indirect expression, of subordinate but significant detail, its atmosphere, its foregrounds and backgrounds" (WIN §37). The phrase is a paradox in three words: the detail is lower in rank than the subject and yet carries its meaning. Painting can say by a curtain, a window, a flower in the background what the face in the foreground does not say, and this is its "power of indirect expression". Sculpture cannot command these appliances (WIN §37; see Situation), and works by abstracting from detail rather than accumulating it. The word "subordinate" has two other uses in the book, both of art beneath architecture. Sculpture threw itself upon pure form in proportion as it "ceased to be merely decorative, and subordinate to architecture" (WIN §34; see Plastic art), and Venetian painting, "always subordinate to architectural effect", never escaped the influence of its decorative beginnings (GIO §12). The significant detail is the other kind of subordination: the part that serves the whole by meaning more than its place.

## See also

Delineation; Indirect influence; Plastic art; Situation.

## Suggestion of life

*The secret of Michelangelo's sweetness: a power felt in his figures, not shown in their accessories · The Renaissance*

*suggestion of life*; *suggestion*, *suggestions*

[337] John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1819), lines 11–12.

## At a Glance

**The word.** A suggestion is a hint, something brought to mind without being stated; a suggestion of life is the sense of life conveyed without being shown.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "And it is in this penetrative suggestion of life that the secret of that sweetness of his is to be found" (MIC §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §5.

## Meaning

The Latin *suggerere* is to carry up from below, to supply; "suggestion" came to mean the bringing of an idea into the mind by indirect means. In criticism a suggestive work is one that makes the viewer think or feel more than it shows. Pater's phrase adds an adjective: the suggestion is "penetrative", it goes into the viewer.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the first sentence of the fifth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, the answer to the question the second paragraph had asked, wherein precisely Michelangelo's sweetness resided (MIC §2; see Convulsive energy): "And it is in this penetrative suggestion of life that the secret of that sweetness of his is to be found" (MIC §5). The next sentences set out what the sweetness is not: "He gives us indeed no lovely natural objects like Leonardo or Titian, but only the coldest, most elementary shadowing of rock or tree; no lovely draperies and comely gestures of life, but only the austere truths of human nature; 'simple persons'—as he replied in his rough way to the querulous criticism of Julius the Second, that there was no gold on the figures of the Sistine Chapel—'simple persons, who wore no gold on their garments'" (MIC §5; see Austere dignity; Comely form).

The anecdote is Condivi's: when Julius II complained that the ceiling looked poor without gold, Michelangelo answered that the people painted there had been poor themselves.[338] Pater uses it to show what the sweetness is not. It is not ornament, not gold, not the lovely objects of Leonardo and Titian; the second paragraph had set it against Hugo's "lovely accidents or accessories" (MIC §2) and against the remark of the German biographer Herman Grimm that when one speaks of Michelangelo "woods, clouds, seas, and mountains disappear" (MIC §2). The sweetness is in the figures themselves, in "the austere truths of human nature".

The rest of the sentence gives the suggestion its force: "but he penetrates us with a feeling of that power which we associate with all the warmth and fulness of the world" (MIC §5; see Brooding spirit of life). The life is

[338] Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* (1553), section XXXVIII in Charles Holroyd's translation (1903); the story is retold by Vasari.

suggested, not shown. The suggestion is "penetrative" because it works inward, from the figure into the viewer's own memory of the world's warmth.

"Suggestion" elsewhere in the book names this power of the indirect. the low relief of the Tuscan sculptors gives even their monumental effigies "a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3; see Depression of surface), and their tombs are "inexhaustible in suggestions of repose" (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait); Leonardo's two drawings offer a "thread of suggestion" (LEO §23); Winckelmann is classed with works "possessing an inexhaustible gift of suggestion" (WIN §2), and poetry needs language with "its remote associations and suggestions" (WIN §37). Against these, Greek sculpture "is in no sense a symbol, a suggestion, of anything beyond its own victorious fairness" (WIN §28).

The phrase can be read as joining Michelangelo's strength to his sweetness without addition. His figures are austere, and the austerity is their strength; but they suggest life, and the suggestion is their sweetness. This is the "interfusion" the essay ends on (MIC §21; see Sweetness and strength): not sweetness added from outside, but a quality the strong figure carries.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "suggestion" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §3** The low relief of the Tuscan sculptors gives their monumental effigies a pathetic suggestion of the wasting of death.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors' monuments are inexhaustible in suggestions of repose.

**MIC §5** The secret of Michelangelo's sweetness is in his penetrative suggestion of life.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's two drawings offer a thread of suggestion through a series.

**WIN §2** Winckelmann is classed with works possessing an inexhaustible gift of suggestion.

**WIN §28** Greek sculpture is in no sense a symbol, a suggestion, of anything beyond its own fairness.

**WIN §37** Poetry needs language with its remote associations and suggestions.

## See also

Austere dignity; Brooding spirit of life; Comely form; Convulsive energy; Depression of surface; Sepulchral portrait; Sweetness and strength.

*The power of a work to call up more than it states, in which only Dürer's Melancholia rivals La Gioconda · The Renaissance*

*suggestiveness*; *suggestive*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The power of calling up ideas and feelings beyond what is shown or said.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In suggestiveness, only the Melancholia of Dürer is comparable to it; and no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery" (LEO §30).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §1 says that Leonardo's mention of Botticelli belongs to "a discussion of landscape and the suggestive images one might discern in a stained wall or other marked surface".

**A place to read.** LEO §30, with WIN §§28, 34.

## Meaning

"Suggest" is the Latin *suggerere*, to bring up from below, to supply, and in later Latin to prompt. What is suggested is put into the mind from beneath, without being stated. Suggestiveness is the power to do this, and in the criticism of Pater's century it became a term of praise for art that leaves the beholder something to supply. Its opposite is statement: the emblem that names its meaning, the allegory that can be read off.

## Use in the book

The word's chief place is the opening of Pater's paragraph on La Gioconda. The picture is "the revealing instance of his mode of thought and work. In suggestiveness, only the Melancholia of Dürer is comparable to it" (LEO §30), and the sentence goes on to the crude symbolism that does not disturb it (see Crude symbolism; Refined and graceful mystery). The comparison can be read as double-edged. Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Melencolia I* (1514) is crowded with emblems that ask to be decoded, and it rivals La Gioconda in what it calls up; but the clause that follows separates them, for the portrait suggests as much without any sign at all. On this reading suggestiveness is independent of symbols and better without them.

The Winckelmann essay explains why the quality belongs to some arts more than others. The Venus of Melos "is in no sense a symbol, a suggestion, of anything beyond its own victorious fairness" (WIN §28; see Symbol): Greek sculpture means what it shows, and its meaning is used up in its form. Sculpture "has no backgrounds, no sky or atmosphere, to suggest and interpret a train of feeling" (WIN §34; see Pure form). Painting has them, and Leonardo's backgrounds of rock and water can be read as the means of his suggestion (see Veil of sight). On this account suggestiveness is

a modern and a painterly quality, the gift of a "train of sentiment", as Pater calls what the Saint John of the Louvre sets going, "subtle and vague as a piece of music" (LEO §25; see Ostensible subject). The Giorgione essay draws the line to music: in that school "the presence of water" is "as characteristic, and almost as suggestive, as that of music itself" (GIO §23).

The quality is also the critic's opportunity. The Preface finds the value of earlier attempts to define beauty "in the suggestive and penetrating things said by the way" (PRE §1; see Universal formula), and the Winckelmann essay opens with Goethe classing Winckelmann himself "with certain works of art, possessing an inexhaustible gift of suggestion, to which criticism may return again and again with renewed freshness" (WIN §2; see Suggestion of life). What is suggestive cannot be exhausted, and so criticism of it never ends. The other uses keep the word near feeling and the romantic: Victor Hugo's medieval Paris is "so suggestive and exciting" (FRE §32), Botticelli's Calumnia has "the suggestiveness of an accident which identifies the image of Truth with the person of Venus" (BOT §9; see Veritas), and home-sickness is "that pre-eminently childish, but so suggestive sorrow" (BEL §21; see Home-sickness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "suggestiveness" or "suggestive" occurs, with WIN §§2, 28 and 34, in the order of the book.

**PRE §1** Earlier attempts to define beauty are valued for the suggestive and penetrating things said by the way.

**FRE §32** The Romantic school's medieval world, in Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*, is so suggestive and exciting.

**BOT §9** The suggestiveness of an accident identifies Truth with Venus.

**LEO §30** In suggestiveness only the Melancholia of Dürer is comparable to La Gioconda.

**GIO §23** In Giorgione's school the presence of water is almost as suggestive as music.

**BEL §21** Home-sickness is a childish but so suggestive sorrow.

**WIN §2** Goethe classes Winckelmann with works of art possessing an inexhaustible gift of suggestion.

**WIN §28** The Venus of Melos is in no sense a symbol, a suggestion, of anything beyond its own fairness.

**WIN §34** Sculpture has no backgrounds to suggest and interpret a train of feeling.

## Later readings

Independently of Pater, the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé gave the doctrine its most famous form in 1891: to name an object, he told the

journalist Jules Huret, is to suppress three quarters of the pleasure of a poem, which is made of guessing little by little; to suggest it, that is the dream.[339]

## See also

Crude symbolism; Home-sickness; Intimité; Ostensible subject; Pure form; Refined and graceful mystery; Suggestion of life; Symbol; Symbolism; Universal formula; Veil of sight; Veritas.

# Symbol

*The sign that points beyond itself, and the image that holds its meaning: Pico's token of a higher world, the East's overcharged figures, and the Greek statue that needs none · The Renaissance*

*symbol*, *symbols*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A thing that stands for another, especially a visible thing that stands for an idea.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Venus of Melos "is in no sense a symbol, a suggestion, of anything beyond its own victorious fairness" (WIN §28).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §28 says that the Venus of Melos "is a Hellenistic marble found on Melos in 1820, after Winckelmann's death", and that "Pater supplies his own example of an ideal in which meaning seems to reside entirely in the visible figure".

**A place to read.** WIN §§27–28.

## Meaning

The Greek *symbolon* was a tally: a knucklebone, coin or other small object broken in two, whose halves, matched, proved who held them. A symbol is half of a pair, and points to the other half. Pater's century made the word the centre of a quarrel about art. Goethe set the symbol above the allegory: allegory turns what appears into a concept that the image can hold and state, while the symbol turns it into an idea that remains endlessly active in the image and cannot be reached or said.[340] Coleridge wrote that a symbol "always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible".[341] Hegel, whose philosophy of art Pater read, used the word the other way: "symbolic" is the first stage of art, in which meaning and form do not yet fit,

[339] Stéphane Mallarmé, reply to Jules Huret, in Huret, *Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire* (Paris, 1891).

[340] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*, ed. Max Hecker (Weimar, 1907), nos. 1112–1113.

[341] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual* (London: Gale and Fenner, 1816), p. 37.

as in the colossal and enigmatic works of the ancient East; the classical stage, Greek sculpture, joins them perfectly; the romantic stage, Christian art, has more meaning than any form can hold.[342] For Goethe and Coleridge the symbol is the image that holds its idea; for Hegel it is the image that fails to.

## Use in the book

Pater uses the word in both ways, and the book can be read as moving between them. In the Pico essay the symbol is a sign of a higher world. In the *Heptaplus* Pico lays hold on "the symbols of the Jewish ritual", and every object of the terrestrial world becomes "an analogue, a symbol or counterpart" of a higher reality (PIC §13; see Analogue; Correspondence). The thing matters only as a sign, and its meaning is elsewhere. The Leonardo essay has the courtly version, Ludovico Sforza's device of the mulberry-tree, the "symbol" of a wisdom that waits for its moment (LEO §14; see Device).

The Winckelmann essay follows Hegel's scheme (see Finite image). For Angelico, all that is outward in his fresco, "the hair like wool, the rosy nimbus, the crown of pearl", is "only the symbol or type of a really inexpressible world" (WIN §27), and the many-headed gods of the East, like Angelico's fresco, "are at best overcharged symbols, a means of hinting at an idea which art cannot fitly or completely express" (WIN §27). Architecture "can only express by vague hint or symbol, the spirit or mind of the artist" (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit). Against these stands the Venus of Melos, "in no sense a symbol", before which the mind "begins and ends with the finite image" (WIN §28; see Finite image). The Greek ideal is art without symbol, where the form is the meaning.

The Leonardo and Giorgione essays can be read as giving the word Goethe's sense. The "imaginative reason" is "that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol" (GIO §9; see Imaginative reason): the symbol is born with the thought, not attached to it afterwards. At the end of the passage on La Gioconda, Lady Lisa "might stand as" the embodiment of the old fancy of a perpetual life and "the symbol of the modern idea" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life); the idea she stands for, humanity summing up all modes of thought and life, has been written into her face, and the symbol can be read as no longer pointing away from the image. The book can be read as holding the two senses apart: the symbol as sign, Pico's and Angelico's, and the symbol born with its thought, Giorgione's and Lady Lisa's, which comes as near as modern art can to the Greek statue that needed none.

[342] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), part II, on the symbolic, classical and romantic forms of art.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "symbol" or "symbols" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Pico uses the symbols of the Jewish ritual; every earthly object is a symbol or counterpart of a higher reality.

**LEO §14** Ludovico Sforza took the mulberry-tree as his device, symbol of a wisdom that waits for its opportunity.

**LEO §31** Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

**GIO §9** The imaginative reason is the faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol.

**WIN §27** In Angelico all that is outward is only the symbol of an inexpressible world; the gods of the East are overcharged symbols.

**WIN §28** The Venus of Melos is in no sense a symbol of anything beyond its own victorious fairness.

**WIN §32** Architecture can only express by vague hint or symbol the spirit of the artist.

## See also

Analogue; Correspondence; Device; Finite image; Humanistic spirit; Imaginative reason; Perpetual life; Sensible analogue; Sublime; Symbolical; Symbolism.

# Symbolical

*The fixed meaning of an emblem, which Michelangelo's Medici figures exceed and Leonardo's inventions dissolve into sentiment · The Renaissance symbolical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Having the character of a symbol: standing for an idea by a conventional sign.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The titles of the four Medici figures are too definite, "for these figures come much nearer to the mind and spirit of their author, and are a more direct expression of his thoughts, than any merely symbolical conceptions could possibly have been" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §20 says that the four figures "flank the two captains in Michelangelo's New Sacristy at San Lorenzo".

**A place to read.** MIC §20, with LEO §25.

## Meaning

A symbol, from the Greek *symbolon*, a token (see Symbol), is a sign that stands for something by agreement. In the criticism of art, a symbolical figure is one whose meaning is fixed by convention, as a woman with scales means Justice. Pater uses the adjective both for such fixed signs and for figures whose meaning goes beyond them (see Symbol).

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is in the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, on the figures of the Medici tombs: the titles "Night and Day, The Twilight and The Dawn" are "far too definite" for the "four symbolical figures", which are "a more direct expression of his thoughts, than any merely symbolical conceptions could possibly have been" (MIC §20; see Disembodied spirit).

The word occurs twice in the sentence, and the second use corrects the first. The figures are "symbolical" by tradition: they have names that make them emblems of the times of day. But they are not "merely symbolical": they express, "less by way of definite conceptions than by the touches, the promptings of a piece of music" (MIC §20), the vague fancies of the mind thinking of death. The fixed symbol is too narrow for them; their meaning is not a sign but a sentiment.

The Leonardo essay uses the word in the same way, of art that begins in a symbol and passes beyond it. The Saint John of the Louvre is one of those "symbolical inventions" in which the subject is the starting-point of a sentiment (LEO §25; see Symbolical invention), and Leonardo raises his women "to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression" (LEO §29). The comparison with music returns. For both painters the symbol is a starting point: the conventional subject, Night or Saint John, opens onto a feeling that no convention can hold.

The Winckelmann essay sets the Greek against both: Greek sculpture is "in no sense a symbol, a suggestion, of anything beyond its own victorious fairness" (WIN §28; see Suggestion of life). Between the Greek form that means only itself and the medieval symbol that points away from itself, Pater's account can be read as placing Leonardo's and Michelangelo's figures, which mean more than themselves without pointing to any fixed thing.

On this reading the Medici figures have reached what the Giorgione essay says all art aspires to, the condition of music (GIO §5; see Condition of music), not by being musical in subject but by meaning in music's way, by "touches" and "promptings".

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "symbolical" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §20** The Medici figures are more direct expressions of Michelangelo's thoughts than any merely symbolical conceptions.

**LEO §25** The Saint John is one of those symbolical inventions in which the subject is the starting-point of a train of sentiment.

**LEO §29** Leonardo raises his languid women to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §20 says: "The four reclining figures flank the two captains in Michelangelo's New Sacristy at San Lorenzo. Night and Day accompany Giuliano, Duke of Nemours. Dawn and Dusk accompany Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino."

## See also

Condition of music; Disembodied spirit; Suggestion of life; Symbol; Symbolical invention; Symbolism.

# Symbolical invention

*A figure of the painter's own devising, in which a sacred or given subject becomes the starting-point of a sentiment · The Renaissance*

*symbolical invention*, *symbolical inventions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A symbol invented by the artist, as opposed to one inherited from tradition.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Of the Saint John of the Louvre and its variations: "We recognise one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music" (LEO §25).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §25 says that the Louvre now assigns the painting known as Bacchus to Leonardo's workshop, and that "Its earlier identity as Saint John in the Wilderness helps explain Pater's interest in how an alteration of attributes can shift a sacred subject toward a pagan one".

**A place to read.** LEO §25, with LEO §29.

## Meaning

An invention, in the art theory of the Renaissance, is the conceiving of a subject and its composition (see Invention). A symbol is a sign that stands for something by agreement (see Symbolical). A symbolical invention joins the two, and the joining reverses the usual order. In an inherited symbol the

meaning comes first and the image is found for it: the scales are chosen because Justice weighs. In a symbolical invention the image comes first, and the meaning is invented in it: the painter takes a given figure and makes it mean what no tradition gave it.

The difference can be set beside the distinction between allegory and symbol that Goethe set down in two maxims printed after his death. Allegory, he wrote, changes the appearance into a concept and the concept into an image, so that the concept stays limited and complete in the image and can be spoken from it; symbolism changes the appearance into an idea and the idea into an image, so that the idea stays in the image endlessly active and out of reach, and, even if uttered in every language, would remain unutterable.[343] Pater's symbolical invention can be read as a symbol in Goethe's sense, and his "crude symbolism" as an allegory.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the turn of Pater's paragraph on Leonardo's pupils and their copies. The original, at other times, has been "a mere theme or motive" (LEO §25; see Theme or motive), and the example is the Saint John of the Louvre, with its "treacherous smile" (see Unfathomable smile). In a copy the reed cross "becomes faint", in another version it "disappears altogether", and returning to the original "we are no longer surprised by Saint John's strange likeness to the Bacchus which hangs near it" (LEO §25; see Decayed gods). Only then does Pater name the kind: "We recognise one of those symbolical inventions" (LEO §25; see Ostensible subject).

"Recognise" and "one of those" make the invention a class, and the essay supplies other members. Leonardo used incidents of sacred story "as a cryptic language for fancies all his own" (LEO §29; see Cryptic language), and with the women of Florence he took "one of these languid women", raising her "as Leda or Pomona, as Modesty or Vanity, to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression" (LEO §29; see Symbolical). The names are inherited, Leda the myth, Pomona the goddess of fruit, Modesty and Vanity the moral emblems, and the invention lies in what the painter does with them. The given name becomes a pretext; the figure becomes his own.

The variations can be read as proof. Because the symbol is the painter's and not tradition's, its attributes can be removed without loss: the cross fades, the Baptist's likeness to the Bacchus no longer surprises, and the sentiment survives the change. An inherited symbol dies when its attribute is taken away; a symbolical invention reveals itself. This is why the variations, as Pater says, only bring out the purpose of the original (LEO §25; see Theme or motive). The essay's last word on the matter is La Gioconda, in which "no crude symbolism disturbs the effect" (LEO §30; see

[343] J. W. von Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*, nos. 1112–1113 in Max Hecker's numbering (1907).

Crude symbolism), and which can be read as the symbolical invention perfected: an image that needs no attribute at all.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "symbolical" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §20** The Medici figures are a more direct expression of Michelangelo's thoughts than merely symbolical conceptions.

**LEO §25** The Saint John of the Louvre is one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject starts a train of sentiment.

**LEO §29** Leonardo raises the women of Florence to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression.

## See also

Conventional associations; Crude symbolism; Cryptic language; Decayed gods; Invention; Ostensible subject; Symbolical; Symbolism; Theme or motive; Unfathomable smile.

# Symbolism

*The habit of thinking in symbols: Pico's figured style, and the crude kind that Leonardo's portrait does without · The Renaissance symbolism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The use of symbols as a habit of thought or a method of art; in Pater's last years also the name of a movement in poetry.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This constant tendency to symbolism and imagery gives Pico's work a figured style, by which it has some real resemblance to Plato's" (PIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** PIC §§13–14, with LEO §30.

## Meaning

The noun names a habit rather than a thing: not the symbol (see Symbol) but the practice of reading or making the world in symbols. In Pater's century it also named a theory of myth. The German philologist Friedrich Creuzer's *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker* (1810–12) read the myths of the Greeks as the symbols of an older priestly wisdom from the East, to be decoded by the scholar who held the key.[344] Symbolism in this sense supposes a meaning hidden behind the image and recoverable

[344] Friedrich Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, 4 vols. (Leipzig and Darmstadt, 1810–12).

from it, and the Pico essay's account of the allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century can be read beside it (PIC §§4–5; see Allegorical interpretation).

## Use in the book

The word comes twice, and the two uses mark the book's judgement. In the Pico essay symbolism is the stuff of the allegorical method. Pico lays hold on the symbols of the Jewish ritual and makes every earthly object a counterpart of a higher reality (PIC §13; see Symbol), and the sentence quoted above follows: the tendency gives his work a figured style (PIC §14; see Figured style). Pater credits the habit with a style like Plato's, while the essay treats the allegorical method itself as "a curiosity of the human mind" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation).

In the Leonardo essay the word returns in the negative. La Gioconda is a picture of suggestion and mystery, and "no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery" (LEO §30; see Crude symbolism). Crude symbolism is the kind that points to a meaning which a key could unlock; Leonardo's art works without one. His Saint John is one of "those symbolical inventions" in which the ostensible subject only starts "a train of sentiment" (LEO §25; see Symbolical invention), and Michelangelo's Medici figures are "a more direct expression of his thoughts, than any merely symbolical conceptions could possibly have been" (MIC §20; see Symbolical). Between Pico and Leonardo symbolism has turned from a method of meaning into a danger to it: the book admires the image that carries its sense without a code.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "symbolism" occurs, with the paragraph of Pico's symbols, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Pico uses the symbols of the Jewish ritual; every earthly object is a symbol or counterpart of a higher reality.

**PIC §14** Pico's constant tendency to symbolism and imagery gives his work a figured style.

**LEO §30** No crude symbolism disturbs the subdued and graceful mystery of La Gioconda.

## Later readings

The word became a movement in Pater's last years. Arthur Symons carried it into English criticism in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899),[345] named for the French movement that the poet Jean Moréas had called *symbolisme* in a manifesto of 1886.[346] The symbol of the Symbolists can be read as closer to Leonardo's "train of sentiment" than to Pico's sign.

[345] Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (London, 1899).

[346] Jean Moréas, "Le Symbolisme", *Le Figaro* (18 September 1886), supplément littéraire.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Crude symbolism; Figured style; Symbol; Symbolical; Symbolical invention.

# Terra cotta

*Luca's baked earth, glazed and coloured: a humble material that found another grace · The Renaissance*

*terra cotta*; *baked earth*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Italian, "baked earth": clay hardened by firing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** His biographer says that "instead of making his figures of baked earth simply white, he added the further invention of giving them colour, to the astonishment and delight of all who beheld them" (ROB §12).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §2 glosses the word "fired clay", and says that terra cotta, "literally 'baked earth,' is clay hardened by firing".

**A place to read.** ROB §12, with ROB §2.

## Meaning

Terra cotta is clay modelled and fired, and the commonest of materials: bricks, tiles and pots are terra cotta. Luca della Robbia's invention, as the sixteenth century told it, was to cover modelled terra cotta with a glaze made white and opaque by tin, the glaze of the potters, and to colour it with metallic oxides fired into the surface; the result was durable outdoors and bright. His first dated works in the new manner are the lunettes of the Resurrection and the Ascension over the sacristy doors of Florence Cathedral, from the 1440s.

## Use in the book

The word first appears in the second paragraph of the essay, where the material is subordinate: Luca "was first of all a worker in marble, and his works in terra cotta only transfer to a different material the principles of his sculpture" (ROB §2; see Finish of expression). The twelfth paragraph tells the story of the transfer and is the word's chief passage. The first work in the new material was "a mere rough imitation of the costly, laboriously wrought marble, finished in a few hours" (ROB §12; see Earthenware). "But on this humble path he found his way to a fresh success, to another artistic grace" (ROB §12). The colours of oriental and Roman pottery "haunted Luca's fancy" (ROB §12; see Oriental pottery), and then: "'He still continued seeking something more,' his biographer says of him; 'and instead of making his figures of baked earth simply white, he added the further invention of giving them colour, to the astonishment and delight of

all who beheld them'—*Cosa singolare, e multo utile per la state!*—a curious thing, and very useful for summer-time, full of coolness and repose for hand and eye" (ROB §12).

The biographer is Vasari, and Pater quotes his Life of Luca della Robbia almost word for word in the English of Mrs Jonathan Foster's translation of 1850, changing only "terra-cotta figures" to "figures of baked earth".[347] The Italian exclamation comes from a later passage of the same Life, where Vasari says that the glazed pavement Luca made for the study of Piero di Cosimo de' Medici (1416–1469), father of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was a singular thing and very useful in summer. Pater moves the phrase from the floor to the coloured figures, translates it, and adds a phrase of his own: the coloured clay is "full of coolness and repose for hand and eye" (see Repose). The addition turns Vasari's practical remark about a cool floor into a description of a sensation, the cool smooth surface of glaze, cold to the touch in a Tuscan summer, pale to the eye. It is the Preface's method at work: what matters in a work is the "special impression" it gives (PRE §3).

The passage answers the sixth paragraph's verdict on coloured sculpture (ROB §6; see Equivalent of colour): glazed terra cotta is not stone painted to imitate life but a new material, with its own colour and its own coolness.

Luca's turn to clay is, on one reading, a small fable of art. A great sculptor turns from the noble stone to the common clay, for reasons the biographer calls practical and Pater calls artistic (see Frugality), and finds there a beauty the stone could not give. The humble material does not lower the art; it extends it into "common things" (ROB §12; see Homely art).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "terra cotta" or "baked earth" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §2** Luca's works in terra cotta transfer to a different material the principles of his sculpture.

**ROB §12** Instead of making his figures of baked earth simply white, Luca gave them colour.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §2 says that "Luca's workshop became known for terracotta covered with an opaque, durable glaze", and that "Luca's glazed terracotta was used for both reliefs and sculpture in the round". The Glossary has "Terracotta. Fired clay. In the della Robbia workshop, a glaze gives the surface its colour and gloss." The note at ROB §12 on the Italian says: "English: A singular thing, and very useful in summer. Italian. The historical wording uses state for estate, 'summer.' Pater draws a sensory

[347] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (1568), "Life of Luca della Robbia"; English in *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, trans. Mrs Jonathan Foster, vol. I (London: Bohn, 1850).

implication from the biographer's praise: the cool, pale, glazed surface seems right for warm weather."

## See also

Colours of art; Earthenware; Equivalent of colour; Finish of expression; Frugality; Garland; Homely art; Oriental pottery; Repose.

# Theatricality

*The chief characteristic of Michelangelo's followers and of the society of his old age, and the quality least his own · The Renaissance*

*theatricality*; *theatrical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of the theatre: display, staged effect, emotion shown for an audience rather than felt.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Theatricality is their chief characteristic; and that is a quality as little attributable to Michelangelo as to Mino or Luca Signorelli" (MIC §17).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §17, with MIC §16.

## Meaning

The Greek *theatron* was the place for seeing, and "theatrical" first meant belonging to the stage. By the eighteenth century it had come to mean showy, artificial, aimed at effect. In criticism of art it names gesture and expression that are performed rather than felt, the pose that looks for its spectator.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the end of the seventeenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, after the account of the tradition of sentiment that ended with him (see Tradition of sentiment): "But his professed disciples did not share this temper; they are in love with his strength only, and seem not to feel his grave and temperate sweetness. Theatricality is their chief characteristic; and that is a quality as little attributable to Michelangelo as to Mino or Luca Signorelli. With him, as with them, all is serious, passionate, impulsive" (MIC §17).

The passage explains theatricality by its cause. The followers loved "his strength only": on this reading they took the muscular figures, the violent poses, the scale, and lost the sweetness that tempered them. Strength without sweetness becomes display; the gesture that in Michelangelo was "serious, passionate, impulsive" becomes, in his imitators, a pose. The three

adjectives define the opposite of theatricality. Serious is meant, passionate is felt, impulsive comes from within; the theatrical is none of these.

The sixteenth paragraph had already given the word to the age. Michelangelo lingers on as a revenant "in a worn-out society, theatrical in its life, theatrical in its art, theatrical even in its devotion" (MIC §16; see Primitive form; Revenant). The threefold repetition is the sentence's judgement: the society of the later sixteenth century, its manners, its art and its religion, all played to an audience. The followers' theatricality is the art of that society; Michelangelo, a man of the fifteenth century, stands apart from it.

The Giorgione essay uses the adjective once, lightly: the twisting staircases of the Loire châteaux seem made so that "the actors in a theatrical mode of life might pass each other unseen" (GIO §4). There the theatrical is a style of life, elegant and harmless. In the Michelangelo essay it is a decline, and the word can be read as Pater's name for what happens when a great manner is inherited without the feeling that made it.

The followers whom Pater does not name, the Florentine and Roman painters and sculptors of the mid sixteenth century, are those whose style later criticism named Mannerism. Pater's word judges them severely, and his reason is the one his essay has argued throughout: the true Michelangelesque is sweetness and strength together, and those who took only the strength could produce only its theatre.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "theatricality" or "theatrical" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §16** Michelangelo lingers in a worn-out society, theatrical in its life, its art and its devotion.

**MIC §17** Theatricality is the chief characteristic of his followers, and as little attributable to him as to Mino or Signorelli.

**GIO §4** The staircases of the Loire châteaux seem made for the actors in a theatrical mode of life.

## See also

Michelangelesque; Primitive form; Revenant; Strength; Sweetness and strength; Tradition of sentiment.

# Theme or motive

*The governing idea of a work, which survives when its accessories are changed and which in Greek art saturates the form · The Renaissance theme or motive*; *theme*; *motive*, *motives*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The subject or leading idea of a work of art, which variations may treat in many ways.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "At other times the original remains, but has been a mere theme or motive, a type of which the accessories might be modified or changed; and these variations have but brought out the more the purpose, or expression of the original" (LEO §25).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §25, with WIN §28.

## Meaning

"Theme" is the Greek *thema*, a thing laid down, a proposition; "motive" is the Medieval Latin *motivus*, moving, and in English first meant what moves a person to act. In the criticism of art Pater's century gave "motive" the sense of the French *motif* and the Italian *motivo*: the subject or leading idea of a design, the element a work is built round. Both words belong also to music, where a theme is the tune that variations elaborate and a motive the short figure that recurs. Pater's "theme or motive" can be read in the musical sense: a type on which variations are made.

## Use in the book

Pater reaches for the phrase when he sorts the copies made by Leonardo's pupils. Some copies rough out "some fine hint or sketch of his"; some re-echo lost originals; "At other times the original remains, but has been a mere theme or motive, a type of which the accessories might be modified or changed; and these variations have but brought out the more the purpose, or expression of the original" (LEO §25). "Mere" can be read as the pupils' view. For them the original was only a theme to be varied, and Pater's sentence turns their indifference into evidence: by changing the accessories they showed what did not change. The example follows at once. In the Saint John of the Louvre the reed cross fades in one copy and disappears in another, and the figure is left with its likeness to Bacchus (LEO §25; see Symbolical invention; Decayed gods). The accessories were the saint's; the motive can be taken as something else, the "treacherous smile" (LEO §25), and the variations bring it out.

The word "motive" has this artistic sense through much of the book. The ideal intensity of love is "the motive which really unites together the fragments" of *Aucassin and Nicolette* (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love); comradeship is "especially a classical motive" (FRE §7; see Classical motive); the creation of life, "coming always as relief or recovery", is "in various ways the motive of all his work" in Michelangelo (MIC §4; see Relief or recovery). The Pleiad made of the ancient mythology, which the Italians had found "a motive so weighty and severe", "a mere toy" (BEL §16). And

Giorgione, for all his small surviving work, expresses "in elementary motive and principle" the spirit that Titian spreads over his whole life (GIO §13).

The Winckelmann essay gives the word its theory. Greek sculpture is "a perfect medium of expression for one peculiar motive of the imaginative intellect", and it "renounces all those attributes of its material which do not forward that motive" (WIN §34; see Plastic art). Its motive is not attached from outside, as a meaning is attached to an allegory; it "saturates and is identical with" the sensuous form (WIN §28; see Sensuous form). In sculpture, spirituality "takes up the whole given material, and penetrates it with an imaginative motive" (WIN §33; see Spiritual). Set beside the Leonardo essay, the doctrine divides the arts. In Greek sculpture the motive is the form, and nothing can be taken away without loss. In Leonardo's painting the motive survives the loss of its accessories, and the variations of his pupils make it visible. The Giorgione essay joins the two in its ideal instant: the highest dramatic poetry, and the painting of Giorgione's school that selects such instants, give "some brief and wholly concrete moment" into which "all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have condensed themselves" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "theme" occurs, and every paragraph in which "motive" names the subject or governing idea of a work of art or literature, in the order of the book; the motives of a life or a culture (PRE §§6, 9; WIN §§10, 12, 16, 25, 38, 42) are not listed.

**FRE §7** Comradeship is especially a classical motive.

**FRE §29** The ideal intensity of love is the motive that unites the fragments of *Aucassin and Nicolette*.

**MIC §4** The creation of life is in various ways the motive of all Michelangelo's work.

**LEO §25** The original has been a mere theme or motive, whose accessories might be changed.

**GIO §13** Giorgione expresses in elementary motive and principle the spirit of Venetian art.

**GIO §20** In the ideal instants of dramatic poetry and of Giorgione's school, all the motives of a long history are condensed.

**BEL §16** The Pleiad made the ancient mythology, a motive so weighty to the Italians, a mere toy.

**WIN §28** The motive saturates and is identical with the sensuous form.

**WIN §33** In sculpture spirituality penetrates the whole material with an imaginative motive.

**WIN §34** Sculpture is a perfect medium for one peculiar motive of the imaginative intellect.

**WIN §36** Browning's poem has the clear ring of a central motive.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Classical motive; Decayed gods; Ideal instant; Ideal intensity of love; Plastic art; Pure form; Relief or recovery; Sensuous form; Spiritual; Symbolical invention.

# Topography

*topography*

Attested: *topography* (GIO §§5, 6). Topography, the Greek *topographia*, is the description of a place, the record of what is where; in English painting a topographical view was the faithful likeness of a particular scene, made to inform rather than to move. Pater uses the word twice for the matter of a landscape as against its art. The mere matter of a picture is "the actual circumstances of an event, the actual topography of a landscape", and that it "should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling" is "what all art constantly strives after" (GIO §5; see Matter and form). A river-side in France is superior to a Swiss valley "for most conditions of the picturesque", "because, on the French river-side, mere topography, the simple material, counts for so little" (GIO §6; see Dominant tone; Picturesque). "Mere" in both places gives the judgement. Topography is the part of a landscape that a map could record, and a scene whose topography is striking gives light and shade harder work, because its matter is not so easily modulated "to one dominant tone" (GIO §6). The Venetian painters, by contrast, keep of their country only "the spirit or essence" of a landscape, "a country of the pure reason or half-imaginative memory" (GIO §6; see Abstracted elements), a place that no topography could map.

## See also

Abstracted elements; Dominant tone; Matter and form; Picturesque.

# Tracery

*traceries*

Attested: *traceries* (BEL §§1, 2, 16). Tracery is the ornamental stonework of Gothic architecture, the branching ribs that divide a window or panel a wall; from "trace", a line drawn. Pater uses the word four times in three paragraphs, and it carries the essay's architecture of the French Renaissance. At Gaillon a Gothic donjon is "veiled faintly by a surface of dainty Italian traceries" (BEL §1; see Donjon), and Ronsard's poems, with their delicately figured surfaces and fanciful rhymes, "are the correlative of the traceries of the house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges, or the Maison de Justice at Rouen"

(BEL §1; see Figured style), the Rouen building being the law courts of Normandy, begun about 1500, and both of them works of the last Gothic. The native taste was "naturally akin to that Italian finesse" (BEL §2): the qualities of old French poetry "are characteristic too of a hundred French Gothic carvings and traceries" (BEL §2; see Daintiness). In the sixteenth paragraph the traceries of the time give a place to the charnel-house among birds and flowers (BEL §16; see Charnel-house). Tracery can be read as the essay's model of a surface art, line laid over structure, and its equation of a poem with a tracery is the equation the whole essay makes between the Pleiad and the buildings of its age.

## See also

Charnel-house; Daintiness; Donjon; Figured style; Rhetoric in architecture.

# Transmutation of ideas into images

*Leonardo's problem: to change thought into colour and form so completely that no residue of thought remains · The Renaissance*
*transmutation of ideas into images*; *transmute ideas into images*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The change of an idea into an image, as the alchemist changes one metal into another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "His problem was the transmutation of ideas into images" (LEO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §§20–21.

## Meaning

"Transmutation" is the Latin *transmutatio*, a change across, and in the language of alchemy the change of a base metal into gold (see Alchemy; Transmute). Pater's phrase names a change of substance, not of dress. An idea illustrated keeps its own nature and puts on a picture; an idea transmuted ceases to be an idea and becomes the image.

The formula can be set beside the definition of beauty in Hegel's lectures on aesthetics, which the Winckelmann essay quotes on other matters (WIN §§2, 41): the beautiful is "the sensuous shining of the Idea" (*das sinnliche Scheinen der Idee*), the idea appearing in a sensuous form.[348] Hegel's phrase describes the result. Pater's describes the labour, and for Leonardo the labour was the problem of a life.

[348] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* (Berlin, 1835–38), part I, chapter 1.

## Use in the book

Pater sums up a conflict in the phrase. Curiosity "came in conflict with the desire of beauty", and the struggle "between the reason and its ideas, and the senses" is "the key to Leonardo's life at Milan", with its restlessness and endless re-touchings (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty). After all that he must leave unfinished and recommence (LEO §20; see Ennui) comes the sentence "His problem was the transmutation of ideas into images" (LEO §20). The ideas are curiosity's, the knowledge of nature that the earlier paragraphs gathered; the images are the desire of beauty's. The medium was too small for the matter: he had mastered the earlier Florentine style "with its naïve and limited sensuousness" (LEO §20; see Sensuousness), and now he was to entertain in it "divinations of a humanity too wide for it" (LEO §20; see Divination). The effort shows, and to others he seems to aim "at an impossible effect" (LEO §20; see Ennui).

The next paragraph tests the problem on Goethe. Goethe "in the Elective Affinities and the first part of Faust, does transmute ideas into images", and wrought "many such transmutations", but did not always find "the spell-word", and the second part of *Faust* is "a mass of science" without artistic character (LEO §21; see Spell-word). The failed transmutation leaves a residue, science that has not become art. Leonardo is saved from it by waiting for the moment of *bien-être*, well-being, when, "the alchemy complete", "the idea is stricken into colour and imagery" (LEO §21; see Bien-être; Alchemy). "Stricken" is the word of a sudden blow, and it can be read as the essay's answer to its own problem. The transmutation is not achieved by labour but in an instant, for which all the labour is a preparation.

The Preface uses the verb of a failure of the same kind in Wordsworth, whose genius deposits a crystal here and there "in a matter it does not wholly search through and transmute" (PRE §5; see Transmute). The Winckelmann essay describes the Greek success. The artist "has gradually sunk his intellectual and spiritual ideas in sensuous form" (WIN §43; see Sensuous form), and in Greek sculpture the motive "saturates and is identical with" the form (WIN §28; see Sensuous form). The Greek transmutation is complete because the idea was never larger than the image; Leonardo's is hard because his ideas were too wide for it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "transmute", "transmutation" or "transmutations" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §5** Wordsworth's genius does not wholly search through and transmute its matter.

**LEO §20** Leonardo's problem was the transmutation of ideas into images.

**LEO §21** Goethe transmutes ideas into images in the Elective Affinities and the first part of Faust, but not always.

## See also

Alchemy; Bien-être; Desire of beauty; Divination; Ennui; Sensuous form; Sensuousness; Spell-word; Spiritual; Theme or motive; Transmute.

# Type

*The general form of the Greeks and the peculiar face of a modern painter · The Renaissance*

*type*, *types*, *typical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A type is a pattern or model: the general form of which individuals are examples, or a recurring figure in an artist's work.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli "has worked out in" his Madonnas "a distinct and peculiar type, definite enough in his own mind, for he has painted it over and over again" (BOT §7).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §7 says that Pater's point about *Allgemeinheit* "concerns the removal of transient particulars so that a figure can present a broadly recognizable type".

**A place to read.** BOT §7, with ROB §7 and WIN §37.

## Meaning

The Greek *typos* is a blow, then the mark a blow leaves, then any impression, mould or pattern: the stamp from which many coins are struck. Paul calls Adam a *typos* of the one to come,[349] and Christian interpretation made the type a figure that foreshadows; printers made it the block that prints a letter. Pater's uses keep the sense of the stamp. A type is what many instances bear, whether the instances are statues, faces or a painter's repeated Madonnas.

## Use in the book

The word occurs in forty-two paragraphs, and two kinds of type stand out. The first is the Greek. In the della Robbia essay the law of *Allgemeinheit* prompted the Greek sculptors "constantly to seek the type in the individual" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit). The Winckelmann essay repeats the law for sculpture: "not the special situation, but the type, the general character of the subject to be delineated, is all-important" (WIN §37), and sculpture "gradually purges away" from "the supreme types of humanity" all that is accidental (WIN §37). This type is general, purged of the person.

[349] Romans 5:14.

The second is the modern painter's, and the Botticelli essay is its home. "It is this which gives to his Madonnas their unique expression and charm" (BOT §7), and the type of the sentence quoted above, "definite enough in his own mind, for he has painted it over and over again" (BOT §7), is Botticelli's own. It departs from the general, for the same Madonnas are "conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty" (BOT §7; see Abject). Leonardo has one too: "His type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights" (LEO §2), and his drawings can be arranged to illustrate "Leonardo's type of womanly beauty" (LEO §23). The Giorgione essay finds a type that is a school's, "an influence, a spirit or type in art" (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque).

The two kinds can be read as the book's history of art in one word. The Greek type is a law of generality that purges the accidents of a person; the Renaissance type is the person's own, a face that recurs because a temperament keeps returning to it. Between them lies, on this reading, the Renaissance: the passage from the general to the peculiar, from Pheidias to Botticelli. Pater does not choose. He admires the Greek type as repose and the modern as expression, and the della Robbia essay sets the two side by side as the problem the great styles solved in different ways (ROB §§6, 9).

The peculiar type has its danger, and the Botticelli sentence glances at it: he painted it over and over, "sometimes one might think almost mechanically". A type a painter repeats may harden into a manner. The sentence's last clause can be read as redeeming it, the "pastime" of "that dark period" (BOT §7). The repetition becomes a sign of the man, the face to which a troubled mind kept returning, and the type is the record of a temperament.

## Places to read

A selection of the paragraphs in which the word bears on the argument, in the order of the book; "type", "types" or "typical" occur in forty-two paragraphs in all.

**BOT §4** Botticelli is the type of a genius that usurps the data before it.

**BOT §7** Botticelli worked out in his Madonnas a distinct and peculiar type, conformed to no acknowledged type of beauty.

**ROB §7** Allgemeinheit prompted the Greek sculptors to seek the type in the individual.

**ROB §9** The Greek system of abstraction, aiming always at the broad and general type, sacrificed expression to a certain degree.

**LEO §2** Leonardo's type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates more than it delights.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's drawings illustrate his type of womanly beauty.

**GIO §18** The Giorgionesque is an influence, a spirit or type in art.

**WIN §35** Hellenic breadth comes of a culture concentrating its impressions into certain pregnant types.

**WIN §37** In sculpture the type, the general character of the subject, is all-important.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §7 glosses *Allgemeinheit* as "Universality", and says that Pater's "point concerns the removal of transient particulars so that a figure can present a broadly recognizable type".

## See also

Abject; Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity; Giorgionesque; Madonna; Visionary painter.

### Undertone

*undertones*

Attested: *undertones* (BOT §9). A low tone of voice, below ordinary speech; in painting, a colour beneath a surface colour that modifies it. Pater uses the voice's sense for a painting: "He paints Madonnas, but they shrink from the pressure of the divine child, and plead in unmistakable undertones for a warmer, lower humanity" (BOT §9). "Unmistakable undertones" is a paradox, a voice too low to be overheard that cannot be missed, and the paradox can be read as the essay's method: the sentiment Pater reads is never the picture's subject and always its effect, like the "under-current of original sentiment" that touches you "through the veil of its ostensible subject" (BOT §1; see Original sentiment). "Lower" can be read as taking up the "mean or abject" of the earlier paragraph (BOT §7; see Abject) and reversing its value: the Madonnas plead for the humanity of the low, warmer than the high cold words of their exaltation (see Intolerable honour).

## See also

Abject; Intolerable honour; Madonna; Original sentiment.

### Untranslatable charm

*The charm proper to each art, which cannot be carried over into any other, against the popular view of the arts as translations of one thought · The Renaissance*

*untranslatable charm*; *untranslatable*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A charm that cannot be carried across from one art into another without being lost.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Each art has thus its own specific order of impressions, and an untranslatable charm" (GIO §3).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §1 says that "Pater opens with a theory he rejects."

**A place to read.** GIO §§1, 3.

## Meaning

To translate, from the Latin *translatum*, carried across, is to move a meaning from one language into another. Pater takes the figure from the error he opposes, which treats the arts as languages of one meaning, and turns it against it. If each art is a language, what it says in its own tongue is untranslatable: the charm stays behind when the sense is carried over.

## Use in the book

The essay opens with the error, and the word "untranslatable" is its refutation. "It is the mistake of much popular criticism to regard poetry, music, and painting—all the various products of art—as but translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought, supplemented by certain technical qualities of colour, in painting; of sound, in music; of rhythmical words, in poetry" (GIO §1; see Rhythmical language). On that view the thought is the substance and the arts are its languages; colour, sound and rhythm are added afterwards, as technique. Pater answers in a refrain. The sensuous material of each art brings a beauty "untranslatable into the forms of any other" (GIO §1; see Sensuous material); each art has "its own peculiar and untranslatable sensuous charm" (GIO §1; see Responsibilities to its material); each has "an untranslatable charm" (GIO §3; see Anders-streben); each has "its untranslatable order of impressions" (GIO §10; see Musical law). Four times in ten paragraphs the word recurs, and each time it is the ground on which the next step is built.

The refrain makes the essay's later claims possible. The arts can lend each other "new forces" but cannot "supply the place of each other" (GIO §3; see Partial alienation), because what each has is untranslatable; they can all aspire to music, because music is the art in which nothing is translatable at all, presenting "no words, no matter of sentiment or thought, separable from the special form in which it is conveyed" (GIO §1; see Musical charm). Untranslatability is the condition of the arts' difference and also of their common goal.

The doctrine can be read against Pater's own practice, which is full of translation: the Old French of Aucassin and Nicolette and the German of Winckelmann and Goethe appear in his pages mostly in English, and the

Du Bellay essay praises a poem that is itself a translation, Du Bellay's song of the winnowers, carried into French from the Latin of Andrea Navagero, a Venetian humanist poet of the early sixteenth century (BEL §23; see Matter and form). Pater's comment there shows how the doctrine applies: it is "a composition in which the matter is almost nothing, and the form almost everything; and the form of the poem as it stands, written in old French, is all Du Bellay's own" (BEL §23). The matter was translated; the form was not, and could not be. A translation succeeds, on this view, only when it makes a new form, and the untranslatable charm of the original is replaced, not carried over.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "untranslatable" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §1** Popular criticism treats the arts as translations of one thought; each art has an untranslatable sensuous charm.

**GIO §3** Each art has its own specific order of impressions, and an untranslatable charm.

**GIO §10** Each art has its incommunicable element and its untranslatable order of impressions.

## See also

Anders-streben; Matter and form; Musical charm; Musical law; Partial alienation; Responsibilities to its material; Rhythmical language; Sensuous material.

# Unveiled human form

*The nude, brought into the presence of the Madonna · The Renaissance the unveiled human form*; *unveiled*, *unveils*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The unveiled human form is the nude: the human body shown without clothing, as the subject of art.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the Doni Madonna Michelangelo "actually brings the pagan religion, and with it the unveiled human form, the sleepy-looking fauns of a Dionysiac revel, into the presence of the Madonna" (PIC §15). The Michelangelo essay speaks of him as one "who spoke so decisively of the supremacy in the imaginative world of the unveiled human form" (MIC §8).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §15 says that the Doni Tondo's "background nudes have prompted different readings".

**A place to read.** PIC §15, with MIC §8.

## Meaning

"Unveiled" is uncovered, revealed: the word is used of a statue at its dedication, of a secret disclosed, of a face. Pater's phrase is a periphrasis for the nude, and the periphrasis matters. An unveiled form is one from which a covering has been taken away; the body is revealed, as a truth is.

## Use in the book

In the Pico essay the unveiled human form comes with "the pagan religion", in the sentence quoted above (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation; Faun). The words "with it" are the point. The nude belongs to the pagan world; Christian art, on this reading, had veiled the body, and to bring the nude into a picture of the Holy Family is to bring paganism back into Christian art. Pater's reading makes them the old religion returned.

The Michelangelo essay makes the nude Michelangelo's own creed. Behind the Platonic calm of the sonnets lies a delight in "carnal form and colour" (MIC §8; see Carnal), and the man who spoke of "the supremacy in the imaginative world of the unveiled human form" had not always been, Pater adds, "we may think, a mere Platonic lover" (MIC §8; see Platonic lover). The words "we may think" are Pater's hedge, and he keeps it. The supremacy of the nude in the imaginative world is Michelangelo's doctrine as a sculptor; Pater wonders whether it was also his experience as a man (see Unseen beauty).

The verb returns twice. Leonardo's grotesques have their counterpart in nature's: "the rent rock, the distorting lights of evening on lonely roads, the unveiled structure of man in the embryo, or the skeleton" (LEO §11). Leonardo's unveiling is anatomical: the body under the skin. And Greek sculpture, limited to pure form and light, "gains more than it loses by this limitation to its own distinguishing motives; it unveils man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics" (WIN §34). The three unveilings can be read as three ways of revealing man: the nude as pagan beauty in Michelangelo, the structure as nature's secret in Leonardo, the type as the permanent in Greek sculpture. The book follows the unveiling of the human form in all three senses.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "unveiled" or "unveils" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §15** In the Doni Madonna Michelangelo brings the pagan religion, and with it the unveiled human form, into the presence of the Madonna.

**MIC §8** He who spoke of the supremacy of the unveiled human form had not been always, we may think, a mere Platonic lover.

**LEO §11** Nature's grotesques include the unveiled structure of man in the embryo, or the skeleton.

**WIN §34** Sculpture unveils man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §15 says that the Uffizi's Doni Tondo "is a round painting of the Holy Family", that "Its background nudes have prompted different readings", and that Pater's "description of them as fauns is an interpretation that serves his account of pagan forms surviving within Christian art".

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Carnal; Faun; Platonic lover; Unseen beauty.

### Veritas

*Veritas*

Attested: *Veritas* (BOT §9). Latin, "Truth": the naked figure at the left of Botticelli's *Calumny of Apelles* (see Calumnia), who points upward. The nakedness is old: Horace speaks of *nuda Veritas*, naked Truth.[350] Pater's sentence follows one face through three pictures: "The same figure—tradition connects it with Simonetta, the mistress of Giuliano de' Medici—appears again as Judith, returning home across the hill country, when the great deed is over, and the moment of revulsion come, when the olive branch in her hand is becoming a burthen; as Justice, sitting on a throne, but with a fixed look of self-hatred which makes the sword in her hand seem that of a suicide; and again as Veritas, in the allegorical picture of Calumnia, where one may note in passing the suggestiveness of an accident which identifies the image of Truth with the person of Venus" (BOT §9). Giuliano de' Medici (1453–1478), Lorenzo's brother, and Simonetta were the celebrated pair of Florentine legend. Pater himself gives the link with Simonetta as "tradition", and the edition's note adds that "The painting alone cannot establish that figures in distinct mythological, biblical, and allegorical scenes portray the same sitter"; another note says the seated figure is Fortitude, holding "a ceremonial mace", not Justice with a sword. The last clause survives: Truth has the body of Venus, and the "accident" can be read as Pater's thesis in an image, that in Botticelli pleasure and truth wear one face.

## See also

Calumnia; Complexion of humanity; Goddess of pleasure.

[350] Horace, *Odes* I.24.7.

## Viol

*viol*

Attested: *viol* (GIO §15). The viol was the family of bowed string instruments of the Renaissance, fretted and usually six-stringed, held upright on or between the knees; the name came into English from the French *viole*, a cognate of the Italian *viola*. Pater uses the word in his description of the Concert of the Pitti, where "a clerk, placed behind him, grasps the handle of a viol" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord). The viol is held, not played: the clerk grasps it by the neck, and the singer waits to begin (GIO §15). The picture is the essay's chief example of a subject chosen from music, and the twenty-first paragraph makes it typical: "In choice of subject, as in all besides, the Concert of the Pitti Palace is typical of everything that Giorgione, himself an admirable musician, touched with his influence" (GIO §21; see Condition of music). The tradition goes back to Vasari, who tells that Giorgione sang and played so well that he was often asked to musical gatherings of noble persons.[351] The painter of musicians was a musician, and the viol in the clerk's hand can be read as a sign of the art the painter practised too.

### See also

Clerk; Condition of music; Harpsichord; Pause in time; Tonsure.

## Visible circumstance

*The things of the world in which the scene clothes the painter's mood · The Renaissance*

*visible circumstance*; *circumstance*, *circumstances*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Visible circumstance is the seen detail of a scene, its setting, objects and gestures, in which a feeling can be embodied.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The mood the scene awakes in the visionary is one "which it clothes, that all may share it, with visible circumstance" (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward".

**A place to read.** BOT §4, with BOT §3.

### Meaning

The Latin *circumstantia* is what stands around. Rhetoric used the word for the attendant facts of an act, who did it, where, when, how and why, and law and history kept that sense: the circumstances of a deed are its

[351] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Giorgione.

setting. “Visible” turns the word to painting. Visible circumstances are the things a picture can show around its figures, the lawns, pools and reeds, the light, the shell and the falling roses.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the sentence that sets out Pater’s theory of the visionary. The scene comes to the painter with all its reality and awakes in him a mood “which it clothes, that all may share it, with visible circumstance” (BOT §4; see Mood).

The figure is of clothing. The mood is a body of feeling, private and invisible, and visible circumstance is the dress that lets it go out among others. “That all may share it” gives the clothing a purpose: art is the means by which one person’s mood becomes common. The circumstances need not be those the scene first offered. The visionary rejects some data, isolates others and combines them anew (BOT §4; see Data), so that the clothing is made to the mood’s measure out of the world’s cloth.

The paragraph before shows the same freedom in practice. In the illustration of the Centaurs, “forgetful of the actual circumstances of their appearance, Botticelli has gone off with delight on the thought of the Centaurs themselves” (BOT §3; see Painter’s vision). Dante gave the circumstances, a river of blood and grim archers; Botticelli forgot them and gave the Centaurs others, the woodland, baby faces and tiny bows. The actual circumstances belong to the text, the visible circumstances to the painter.

The word “circumstance” occurs in sixteen paragraphs of the book, most often for the conditions of a life or an age. Pater can say of Pico that “his own story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent” of his writings (PIC §5), and the phrase is close kin to “visible circumstance”: in both, an inward thing has a visible counterpart. The Botticelli phrase can be read as the general form of that idea for art. A mood without circumstance cannot be shared; circumstance without a mood is the dramatic painter’s transcription (see Dramatic painter). The picture lives where the two are joined, and Pater’s word for the joint is “clothes”.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs of the Botticelli essay in which “circumstance” or “circumstances” occurs, in the order of the book; the word occurs in sixteen paragraphs in all.

**BOT §3** Forgetful of the actual circumstances of their appearance, Botticelli goes off with delight on the Centaurs themselves.

**BOT §4** The scene clothes the mood it awakes in the visionary, that all may share it, with visible circumstance.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward. Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects."

## See also

Data; Dramatic painter; Exponent; Mood; Painter's vision; Visible form.

# Visible form

*The shape a poet's image takes when the eye must see it · The Renaissance visible form*; *visible*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Visible form is shape as the eye sees it, as distinct from an image that words call up in the mind.

**In *The Renaissance*.** A poet's words "must be lowered in key when translated into visible form" (BOT §3; see Lower in key).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BOT §3, with PIC §5.

## Meaning

*Forma* is the Latin for shape, and it rendered the Greek words that philosophy had made central. Plato's Forms, the *eidē*, take their name from a verb of seeing, yet they are seen only by the mind; the visible shapes of things are their copies.[352] Pater's phrase uses the plain sense, the shape the eye takes in, and its interest lies in the passage from the other kind of image, the one words give, into this.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes once, in the principle quoted above, which the Botticelli essay draws from the illustrations to Dante (BOT §3; see Lower in key).

"Translated" is the decisive word: visible form is a second language with its own rules, and the painter must change the key of his original (see Lower in key).

The adjective "visible" returns in passages where something inward becomes seen. Pico's "own story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent" of his writings (PIC §5; see Analogue): a life made the visible form of an idea. In Leonardo's Milan years "everywhere the effort is visible in the work of his hands" (LEO §20). In the painter's temperament, the Giorgione essay says, all ideas "float up as visible scene or image" (GIO §2). And in the next

[352] Plato, *Republic* VI, 507b–c.

paragraph of the Botticelli essay the scene clothes the mood it awakes in the visionary "with visible circumstance" (BOT §4; see Visible circumstance).

The book can be read as a study of such translations: of feeling into visible circumstance, of an idea into a life, of Dante's words into Botticelli's plates, of Greek religion into a Florentine Venus. In each the passage into visible form costs something and adds something. Pater's rule for the Dante illustrations, that the key must be lowered, is the caution of a critic who knows how much the eye takes in at once.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraphs in which "visible" marks an inward thing made seen, in the order of the book; "visible" occurs in nine paragraphs in all.

**PIC §5** Pico's story is a sort of analogue or visible equivalent to the purpose of his writings.

**BOT §3** A poet's words must be lowered in key when translated into visible form.

**BOT §4** The scene clothes the visionary's mood with visible circumstance.

**LEO §20** In Leonardo's Milan years the effort is visible in the work of his hands.

**GIO §2** In the painter's temperament all ideas, however abstract or obscure, float up as visible scene or image.

**WIN §12** Winckelmann's fears of the inquisition are sometimes visible during his life in Rome.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Analogue; Lower in key; Painter's vision; Visible circumstance.

# Visionary painter

*Botticelli's kind, like Dante's: the painter who sees by a mood · The Renaissance*

*visionary painter*; *visionary*, *visionariness*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A visionary painter is one who paints what he sees inwardly, letting a mood govern what the eye gives him.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli might have been a mere naturalist, "But this was not enough for him; he is a visionary painter, and in his visionariness he resembles Dante" (BOT §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §4 says that "Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects".

**A place to read.** BOT §4, with BOT §6.

## Meaning

A visionary is one who sees visions, the prophet or the mystic, and by extension one whose sight goes beyond what is there. In English painting of the century before Pater the type was William Blake, whose biographer called him *Pictor Ignotus*, the unknown painter, in the life of 1863 that restored his name.[353] Pater's visionary is not a seer of other worlds. He sees this one, and sees it through a mood.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the turn of the essay's fourth paragraph. Botticelli "might have been a mere naturalist" among the naturalists of his generation (BOT §4; see Naturalist); the sentence quoted above follows. Pater then defines the visionary by contrast. Giotto, Masaccio and Ghirlandajo are "dramatic, not visionary painters" (BOT §4; see Dramatic painter), while the genius of which Botticelli is the type "usurps the data before it" (BOT §4; see Data). The visionary does not see less than the transcriber; the outward image comes to him "with all its incisive and importunate reality" (BOT §4; see Outward image), but it awakes in him a mood, and the mood governs the picture (see Mood).

"In his visionariness he resembles Dante" makes Dante the measure, and the next paragraph sets a limit to the likeness. Botticelli is "far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5; see Conventional orthodoxy). He is Dante's kind of seer without Dante's theology: he sees by mood as Dante did, but what he sees is the middle world that Dante scorned (BOT §6; see Middle world).

The word returns once more: Botticelli's sympathy "makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist" (BOT §6; see Realist). Vision, on this account, is not a departure from the world but a way into it.

The phrase can be read as the book's definition of the artist it most admires. Leonardo, Michelangelo and Giorgione are each in their way painters who let a temperament govern the given. Pater's visionary is defined against the impassive spectator and toward the realist of feeling, and the definition is a claim about truth: that a scene is most truly painted by the one in whom it awakens most. The edition's note on the passage says

[353] Alexander Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake, "Pictor Ignotus"*, 2 vols (London, 1863).

that the contrast "prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects", and the rest of the essay is that reading.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which "visionary" or "visionariness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §4** Botticelli is a visionary painter, and in his visionariness he resembles Dante; Giotto and Masaccio are dramatic, not visionary painters.

**BOT §6** Botticelli's sympathy makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §4 says that "'Exponent' here means the visible expression of something inward. Pater's contrast between transcription and vision prepares his reading of the same melancholy expression in markedly different subjects."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Conventional orthodoxy; Data; Dramatic painter; Middle world; Mood; Naturalist; Outward image; Realist.

# Volatile effect

*volatile effects*; *volatile effect*

Attested: *volatile effects* (WIN §32); *volatile effect* (WIN §33). *Volatile* is the Latin *volatilis*, flying, and in chemistry a substance that passes off readily as vapour, like the *sal volatile* of smelling salts. Pater uses it for the spirit of architecture. The architect closes his sadness over him, or bares himself to the sunlight, but these spiritualities, "felt rather than seen", can only lurk about architectural form "as volatile effects", to be gathered from it by reflexion (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit). The spirit of a building is a vapour that hangs about it, and the visitor collects it by thinking, as a chemist condenses a gas. The next paragraph uses the word to define sculpture by contrast: the spirituality that only lurks about architecture "as a volatile effect" in sculpture "takes up the whole given material" (WIN §33; see Spiritual). What escapes from stone in a temple is held in stone by a statue. The figure can be read as part of the essay's chemistry of the spirit (see Sublime). The volatile is what will not stay in matter; sculpture is the art that makes it stay.

## See also

Humanistic spirit; Pure effect; Self-reflexion; Spiritual; Spiritualise; Sublime.

## Wandering sound

*wandering sound*

Attested: *wandering sound* (GIO §15). Pater uses the phrase in the sentence that names the master's own touches in the Concert, the one of the famous pictures the critics left him: "The outline of the lifted finger, the trace of the plume, the very threads of the fine linen, which fasten themselves on the memory, in the moment before they are lost altogether in that calm unearthly glow, the skill which has caught the waves of wandering sound, and fixed them for ever on the lips and hands—these are indeed the master's own; and the criticism which, while dismissing so much hitherto believed to be Giorgione's, has established the claims of this one picture, has left it among the most precious things in the world of art" (GIO §15). "Waves of wandering sound" is the language of acoustics, which describes sound as a wave spreading through the air; "wandering" adds that it spreads and is lost. The paradox is the essay's own. Sound passes, and painting is silent; yet the master's skill has "fixed" the passing sound "for ever on the lips and hands" that make it, as Giorgione's art arrests "instantaneous motion" (GIO §20; see Instantaneous motion). The edition's Introduction records: "The Uffizi now attributes it to Titian." The picture that "these are indeed the master's own" defends is no longer given to Giorgione, and its sound has wandered to another name.

### See also

Harpsichord; Instantaneous motion; Musical charm; Stringless instrument; Viol.

# Poetry, language and letters

## Antistrophe

*antistrophe*; *strophe and antistrophe*

Attested: *antistrophe* (BEL §4). In Greek choral lyric the strophe, *strophē*, a turning, was the stanza sung as the chorus moved one way, and the antistrophe, *antistrophē*, the answering stanza in the same metre sung as it turned back; most of the odes of Pindar are built of such pairs, each followed by an epode. The note at BEL §4 says that "the corresponding metrical patterns of strophe and antistrophe mark successive parts of an ode", and that "The French Pindaric revival adapted that patterned alternation." Pater uses the word of Ronsard's reform of the French song, which "became in the hands of Ronsard a Pindaric ode. He gave it structure, a sustained system, strophe and antistrophe" (BEL §4; see

Pindaric ode). Ronsard's *Odes* of 1550 set some of their Pindaric poems out in strophe, antistrophe and epode, as the Greek had. "Structure" and "system" are Pater's point: the antistrophe gives a poem a shape that answers itself, where the old chanson was "often, in its essence, something rude and formless" (BEL §4). The same sentence adds the changefulness of metre that keeps the eye moving (BEL §4; see Changefulness), and Pater's instance is Rémy Belleau's "Avril" (BEL §§5–6; see Pindaric ode). The order he praises is, on this reading, visible as well as audible, a pattern laid out on the page.

## See also

Changefulness; Chanson de geste; Pindaric ode; Strophe.

# Assonant

*Verse that chimes on vowels only, before true rhyme · The Renaissance assonant*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Assonance is the echo of vowel sounds at the ends of lines without the consonants that make a full rhyme; assonant verse is built on it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The songs of Aucassin and Nicolette are "of the simplest kind, not rhymed even, but only imperfectly assonant, stanzas of twenty or thirty lines apiece, all ending with a similar vowel sound" (FRE §21). In them "you see people just growing aware of the elements of a new music in their possession" (FRE §21).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word; the note at FRE §21 is on the cantefable (see Cantefable).

**A place to read.** FRE §21, the last three sentences.

## Meaning

The word comes from the Latin *assonare*, to answer with a sound. The early chansons de geste, the Old French epics, were written in laisses, stanzas of irregular length bound by one vowel sound at each line's end; later chansons turned to full rhyme. The songs of Aucassin and Nicolette use such assonance in short lines.

## Use in the book

Pater describes the songs closely: "the songs themselves are of the simplest kind, not rhymed even, but only imperfectly assonant, stanzas of twenty or thirty lines apiece, all ending with a similar vowel sound" (FRE §21). He reads them as a moment in the history of an art, the formation of "a new artistic sense" and the rise of "the music of rhymed poetry" (FRE §21; see New artistic sense; Music of rhymed poetry), in songs "which seem

always on the point of passing into true rhyme, but which halt somehow, and can never quite take flight" (FRE §21).

The image is of something unfinished and the more interesting for it. Assonance is rhyme not yet achieved, and Pater values the songs as a beginning, as he values the early phases of the Renaissance for "the charm of ascêsis" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis). The essay on Du Bellay can be read as the other end of the same history, where French poetry has mastered rhyme and the jaded readers of Ronsard's school "love a constant change of rhyme in poetry" (BEL §17).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**FRE §21** The songs are not rhymed but imperfectly assonant, always on the point of passing into true rhyme; a new music is being discovered.

## See also

Ascêsis; Cantefable; Music of rhymed poetry; New artistic sense; Rhyme.

# Aubade

*The dawn song of the Provençal poets · The Renaissance*
*Aubade*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An aubade is a dawn song, in which lovers who have spent the night together lament the coming of day and their parting.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The central love-poetry of Provence, the poetry of the Tenson and the Aubade, of Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal, is poetry for the few, for the elect and peculiar people of the kingdom of sentiment" (FRE §20).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §20 defines the tenson as a debate poem and the aubade as a dawn song.

**A place to read.** FRE §20, the first two sentences.

## Meaning

The French *aubade* comes from *aube*, dawn; the Provençal form is the *alba*. In the troubadour *alba* a watchman or a bird warns the lovers that day is coming, and the song keeps a refrain on the word *alba* itself. The form passed into the German *Tagelied* and the English dawn song.

## Use in the book

Pater names the aubade with the tenson as the two forms of "the central love-poetry of Provence", poetry "of Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal", the troubadours Bernart de Ventadorn of the twelfth century and Peire Vidal of about 1200 (FRE §20; see Tenson). He places it high and narrow, as "poetry for the few", for the elect of "the kingdom of sentiment" (FRE §20; see Kingdom of sentiment).

The aubade is named to set Aucassin and Nicolette below it. "But below this intenser poetry there was probably a wide range of literature, less serious and elevated, reaching, by lightness of form and comparative homeliness of interest, an audience which the concentrated passion of those higher lyrics left untouched" (FRE §20). Claude Fauriel thought he detected in the tale a later version of that lower range, "the only representative of its species" (FRE §20), though touches of "some intenser sentiment", coming "it would seem" from the Provençal poetry itself, break into it (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love). The aubade, with its parting at dawn, can be read as the purest form of the "concentrated passion" Pater describes.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**FRE §20** The poetry of the Tenson and the Aubade is for the elect of the kingdom of sentiment; below it there was probably a lighter literature, of which Fauriel thought Aucassin and Nicolette a surviving version.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §20 defines the tenson (see Tenson) and the aubade, "An aubade is a dawn song", and says Pater uses the forms "to evoke a Provençal tradition of formally elaborate love poetry".

## See also

Ideal intensity of love; Kingdom of sentiment; Tenson; Troubadour.

# Autograph

*autograph*

Attested: *autograph* (MIC §9, twice). A text in the author's own hand, from the Greek *autographos*, written with one's own hand. Pater tells the history of Michelangelo's sonnets in the ninth paragraph of the essay. They were first collected in 1623 by his great-nephew, Michelangelo Buonarroti the younger, who "omitted much, re-wrote the sonnets in part, and sometimes compressed two or more compositions into one" (MIC §9). "But in 1858 the last of the Buonarroti bequeathed to the municipality of

Florence the curiosities of his family. Among them was a precious volume containing the autograph of the sonnets" (MIC §9). Cesare Guasti (1822–1889), an archivist of the state archives in Florence, undertook "to collate this autograph with other manuscripts" (MIC §9; see Collate), and published the true text in 1863. The autograph matters to Pater because the poems are personal (MIC §9; see Occasional poetry), and the great-nephew's text of 1623 had lost "something of the force and incisiveness of the original" (MIC §9). The note at MIC §9 says that Guasti's edition "identifies itself as drawn from the autographs".

## See also

Collate; Occasional poetry.

## Bleynte

*bleynte*

Attested: *bleynte* (FRE §8). Middle English, the past tense of *blenchen*, to start back, flinch. Pater quotes three lines of Chaucer's Knight's Tale, where Palamon, a prisoner in the tower, first sees Emelya in the garden below: "He cast his eyen upon Emelya, / And therewithal he bleynte and cried, ah! / As that he stongen were unto the herte" (FRE §8).[354] The note at FRE §8 renders it "at once he started and cried 'Ah!' as if he had been stung to the heart", and says that "'Bleynte' suggests a sudden start or change of color". Pater hears more in the start than the shock of love: "What reader does not refer something of the bitterness of that cry to the spoiling, already foreseen, of the fair friendship, which had made the prison of the two lads sweet hitherto with its daily offices?" (FRE §9; see Comradeship). The Knight's Tale is his instance of friendship as a classical motive, an "antique tale" in which the love of the two friends for each other rivals their love for Emelya (FRE §7; see Classical motive).

## See also

Classical motive; Comradeship.

## Burlesque

*The comic strain in Aucassin and Nicolette · The Renaissance burlesque*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Burlesque is mockery by exaggeration or incongruity, treating a serious thing lightly or a slight thing grandly.

[354] Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, the Knight's Tale, I.1077–79.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Aucassin and Nicolette "has its burlesque element also, so that one hears the faint, far-off laughter still" (FRE §22). Its general substance is "lighter matter, always tinged with humour and often passing into burlesque", through which the deeper morsels of ideal love are scattered (FRE §29).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** FRE §22, from "And then all is so realised!"

## Meaning

The word comes through French from the Italian *burlesco*, from *burla*, a jest. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it named a kind of parody in verse and on the stage; by Pater's time it also meant, more loosely, the comic and mocking element in any work.

## Use in the book

Pater hears the burlesque as a sound. Among the details that make the tale "so realised" are the country people choosing their spokesman (FRE §22; see Enparlés), "for the little book has its burlesque element also, so that one hears the faint, far-off laughter still" (FRE §22). The laughter can be read as that of the first performers and their audience, faint with distance but still carried to the modern reader. The same paragraph says the tale asks to be entertained "chiefly for its manner" (FRE §22; see Cortois et bien assis; Matter and manner). Burlesque is the most perishable of manners, since a joke needs its audience, and that Pater can still hear it may be taken as a measure of the tale's life.

The second use places the burlesque in the tale's design. It is the "lighter matter, always tinged with humour and often passing into burlesque, which makes up the general substance of the piece", through which the morsels of "intenser sentiment" are scattered (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love). Burlesque is the ground and ideal love the figure. Pater does not name the burlesque episodes; the episode of the topsy-turvy kingdom of Torelore, where Aucassin finds the king lying in childbed and the queen away at the war, can be read as fitting his description.[355] His reading can be taken as holding the two together: the tale mocks the conventions of romance and keeps, within them, the intensity those conventions were made for.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §22** The little book has its burlesque element, and one hears its faint, far-off laughter still.

**FRE §29** The general substance of the piece is lighter matter, tinged with humour and often passing into burlesque.

[355] *Aucassin et Nicolette*, the Torelore episode; in English in Andrew Lang, *Aucassin and Nicolete* (London, 1887).

## See also

Cantefable; Cortois et bien assis; Enparlés; Ideal intensity of love; Matter and manner.

### Cantefable

*A tale told in prose and song, the name Aucassin and Nicolette gives itself · The Renaissance*
*cantefable*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A cantefable, in modern French *chantefable*, is a tale that alternates sung verse and spoken prose.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The writer himself calls the piece a cantefable, a tale told in prose, but with its incidents and sentiment helped forward by songs, inserted at irregular intervals" (FRE §21). Pater suspects "that the prose was only put together to connect a series of songs" (FRE §21).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §21 explains the term and its modern spelling; the Glossary's entry for Aucassin and Nicolette gives *chantefable*.

**A place to read.** FRE §§21–22.

## Meaning

The word joins the Old French *canter*, to sing, and *fable*, a tale, in the Picard form of the north of France. It is found only in Aucassin and Nicolette, whose last song closes *No cantefable prent fin, / n'en sai plus dire*, "our cantefable comes to its end; I can say no more"; the tale is the one surviving example of its kind, and scholars took the word from it for the genre.[356]

## Use in the book

Pater takes the author at his word. "The writer himself calls the piece a cantefable, a tale told in prose, but with its incidents and sentiment helped forward by songs, inserted at irregular intervals" (FRE §21). He then reverses the order the definition suggests: "In the junctions of the story itself there are signs of roughness and want of skill, which make one suspect that the prose was only put together to connect a series of songs—a series of songs so moving and attractive that people wished to heighten and dignify their effect by a regular framework or setting" (FRE §21). The songs come first, in his reading, and the prose is their frame.

The next paragraph imagines performance. The piece "was probably intended to be recited by a company of trained performers, many of whom, at least for the lesser parts, were probably children". Each song and each

[356] *Aucassin et Nicolette*, last section (41), in the unique manuscript, Paris, BnF fr. 2168.

division of prose is announced by its rubric, and "The musical notes of a portion of the songs have been preserved" (FRE §22; see Rubric; Or se cante; Or dient et content et fabloient). In Pater's account the cantefable can be read as a work between literature and theatre, and between speech and music; its songs, which "seem always on the point of passing into true rhyme" (FRE §21), make it a witness to the birth of a new art (see Assonant).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs, and the paragraph on its performance.

**FRE §21** The writer calls the piece a cantefable, prose helped forward by songs; the prose seems put together to connect the songs.

**FRE §22** The piece was probably recited by trained performers; songs and prose are introduced by their rubrics.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §21 explains the word as "A sung tale alternating verse and prose, more often spelled chantefable in modern French", and the labels inside the work as signalling "when the mode changes". The Glossary's entry for Aucassin and Nicolette calls it "An anonymous Old French tale alternating sung verse and spoken prose", adding that "The form is often called a *chantefable*". Pater's own note at FRE §20 commends the English versions of the tale by F. W. Bourdillon and Andrew Lang, and the chapter on "The Outdoor Poetry" in Vernon Lee's *Euphorion*.

## See also

Assonant; Burlesque; Or dient et content et fabloient; Or se cante; Rubric.

# Castigation

*castigation*

Attested: *castigation* (BEL §3). Castigation is correction, from the Latin *castigare*, to make pure, chasten, set right, a word built on *castus*, pure; Renaissance scholars used it of the correcting of a text, and an edition "castigated" was one purged of its errors. Pater uses it of the state of French literature before the Pleiad: "In Ronsard's time that rougher element seemed likely to predominate. No one can turn over the pages of Rabelais without feeling how much need there was of softening, of castigation. To effect this softening is the object of the revolution in poetry which is connected with Ronsard's name" (BEL §3), François Rabelais being the author of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, the great comic books of the age.

"Softening" and "castigation" are set side by side, and the scholar's sense keeps the second from being only a punishment. The Pleiad corrects French as an editor corrects a text, by refining it. The essay counts what was lost in the process, the force and the seriousness of French work (BEL §3; see Finesse), and the word may be taken to carry both sides: castigation purifies, and it chastens.

## See also

Finesse; Gothic manner; Literary revolution.

## Changefulness

*changefulness*; *changeful*

Attested: *changefulness* (BEL §4); *changeful* (LEO §15). Changefulness is the quality of what keeps changing, variety in motion. Pater uses it of the metre Ronsard gave the French ode. Ronsard gave the old chanson structure and taught it "a changefulness and variety of metre", so that its very look on the page "carries the eye lightly onwards" (BEL §4; see Pindaric ode). The pleasure is twofold, of the ear and of the eye, and the example that follows, Rémy Belleau's "Avril", shows it: each six-line stanza sets two lines of three syllables among lines of seven, so that it lies on the page as a pattern of long and short (BEL §§5–6; see Doulce haleine). The Leonardo essay uses the adjective of people, the people who moved in the streets of Milan below the new Duomo, a people "as fantastic, changeful, and dreamlike" as the cathedral that seemed so fantastic to a Florentine eye (LEO §15). Pater does not cite it, but John Ruskin, in "The Nature of Gothic" (1853), had named changefulness the second of the elements of Gothic architecture, after its savageness.[357] Pater's changefulness belongs to the Renaissance refinement of the Gothic, not to the Gothic itself, and the two uses can be set side by side: in both the variety keeps the eye from rest.

## See also

Antistrophe; Curiosity; Doulce haleine; Gothic manner; Pindaric ode.

## Chanson de geste

*chansons de geste*; *chanson*; *the song of Roland*

Attested: *chansons de geste* (BEL §2); *the song of Roland* (BEL §2); *chanson* (BEL §4). A chanson de geste is a song of deeds, from the Latin *gesta*, things done: the long Old French narrative poems of the wars of Charlemagne and his barons, of which *The Song of Roland*, from about 1100, is the most famous. The note at BEL §2 renders the phrase "Songs of

[357] John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 2 (London, 1853), ch. 6, "The Nature of Gothic".

heroic deeds". The sentence is long and holds both arts: "Alike in the old Gothic cathedrals, and in their counterpart, the old Gothic chansons de geste, the rough and ponderous mass becomes, as if by passing for a moment into happier conditions, or through a more gracious stratum of air, graceful and refined, like the carved ferneries on the granite church at Folgoat, or the lines which describe the fair priestly hands of Archbishop Turpin, in the song of Roland; although below both alike there is a fund of mere Gothic strength, or heaviness" (BEL §2). Turpin, archbishop of Reims, fights beside Charlemagne's twelve peers in the poem and dies at Roncevaux; when Roland sees him lying dead, the poet says that "on his breast, between the two collarbones, he has crossed his white hands, the fair ones".[358] Pater's "fair priestly hands" are those *blanches mains, les beles*. The detail is a fine line in a heavy poem, as a carved fern is in granite, and the essay can be read as finding in the chanson de geste what it finds in the whole French middle age: strength below, and here and there the higher touch (BEL §3; see Ennoble).

## See also

Aerial delicacy; Daintiness; Ennoble; Gothic manner; La poésie chantée; Pindaric ode.

## Classical motive

*classical motive*; *motive*, *motives*

Attested: *classical motive* (FRE §7); *motive* (FRE §29). A motive, the French *motif*, is the theme or moving idea of a work of art. "Such comradeship, though instances of it are to be found everywhere, is still especially a classical motive" (FRE §7; see Comradeship). Pater gives one instance, Chaucer's Knight's Tale, "an antique tale" set in the Athens of Theseus and taken from Boccaccio's *Teseida*, in which "one knows not whether the love of both Palamon and Arcite for Emelya, or of those two for each other, is the chiefer subject" (FRE §7; see Bleynte). The Dioscuri, with whom "that curious interest of the Doppelgänger" "begins among the stars", can be read as giving the friends' likeness a classical origin in myth (FRE §10; see Dioscuri). The book's last friendships are Winckelmann's, regulated, Pater says, by "that beauty of living form" (WIN §19; see Beauty of living form). "Motive" or "motives" comes in seventeen further paragraphs, ten of them in the Winckelmann essay; in the first essay it returns for "the ideal intensity of love, the motive which really unites together the fragments" of Aucassin and Nicolette (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love).

[358] *La Chanson de Roland*, Oxford manuscript, laisse 167, ll. 2249–50: *Desur sun piz entre les dous furceles / Cruisiedes ad ses blanches mains les beles*.

## See also

Beauty of living form; Bleynte; Comradeship; Dioscuri; Ideal intensity of love; Temperament.

## Collate

*collate*

Attested: *collate* (MIC §9). To compare texts of the same work line by line in order to establish what the author wrote, from the Latin *collatus*, brought together. It is the first task of an editor. Pater uses the word of Guasti's work: "A learned Italian, Signor Cesare Guasti, undertook to collate this autograph with other manuscripts at the Vatican and elsewhere, and in 1863 published a true version of Michelangelo's poems, with dissertations and a paraphrase" (MIC §9; see Autograph). The collation undid the work of the great-nephew who had published the sonnets in 1623, and it made "a true study" of the poems "for the first time possible" (MIC §9). Pater draws on it in the next paragraph, where Guasti "finds only four, or at most five" sonnets that can be shown on genuine authority to be addressed to Vittoria Colonna (MIC §10). Pater adds in a note that "The sonnets have been translated into English, with much skill, and poetic taste, by Mr. J. A. Symonds" (MIC §9); the English critic and historian of the Italian Renaissance John Addington Symonds (1840–1893) published *The Sonnets of Michael Angelo Buonarroti and Tommaso Campanella* in 1878, between the first edition of *The Renaissance* and the fourth.

## See also

Autograph.

## Conceit

*conceit*, *conceits*

Attested: *conceit* (FRE §10; BOT §8); *conceits* (PIC §5). A fanciful device or invention, in story, thought or ornament; the word is from "conceive", and once meant any thing conceived. In Amis and Amile, "like a second reflexion of that inward similitude", comes "the conceit of two marvellously beautiful cups, also exactly like each other" (FRE §10; see Inward similitude; Handiwork). In the Pico essay "its quaint conceits" are among the marks of the allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century, which Pater values as part of the local colour of its age (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation; Local colour). In Botticelli's Birth of Venus the draperies are powdered "with a quaint conceit of daisies" (BOT §8; see Quaint conceit). Twice the conceit is "quaint", and each time Pater takes it as a mark of the period, a small ingenuity that gives an age its flavour (see Quaintness).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Handiwork; Inward similitude; Local colour; Quaint conceit; Quaintness.

## Construe

*construe*

Attested: *construe* (PIC §6). To take a sentence apart grammatically and render it word by word, as a schoolboy construes his Latin; from the Latin *construere*, to build up. When Ficino's Latin Plato was finished, "the door of the mystical temple lay open to all who could construe Latin" (PIC §6; see Mystical temple). The schoolroom verb sits against the temple. Plato's mysteries, kept for the initiated, are now open to anyone who can parse a Latin sentence, and the grand image can be read as lightly undercut. Pater's praise of Pico a little later turns on the difference: Pico, who reads Plato in Greek, belongs for that reason to the higher culture (PIC §14; see Higher culture).

## See also

Higher culture; Mystical temple.

## Convenient

*convenient*; *conveniently*

Attested: *convenient* (FRE §13); *conveniently* (FRE §31). The Latin *convenire*, to come together, gave "convenient" its old sense, fitting, proper, as it should be; the modern sense, easy or handy, came later. Pater's English of Amis and Amile keeps the old one. When Amis protests that his comrade should not become a murderer for his sake, "the angel said, It is convenient that he do this. And thereupon the angel departed" (FRE §13). The angel means that it is fitting, that it accords with God's purpose. The adverb comes in Pater's own prose, with the modern sense: Aucassin, carried by the malady of his love into the midst of his enemies, "heard them talking together how they might most conveniently kill him" (FRE §31; see Malady of love). On one reading the two uses mark the distance between the stories, the one solemn and sacred, the other touched with burlesque.

## See also

Comradeship; Feat; Malady of love.

## Copie

*copie*; *copia*

Attested: *copie* (BEL §9); *copia* (MIC §15). *Copie*, in sixteenth-century French, is abundance, from the Latin *copia*, plenty; the note at BEL §9 renders Du Bellay's phrase *cette élégance et copie qui est en la langue Greque et Romaine* as "That elegance and abundance found in the Greek and Latin languages", and explains that the word "here concerns the resources of vocabulary and expression". Pater quotes it in his account of those who despaired of French, "who thought it naturally incapable of the fulness and elegance of Greek and Latin" (BEL §9), and his English, "fulness", renders it. The words are Du Bellay's, from the *Deffense* (I.9), where they read *en la grecque et romaine*, without Pater's *langue*.[359] *Copia* had been made a doctrine of style a generation earlier, in the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus's *De copia* (1512), and Erasmus teaches it as a power to be won by reading and practice, not a gift of nature.[360] That is Du Bellay's argument: the virtue of a language "is generated in the world of choice and men's freewill concerning them" (BEL §9; see Freewill), and French may win copie by its users' cultivation. The Italian form comes once, in a line of Michelangelo's in which great abundance curbs great desire, *ove gran desir gran copia affrena* (MIC §15; see Surfeiting of desire). The two uses may be taken as the two faces of plenty, an abundance to be won in language and an abundance that dulls in love.

### See also

Classical culture; Dead words; Freewill; Surfeiting of desire; Vulgar tongue.

## Cortois et bien assis

*cortois et bien assis*

Attested: *cortois, it tells us, et bien assis* (FRE §22). Old French, rendered in the note at FRE §22 as "Refined and well composed". *Cortois* is courteous, of the court, the word behind English "courteous"; *bien assis* is well set, well placed. The note says that "'Courteous' suggests the cultivated manners of a court" and that "The second phrase may describe the tale as aptly put together or pleasingly composed". Pater cites the tale's own claim to be a thing of joy, to be entertained chiefly for its manner (FRE §22; see Matter and manner): "it is cortois, it tells us, et bien assis" (FRE §22). He sets the claim beside "this high quality of poetry, that it aims at a purely

[359] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 9.

[360] Desiderius Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo* (Paris, 1512).

artistic effect" (FRE §22). He splits the phrase with his own words, and the tale speaks for itself in its own language.

## See also

Cantefable; Matter and manner.

## Dansellon

*dansellon*

Attested: *dansellon* (FRE §31). Old French, a young nobleman; the note at FRE §31 gives "young nobleman", and calls the word "a diminutive for a young nobleman or lad". It is formed, like the French *damoiseau*, from the Latin *dominus*, lord, and so means a little lord, a squire not yet knighted. Pater keeps it among the epithets of Aucassin: "slim, tall, debonair, dansellon, as the singers call him, with his curled yellow hair, and eyes of vair" (FRE §31; see Vair). "As the singers call him" marks it as a word of the songs, like the epithets "li biax, li blons, / Li gentix, li amorous" just before (FRE §30; see Li gentix). The figure is "the very image of the Provençal love-god, no longer a child, but grown to pensive youth" (FRE §31; see Love-god).

## See also

Ideal intensity of love; Li gentix; Love-god; Vair.

## Dead words

*The ancient languages kept in books, against the living speech that passes daily through the mouths of men · The Renaissance*

*dead words*; *dead languages*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Words no longer spoken, the words of a language that lives only in writing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Culture is to be carried "out of dead words into those which are alive" (BEL §9).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §11 says that the image of the reliquaries "returns to the earlier comparison of classical texts to sacred objects seen through glass", and that "A language preserved in books has lost the daily circulation Du Bellay prizes."

**A place to read.** BEL §§9, 11.

## Meaning

A dead language is one that no community speaks as its own, known only from books and learned with effort; Greek and Latin were such languages in the sixteenth century, though Latin was still written and spoken by the learned. "Dead words" is a sharper phrase. It makes death a property of the words themselves, and it sets them against words that are "alive", spoken, changing, used.

## Use in the book

The phrase is Du Bellay's, quoted by Pater in the ninth paragraph, where he gives the case against those who thought that science and poetry could be written only in Greek and Latin. Du Bellay first compares the classical writings, as such men keep them, to relics behind glass (BEL §9; see Reliquary), and then says what the comparison means: "That is what these people do with all branches of culture, which they keep shut up in Greek and Latin books, not permitting one to see them otherwise, or transport them out of dead words into those which are alive, and wing their way daily through the mouths of men" (BEL §9). The opposition is between keeping and transporting. Culture kept in the dead words is preserved and untouchable; culture transported into living words moves, and the verb "wing" gives it flight. The French of the *Deffense* has *de ces paroles mortes en celles qui sont vives* (I.10).[361] The living words, in the image, are winged, and the image can be read as a turn on Homer's "winged words", which fly from one mouth to another ear: the classical tradition supplies the figure for its own escape from the classical languages.

Pater takes up the thought in his own voice two paragraphs later. Du Bellay's plea for French is "for freedom, impulse, reality, not in literature only, but in daily communion of speech" (BEL §11; see Mother-tongue), and Greek and Latin were "dead languages shut up in books as in reliquaries" (BEL §11; see Reliquary). The French phrase that follows, *péris et mises en reliquaires de livres*, is from the *Deffense* too, where it stands in the singular and is said of French itself, supposing it had perished like Greek and Latin, in the chapter on the impossibility of equalling the ancients in their own tongues (I.11).[362] Pater's "daily" answers his own rendering of Du Bellay, in which the living words fly "daily" through the mouths of men (the French has *ordinairement*, commonly), and the mother-tongue is the language of "daily communion". Death, in the image, is the lack of daily use.

The phrase can be read as a paradox that the whole book bears on. The Renaissance revived the dead languages, and the revival is one of the things the book praises; yet in Du Bellay the revival ends by sending the reader

[361] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 10.

[362] Du Bellay, *Deffence*, book I, ch. 11.

back to his own tongue. Pater makes the same turn in the life. Du Bellay's studies of the Greek and Latin poets "came too late to make him what he so much desired to be, a trifler in Greek and Latin verse, like so many others of his time now forgotten; instead, they made him a lover of his own homely native tongue" (BEL §12; see Homely art). The forgotten triflers wrote in dead words, and are dead with them; the poet who failed to learn them well enough wrote in a living one, and lives. Pater calls the failure "this fortunate shortcoming in his education", through which "he became national and modern" (BEL §12; see National and modern).

The book's own practice can be read against the phrase. Pater quotes Latin, Italian and French freely, and often leaves them untranslated; but the quotations are mostly set in a living English sentence that carries them, as Du Bellay would have the classical culture carried into French. The dead word is quoted; the living word does the work.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "dead words" or "dead languages" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BEL §9** Du Bellay's opponents keep culture shut up in Greek and Latin books and will not transport it out of dead words into living ones.

**BEL §11** It was impossible to have the impulse of daily speech in Greek and Latin, dead languages shut up in books as in reliquaries.

## In this edition

The notes render the French of the two places. At BEL §9 *cette élégance et copie qui est en la langue Greque et Romaine* is "That elegance and abundance found in the Greek and Latin languages" (see Copie). At BEL §11 *péris et mises en reliquaires de livres* is "Perished and placed in the reliquaries of books", with the comment quoted above, and *pauvre plante et vergette*, the "starveling stock" of French, is "A poor plant and little shoot", a figure of "the supposedly weak stock of a vernacular that can nonetheless be made to grow" (see Starveling stock).

## See also

Copie; Homely art; Mother-tongue; National and modern; Reliquary; Starveling stock; Vulgar tongue.

# Dénouement

*The unravelling of a plot; in the last sentences of the book, the end that noble men and women work out within the network of natural law · The Renaissance*

*a supreme dénouement*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, "untying": the resolution of the plot of a play or novel, where its knots are undone.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo "certain groups of noble men and women work out for themselves a supreme dénouement" (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §53 renders the word "Resolution" and says that "Pater ends by asking how art can show a kind of freedom in the way a person meets conditions beyond their power to alter."

**A place to read.** WIN §53.

## Meaning

*Dénouement* is from the French *dénouer*, to untie, from *nouer*, to knot, from the Latin *nodus*, a knot. In the criticism of drama it is the untying of the plot, as the *nœud*, the knot, is its tying. The figure is ancient: Aristotle divides every tragedy into the tying, *desis*, everything up to the change of fortune, and the untying, *lusis*, from the change to the end,[363] and French classical criticism took the pair as *nœud* and *dénouement*. English borrowed the French word in the eighteenth century.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, where he asks what modern art can do for the modern spirit. The spirit needs, Pater says, the "sense of freedom", and the old sense of freedom is gone: for us necessity is "a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53; see Magnetic). Pater asks whether art can give the spirit "at least an equivalent for the sense of freedom" (WIN §53; see Freedom), and his answer is the modern novel. "Certainly, in Goethe's romances, and even more in the romances of Victor Hugo, we have high examples of modern art dealing thus with modern life, regarding that life as the modern mind must regard it, yet reflecting upon it blitheness and repose" (WIN §53). And then: "In those romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo, in some excellent work done after them, this entanglement, this network of law, becomes the tragic situation, in which certain groups of noble men and women work out for themselves a supreme dénouement" (WIN §53).

The sentence turns the figure of the knot to the essay's purpose. The network of law is the knot; the noble characters do not cut it, since natural laws "we shall never modify" (WIN §53), but untie it, and the untying is theirs, "for themselves". Freedom, on this account, is not escape from the knot but the manner of its undoing: "there is still something in the nobler or less noble attitude with which we watch their fatal combinations" (WIN

[363] Aristotle, *Poetics* 18, 1455b24–32.

§53; see Freedom). The dénouement is the place where that attitude shows. "Supreme" makes it more than an ending; it is the height of the work, the moment in which necessity and nobility meet.

The essay can be read as joining here the two arts it has most set apart. Sculpture, it said, presents character and excludes situation; poetry and painting develop situation (WIN §§36–37; see Character). The modern romance makes the situation itself "tragic", a network of law, and asks of its characters the old Greek virtue of repose within it. The dénouement is thus a Greek resolution in a modern plot, and the romances of Goethe and Hugo are Pater's instances of the "blitheness and universality of the antique ideal" communicated to the fulness of modern experience (WIN §52; see Universality).

Pater names no romance here, but the forty-fifth paragraph has named two of Hugo's, *Les Travailleurs de la mer* (*The Toilers of the Sea*) and *Les Misérables*, with Gilliatt and the bleeding mouth of Fantine, as instances of a "subtle and penetrative, yet somewhat grotesque art of the modern world" that Winckelmann could hardly have conceived (WIN §45). Gilliatt, who saves the ship's engine and then gives up the woman he loves and lets the sea rise over him, can be read as the very type of the supreme dénouement.

## Places to read

The last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, where the word occurs, with the paragraph of the essay that names two of Hugo's romances, in the order of the book.

**WIN §45** Pater asks what Winckelmann would have thought of Gilliatt, or of Fantine, in Victor Hugo's romances.

**WIN §53** In the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo, noble men and women work out for themselves a supreme dénouement.

## See also

Blitheness; Chain of circumstance; Character; Freedom; Magnetic; Universality.

# Dernière main

*The painter's last touch, which Du Bellay desired for the French language · The Renaissance*

*cette dernière main que nous désirons*; *that last, so desirable, touch*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The last hand, the finishing touch a painter gives a picture; for Du Bellay, the perfection a language still lacks.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Du Bellay would give French, "as painters do to their pictures, that last, so desirable, touch" (BEL §11).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §11 renders the phrase "That final touch we desire", and says that "The metaphor compares the cultivated finish of literary expression with the last touches of a painter."

**A place to read.** BEL §11.

## Meaning

*La dernière main*, the last hand, is the French form of an old Latin figure, *extrema manus* or *summa manus*, the final working that completes a thing. It belongs to the workshop: the painter's last strokes, the sculptor's last polish. To put the last hand to a work is to finish it, and the figure carries the sense that finishing is a separate act, the one that turns a work that is done into a work that is perfect.

## Use in the book

Pater sets the phrase at the head of the eleventh paragraph, in a sentence that gathers the aims of Du Bellay's treatise: "In this effort to ennoble the French language, to give it grace, number, perfection, and as painters do to their pictures, that last, so desirable, touch—cette dernière main que nous désirons—what Du Bellay is really pleading for is his mother-tongue, the language, that is, in which one will have the utmost degree of what is moving and passionate" (BEL §11). The list rises from grace and number, the qualities of a style, to perfection, and the painter's figure names the last step. The sentence then turns. What Du Bellay is "really" pleading for is not polish but the language of passion, and the last touch is wanted for the sake of what moves.

In the *Deffense* the phrase stands in another place, in a negative sentence: the last touch is what translation cannot give. Pater lifts it from the negative and sets it among the aims of the whole treatise, and the move can be read as his reading of Du Bellay in brief: what the translator cannot supply, the poet writing in his own tongue may.

The book has three other last touches, and they mark the range of the figure. Michelangelo, treating the Creation for the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, "receives from tradition his central conception, and does but add the last touches" (MIC §18; see Medievalism): the design is the middle age's, the finish his. Leonardo is the opposite case. "His restlessness, his endless re-touchings, his odd experiments with colour" are the sign of his struggle between reason and the senses (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty), and in the refectory at Milan there were anecdotes of "his retouchings and delays" (LEO §26; see Invention). For Leonardo there is no last touch, only another. Pater does not cite it, but Pliny the Elder tells that the painter Apelles granted his rival Protogenes equality or more in everything but one: Apelles knew when to take his hand from the picture, and his memorable

precept was that too much care often does harm.[364] The last touch can be read, in that light, as the one that knows when to stop.

The Pleiad, in Pater's account, can be read as running Protogenes' danger. Its charm is that "of a thing not vigorous or original, but full of the grace which comes of long study and reiterated refinements, and many steps repeated, and many angles worn down" (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise), and its merits are "grace and finish" (BEL §17; see Finish of expression). The last touch was given, and given again. The essay can be read as setting Du Bellay's desire for the last touch at the beginning of the movement and its excess at the end: a language brought to perfection, and a poetry that could not stop perfecting.

## Places to read

The paragraph of the phrase, with every other paragraph in which a last touch, a re-touching or a retouching is named, in the order of the book.

**MIC §18** Michelangelo receives his conception from tradition and does but add the last touches.

**LEO §20** Leonardo's restlessness shows in his endless re-touchings.

**LEO §26** Anecdotes were told of Leonardo's retouchings and delays in painting the Last Supper.

**BEL §11** Du Bellay would give the French language, as painters do to their pictures, that last, so desirable, touch.

## Pater's sources

The phrase comes from the chapter of the *Deffense* arguing that translations are not sufficient to perfect the French language (I.5), where Du Bellay concludes that the work of translators, useful as it is, "is not sufficient to give to ours this perfection and, as painters do to their pictures, this last hand which we desire".[365]

## See also

Desire of beauty; Ennoble; Finish of expression; Invention; Medievalism; Mother-tongue; Number; Une fadeur exquise.

# Diminutive

*diminutives*; *diminutive*

Attested: *diminutives* (BEL §16); *diminutive*, adjective (LEO §22; GIO §2). A diminutive is a form of a word that makes the thing named small, and

[364] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* XXXV.80.

[365] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 5: *n'est suffisante pour donner à la nôtre cette perfection et, comme font les peintres à leurs tableaux, cette dernière main, que nous désirons*.

often dear: in French the endings *-et* and *-ette*. Pater uses the noun in his account of the Pleiad's play: "They are full of fine railleries; they delight in diminutives, ondelette, fontelette, doucelette, Cassandrette" (BEL §16). The note at BEL §16 renders them "Little wave, little spring, sweet little one, little Cassandra", and says that they make "the thing named sound small, delicate or intimate"; Cassandrette is Cassandre Salviati, to whom Ronsard wrote his *Amours* of 1552. The sentence before has said that Amor has become "Love the boy, or the babe" (BEL §16; see Amor), and the diminutive is the grammar of that change: a mythology made small enough to play with. The essay's last poem shows the same taste in Du Bellay, whose winnower offers the winds "ces fleurettes" and "vermeillettes roses" (BEL §26; see Doulce haleine). The adjective elsewhere keeps the fondness. Leonardo's drawing at Florence of a mother and child has "the half-humorous pathos of the diminutive, rounded shoulders" of the child (LEO §22; see Maternity), and in Titian's Presentation of the Virgin there is "a touch of true childlike humour in the diminutive, quaint figure with its silk gown" (GIO §2; see Abstract colour).

## See also

Abstract colour; Amor; Doulce haleine; Maternity; Ondelette; Raillery.

# Double music

*The Pleiad's ambition to unite the measured music of Greek and Latin verse with the music of French rhyme · The Renaissance*

*double music*; *these two kinds of music*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Two musics in one verse: the measure of quantity, which scans, and the music of rhyme.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To combine these two kinds of music in a new school of French poetry, to make verse which should scan and rhyme as well, to search out and harmonise the measure of every syllable, and unite it to the swift, flitting, swallow-like motion of rhyme, to penetrate their poetry with a double music—this was the ambition of the Pleiad" (BEL §15).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §15 says that Pater "hears a second kind of musicality in the classical patterning of syllables".

**A place to read.** BEL §15.

## Meaning

Greek and Latin verse is measured by quantity, the length of syllables, long and short arranged in feet; it scans, and it does not rhyme. French verse is measured by the number of syllables, and it rhymes. The two systems give

two kinds of music, a music of measure inside the line and a music of echo at its end. A double music would have both.

## Use in the book

The fifteenth paragraph sets the two musics side by side, the measured, scanned verse of Latin and Greek and the rhymed, unscanned verse of Villon and the old French poets (BEL §15; see La poésie chantée). The ambition of the Pleiad was to have both, and Pater's sentence gives each its quality as it names it. The classical music is a matter of search and harmony, "to search out and harmonise the measure of every syllable"; the French music is a motion, "the swift, flitting, swallow-like motion of rhyme" (BEL §15; see Rhyme; Scansion). The swallows are the essay's own: in the poem of April quoted nine paragraphs earlier they are the messengers of spring that April brings back from exile (BEL §6; see Doulce haleine). The rhyme flits, and the measure holds.

The next sentence says what the ambition shows about the poets. "They are insatiable of music, they cannot have enough of it; they desire a music of greater compass perhaps than words can possibly yield, to drain out the last drops of sweetness which a certain note or accent contains" (BEL §15). The double music is a sign of appetite, and the essay is not sure that the appetite can be fed. The words "perhaps than words can possibly yield" are the point: poetry, pressed for more music than language holds, strains toward the art that has nothing else. The sentence, from an essay dated 1872, five years before the Giorgione essay of 1877, can be read as an early form of that essay's doctrine that all art "constantly aspires towards the condition of music" (GIO §5; see Condition of music), and of its account of the arts' borrowing from one another (GIO §3; see Anders-streben). In the Pleiad the striving is not yet a law of art; it answers the wish of a jaded audience, "princes weary of love", for "a subdued and delicate excitement" (BEL §17; see Eye of the fancy).

The surrounding paragraphs place the music in the Pleiad's life. The sixteenth begins with the composer Claude Goudimel, "the serious and protestant Goudimel, who set Ronsard's songs to music; but except in this eagerness for music the poets of the Pleiad seem never quite in earnest" (BEL §16). Music is the one thing they take seriously. The eleventh had already found music in Du Bellay's theory of language: he "recognised of what force the music and dignity of languages are, how they enter into the inmost part of things" (BEL §11; see Music of language). The thirteenth gives the Romanticists who brought the Pleiad back an "eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery" (BEL §13; see Romantic school). The essay's music is thus a taste the Pleiad shared with the readers who revived it.

Pater does not mention it, but the ambition had a real history. Jean-Antoine de Baïf, one of the seven of the Pleiad, founded in 1570, with the

musician Thibault de Courville and the king's letters patent, an Académie de Poésie et de Musique for the making of French verse measured in the ancient manner, *vers mesurés à l'antique*, to be sung.[366] The *Deffense* had already given a chapter to rhyme and to verse without rhyme (II.7).[367] Pater's "double music" can be read as the Pleiad's programme in its most generous form, verse that should "scan and rhyme as well", where the Académie chose measure and music over rhyme.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Du Bellay essay in which "music" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BEL §11** Du Bellay recognised of what force the music and dignity of languages are.

**BEL §13** The Romanticists, eager for strange music and imagery, went back to the middle age and took up the Pleiad.

**BEL §15** The Pleiad would penetrate their poetry with a double music, scanned and rhymed.

**BEL §16** Goudimel set Ronsard's songs to music, and except in their eagerness for music the Pleiad seem never quite in earnest.

## See also

Anders-streben; Condition of music; Doulce haleine; Eye of the fancy; La poésie chantée; Music of language; Music of rhymed poetry; Rhyme; Romantic school; Scansion.

# Ennoble

*To raise the French language to the rank of the classical ones, the problem of Du Bellay's treatise · The Renaissance*

*ennoble*; *ennobling*; *nobler blood in a lower stock*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To make noble: to raise in rank, dignity or worth.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The problem of Du Bellay's treatise is "how to illustrate or ennoble the French language" (BEL §8).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §10 renders the French as "We always favor foreigners", and says that "The 'foreigners' are writers or literary models esteemed for coming from outside the native tradition."

**A place to read.** BEL §§8–11.

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[366] The letters patent of Charles IX for the Académie de Poésie et de Musique of Jean-Antoine de Baïf and Joachim Thibault de Courville are dated November 1570.

[367] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book II, ch. 7, "De la rime et des vers sans rime".

## Meaning

To ennoble is first to make a man noble, to raise him into the nobility by grant; then to give anything the dignity of what is noble. Applied to a language, the word carries its social sense with it. A language can be of low birth, a vernacular, the speech of the people, as against the languages of learning; to ennoble it is to give it the rank that Greek and Latin held, so that it may be used for the highest things.

## Use in the book

The word comes three times in the Du Bellay essay, each time as the name of the treatise's problem. The first gives it with its twin. *La Deffense et Illustration de la langue Françoyse* has for its problem "how to illustrate or ennoble the French language, to give it lustre" (BEL §8; see Illustrate). Pater's three verbs, illustrate, ennoble, give lustre, translate one word of Du Bellay's title three ways, and the second of them is the one that recurs.

The second use sets out a wrong answer, in an age of translations (BEL §10; see Law of translation). "Du Bellay himself translated two books of the Æneid, and other poetry, old and new, and there were some who thought that the translation of the classical literature was the true means of ennobling the French language:—strangers are ever favourites with us—nous favorisons toujours les étrangers" (BEL §10). The parenthesis can be read as ironic. To ennoble French by translation is to ennoble it with borrowed dignity, the dignity of strangers, and Du Bellay "moderates their expectations" (BEL §10; see Law of translation). The French clause is Du Bellay's own, from the *Deffense* (I.9), though not from its chapters on translation.[368]

The third use gives the right answer. The effort to ennoble the French language, to give it grace, number, perfection and the painter's last touch, is really, Pater says, a plea for the mother-tongue (BEL §11; see Dernière main; Mother-tongue). French is to be ennobled from within, by cultivation, not by grafting on the dignity of other tongues. The paragraph ends: "it is his patriotism not to despair of it", and he sees French "already perfect in all elegance and beauty of words" (BEL §11; see Vénusté).

Pater's own language in the essay can be read as making the word's genealogy visible. In the third paragraph the "higher touch" of French art betrays itself "like nobler blood in a lower stock, by a fine line or gesture or expression, the turn of a wrist, the tapering of a finger" (BEL §3). In the eleventh the French language is "this starveling stock—pauvre plante et vergette" (BEL §11; see Starveling stock). "Stock" is a lineage and a plant, and the essay uses both: noble blood shows in a low family, and a poor plant may be grown. Ennobling, in Du Bellay's sense as Pater reads it, is the raising of a stock that already carries, here and there, the signs of better

[368] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 9: *mais nous favorisons toujours les étrangers*.

blood. Du Bellay himself, the younger son of a soldiering family whose education was neglected, became through that neglect "a lover of his own homely native tongue" (BEL §12; see Dead words), and the life can be read as the treatise's argument in small: nobility won by cultivation, not inherited.

The book's other uses of "noble" mostly keep the plain sense of high worth, all noble sculpture (ROB §6), a noble and legitimate function of art (GIO §7), the nobler or less noble attitude with which we watch the fatal combinations of natural laws (WIN §53; see Le discours fatal des choses mondaines). The Du Bellay essay is the one place where nobility is something done to a thing, and the thing is a language.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ennoble" or "ennobling" occurs, with BEL §3, where the higher touch shows like nobler blood, in the order of the book.

**BEL §3** The higher touch in French art betrays itself like nobler blood in a lower stock.

**BEL §8** The problem of Du Bellay's treatise is how to illustrate or ennoble the French language.

**BEL §10** Some thought the translation of the classical literature the true means of ennobling French.

**BEL §11** In the effort to ennoble the French language Du Bellay is really pleading for his mother-tongue.

## In this edition

The note at BEL §8 renders the title of Du Bellay's treatise as "Defense and Enrichment of the French Language", and says that "Illustration here is the act of making the language illustrious by cultivating its literary powers." The notes at BEL §11 render *pauvre plante et vergette* as "A poor plant and little shoot" and *parfait en toute élégance et vénusté de paroles* as "Perfect in every elegance and grace of expression".

## See also

Dead words; Dernière main; Illustrate; Law of translation; Le discours fatal des choses mondaines; Mother-tongue; Starveling stock; Vénusté.

# Enparlés

*enparlés*

Attested: *enparlés* (FRE §22). Old French, well-spoken, ready of speech, from *parler*, to speak. Pater quotes it among the details that make the tale "so realised": "we hear the light-hearted country-people calling each other

by their rustic names, and putting forward, as their spokesman, one among them who is more eloquent and ready than the rest—li un qui plus fu enparlés des autres" (FRE §22), part of the burlesque element Pater hears in the tale (see Burlesque). His English comes first and the Old French after it. The note at FRE §22 renders the phrase "The one who was more ready of speech than the others", and calls the choice of a spokesman "a small dramatic turn in the narrative". The rustics' spokesman can be read as part of that comedy, the country people speaking up in a story of nobles.

## See also

Burlesque; Cantefable; Fay.

## Fabliau

*fabliaux*

Attested: *fabliaux* (FRE §1). A short comic tale in Old French verse, of the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries; the word is a northern diminutive of *fable*. The note at FRE §1 gives "short comic tales", and says that "These brief verse narratives are often comic, sometimes frankly bawdy". The French writers whom the first essay follows "tell us how ... Boccaccio borrowed the outlines of his stories from the old French fabliaux" (FRE §1; see Borrowed interest), as, in the same sentence, they say Saint Francis took his notions of chivalry from a French source (see Chivalry). The note adds that "Their subject matter helps Pater make a place for medieval secular pleasure alongside ecclesiastical art". The fabliaux stand at the comic end of the profane literature Pater sets beside the church's art in the next paragraph (FRE §2; see Profane poetry).

## See also

Borrowed interest; Cantefable; Chivalry; Medieval Renaissance; Profane poetry.

## Fay

*fay*

Attested: *fay* (FRE §24). A fairy, from the Old French *fae*, Latin *fata*, the Fates. Nicolette is "the beautiful, weird, foreign girl, whom the shepherds take for a fay, who has the knowledge of simples, the healing and beautifying qualities of leaves and flowers" (FRE §24; see Simples). Her touch heals Aucassin's sprained shoulder, and the mere sight of her white flesh "healed a pilgrim stricken with sore disease" (FRE §24). The shepherds' mistake is a measure of her strangeness: bought of the Saracens, of unknown parentage (FRE §23), she seems to them a creature of another

world. Pater calls her "the best illustration of the quality I mean", the "languid Eastern deliciousness" of the tale (FRE §24). "Weird", from the Old English word for fate, stands close to *fay*.

## See also

Enparlés; Feat; Overwrought delicacy; Simples.

## Figure

*figure*; *figures*; *figures and ornament in language*; *figure of speech*; *figures of speech*; *figure and analogy*

Attested: *figures and ornament in language* (BEL §10); *figure of speech* (PIC §4); *figures of speech* (GIO §4); *figure and analogy* (PIC §13); *figure* or *figures* in twenty-two further paragraphs, of persons and of painted or carved forms. A figure of speech is a turn of language that departs from plain statement, metaphor, simile, allegory and the rest; the Latin *figura*, shape, gave the word both its senses, the shape of a body and the shape of a phrase. Du Bellay doubts that the right use of figures can be learned "from translations"; Pater's aside says "he is speaking of figures and ornament in language" (BEL §10; see Law of translation). Pater's parenthesis abridges a list. The *Deffense* names "metaphors, allegories, comparisons, similitudes, energy, and so many other figures and ornaments, without which every oration and poem are naked, lame and feeble" (I.5).[369] The Pico essay shows the other use of figures, as hiding-places of meaning: a diviner signification latent "in some stray touch of Homer, or figure of speech in the books of Moses" (PIC §4), and Pico laying hold "on every sort of figure and analogy" (PIC §13; see Figured style). The Giorgione essay says that the analogies between the arts are "more than mere figures of speech" (GIO §4; see Anders-streben). The word marks, on this reading, three views of a figure in the book: an ornament that cannot be translated, a veil over a hidden sense, and a likeness that turns out to be true.

## See also

Anders-streben; Figured style; Law of translation; Le naïf.

## Figured style

*Writing in symbols and images, as Plato wrote · The Renaissance figured style*; *figured*

[369] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 5: *métaphores, allégories, comparaisons, similitudes, énergie, et tant d'autres figures et ornements, sans lesquels toute oraison et poème sont nus, manqués et débiles*.

## At a Glance

**The word.** A figured style is one rich in figures: images, symbols and likenesses that carry the thought, as against plain statement.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This constant tendency to symbolism and imagery gives Pico's work a figured style, by which it has some real resemblance to Plato's" (PIC §14). Elsewhere "Dante's story is a piece of figured work, inlaid with lovely incidents" (MIC §14), and Ronsard's poems have "delicately figured surfaces" (BEL §1).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PIC §14.

## Meaning

The Latin *figura* is a shape, and in rhetoric a figure of speech, any turn of language that departs from the plain way of saying a thing. "Figured" is also a weaver's and a goldsmith's word: figured silk is woven with patterns, figured plate is chased with designs. Pater's phrase draws on both. A figured style is patterned with images, and the images do the work of thought.

## Use in the book

The phrase is the most generous thing Pater says of Pico's writing. "This constant tendency to symbolism and imagery gives Pico's work a figured style, by which it has some real resemblance to Plato's" (PIC §14; see Symbolism; Higher culture). The same habit that the essay elsewhere calls a "strange web of imagery" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation) here earns the comparison with Plato. The difference is in the use. In the allegorist the figures are a means of forcing agreement; in the figured style they are the form of the thought. "Some real resemblance" is measured praise, but it is praise, and it is followed by a stronger: "there is a glow and vehemence in his words" when he explains the soul's ascent (PIC §14; see Disembodied beauty).

The Platonic model can be read in the Winckelmann essay, where "Plato, however, saved so often for his redeeming literary manner, is excepted from Winckelmann's proscription of the philosophers" (WIN §7). Plato is the philosopher whose manner redeems him; Pico, who resembles him in the figured style, is redeemed in the same way, by his manner more than his matter.

The word "figured" comes twice more, both times of decorated surfaces. "Dante's story is a piece of figured work, inlaid with lovely incidents" (MIC §14), against Michelangelo's poems, in which "frost and fire are almost the only images" (MIC §14). The poems of Ronsard have "their ingenuity, their delicately figured surfaces, their slightness, their fanciful combinations of rhyme" (BEL §1). Figured work in these places is inlaid and delicate, a work of craft. The phrase in the Pico essay joins the craft to thought.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "figured" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §14** Pico's tendency to symbolism and imagery gives his work a figured style, with some real resemblance to Plato's.

**MIC §14** Dante's story is a piece of figured work, inlaid with lovely incidents.

**BEL §1** The poems of Ronsard have delicately figured surfaces.

## Later readings

The German philologist Erich Auerbach traced the history of the Latin word in his essay "Figura" (1938), from a plastic shape to the Christian "figure" by which an event of the Old Testament foreshadows one in the New.[370] Auerbach's figure is the allegorist's; Pater's figured style is the writer's.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Disembodied beauty; Higher culture; Symbolism.

# Freewill

*freewill*

Attested: *freewill* (BEL §9). Freewill, which Pater writes as one word, is the power of choosing, the will free to determine itself. He uses it in Du Bellay's argument against those who thought French a weak language by nature: languages, Du Bellay says, are not born like plants and trees, strong or sickly by nature, but "all their virtue is generated in the world of choice and men's freewill concerning them" (BEL §9; see Vulgar tongue; Virtue). The *Deffense* opens with the thought: languages are not born of themselves "in the manner of herbs, roots and trees", but all their virtue is born into the world *du vouloir et arbitre des mortels*, from the will and choice of mortals (I.1).[371] *Arbitre* is the word of *libre arbitre*, free will, and Pater's "freewill" renders it. The claim can be read as making the strength of a language a human work, and so a matter of responsibility: if French is poor, its users have made it so. Du Bellay keeps the plant figure for what cultivation can do. French is a little plant that "has not yet flowered", in his chapter on the reasons why it is less rich than Greek and Latin (I.3), and Pater's *pauvre*

[370] Erich Auerbach, "Figura", *Archivum Romanicum* 22 (1938).

[371] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 1: *ne sont nées d'elles-mêmes en façon d'herbes, racines et arbres*; ch. 3: *comme une plante et vergette, n'a point encore fleuri*.

*plante et vergette* comes from that chapter (BEL §11; see Pauvre plante et vergette). The two images may be read together: a language is not a plant by nature, but it can be grown like one.

## See also

Copie; Pauvre plante et vergette; Starveling stock; Virtue; Vulgar tongue.

# Great refusals

*Dante's sin of the cowardly, made the condition of ordinary lives · The Renaissance*

*great refusals*; *refuse*, *refusing*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A great refusal is the refusal of a great call or charge; in Dante, the act for which one soul is singled out among the cowardly neutrals.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli accepts the "middle world" of those who "make great refusals" (BOT §6; see Middle world).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §6 calls Pater's phrase "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III".

**A place to read.** BOT §6.

## Meaning

In the vestibule of hell Dante recognises one shade among the neutrals: "I saw and knew the shade of him who out of cowardice made the great refusal".[372] Dante does not name him, and the early commentators mostly took him for Pope Celestine V, who resigned the papacy in 1294 after a few months; others proposed Esau or Pontius Pilate. Whoever he was, his refusal is singular, a single act of cowardice that Dante thought worth a line of the poem.

## Use in the book

Pater turns the singular into a plural and the act into a condition. Botticelli accepts what Dante scorns, a world in which men "take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals" (BOT §6; see Middle world). The rhythm is a triad with "great" in each member, and the third member surprises: one expects the people of the middle world to make small choices, and Pater says their refusals are great. The greatness is in what is refused, not in the refusing.

"Cowardice" is the word Pater leaves out. He does not call the refusals noble, but he does not call them cowardly either. The people who make them are "saddened perpetually" by "the great things from which they

[372] Dante, *Inferno* III.59–60.

shrink" (BOT §6; see Middle world). Shrinking is refusal felt from inside: not a decision but a recoil, and the shadow of the refused thing stays on the face. The Madonna is one of them: "her choice is on her face" (BOT §7; see Intolerable honour). Dante's single damned soul becomes, in Pater's sentence, the common condition of attractive, uncertain humanity.

The verb "refuse" occurs twice elsewhere in the book, both times with approval. Leonardo and his kindred, the figures most representative of the Renaissance, "refuse to be classified" (FRE §33), and Leonardo is shown "refusing to work except at the moment of invention, scornful of anyone who supposed that art could be a work of mere industry and rule" (LEO §26). In both the refusal is freedom: from the categories of controversy and from the routine of the workshop.

The plural can be read as Pater's quiet revision of Dante. The neutrals' refusal was a failure of courage; Pater's refusers are men and women who cannot rise to every great thing that calls them, and who know it. He keeps the greatness of what they decline, which is why the shadow remains, and he takes away the contempt. The aesthetic critic's own refusals, of formulas, orthodoxies and moral ambitions (see Moral ambition), are of the free kind; Botticelli's figures make the sadder kind, and the essay feels with both.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "refusal", "refuse" or "refusing" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §33** The painter of the Last Supper and his kindred refuse to be classified.

**BOT §6** In the middle world men take no side in great conflicts, decide no great causes, and make great refusals.

**LEO §26** Anecdotes show Leonardo refusing to work except at the moment of invention.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §6, on "make great refusals", reads: "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III. Pater turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically."

## See also

Intolerable honour; Middle world; Moral ambition; Sympathy.

# Humane literature

*humane literature*

Attested: *humane literature* (WIN §8). Humane letters, the Latin *litterae humaniores*, are the literature of Greece and Rome studied as the formation of a human being, the "more humane" letters as against divinity; the name survives in the classical school of Oxford. The phrase stands in Pater's English of a letter Winckelmann wrote "in halting French" to the historian Count Heinrich von Bünau, asking for a place in his library at Nöthenitz (WIN §8). He hints, Pater says, at his doubtful position "in a metaphysical age, by which humane literature is trampled under foot", and goes on: "little value is set on Greek literature, to which I have devoted myself so far as I could penetrate, when good books are so scarce and expensive" (WIN §8). The metaphysical age is the Germany of the philosophers against whom Winckelmann protested (WIN §7; see Limitation to the concrete), and humane literature its victim; the letter sets the essay's opposition between system and the concrete life of the classics in Winckelmann's own words. The edition's note at WIN §8 corrects the date Pater prints, 1784, to 1748, when Winckelmann applied to Bünau and entered his service. The phrase can be read as naming what the young Winckelmann served before he found sculpture: the words of Greek poetry, which stirred and roused him while he divined beyond them "some unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life" (WIN §9; see Unexpressed pulsation).

## See also

Divinatory power; Humanism; Limitation to the concrete; Unexpressed pulsation.

# Illustrate

*To make illustrious, the word of Du Bellay's title; and to exemplify, the word of Pater's criticism · The Renaissance*

*illustrate*; *illustration*; *illustrator*; *Illustration*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To make bright or famous; to make clear by example; to adorn a text with pictures.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Du Bellay's little book would make French illustrious, "to give it lustre" (BEL §8).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §8 renders the title "Defense and Enrichment of the French Language", and says that "Illustration here is the act of making the language illustrious by cultivating its literary powers."

**A place to read.** BEL §8.

## Meaning

The Latin *illustrare* is to light up, to make bright, from *lustrare*, to illuminate; from it came the senses of making famous, "illustrious", and of making clear. In English the word has three uses, and Pater's book has all of them: to make illustrious, which is Du Bellay's; to make clear by an example, which is Pater's own commonest; and to adorn a text with pictures, which is the use of the Botticelli essay.

## Use in the book

The eighth paragraph gives the oldest sense, and glosses it. Du Bellay's little treatise "has for its title La Deffense et Illustration de la langue Françoyse; and its problem is how to illustrate or ennoble the French language, to give it lustre" (BEL §8; see Ennoble). "To give it lustre" goes back to the root. To illustrate a language is to make it shine, to bring it from obscurity into the light of fame, and the note's "Enrichment" names the means.

The same paragraph says what the little book shows about the Renaissance. "But if anywhere the Renaissance became conscious, as a German philosopher might say, if ever it was understood as a systematic movement by those who took part in it, it is in this little book of Joachim du Bellay's, which it is impossible to read without feeling the excitement, the animation, of change, of discovery" (BEL §8; see Animation; Combined action). The German philosopher can be read as Hegel, in whose history of the spirit a movement comes at last to know itself. In that sense too the treatise illustrates: it is the place where the Renaissance in France sees itself by its own light.

Elsewhere in the book, the Botticelli essay apart, Pater uses the word in the critic's sense, to exemplify, and he uses it of Du Bellay first of all. The Renaissance in France ends "in a phase of which the writings of Joachim du Bellay are in many ways the most perfect illustration" (PRE §6; see Aftermath), and the essay says that much of Du Bellay's poetry "illustrates rather the age and school to which he belonged than his own temper and genius" (BEL §13; see À la mode). The poet who wrote of illustrating his language has become, in his critic's hands, an illustration of his age. The turn can be read as the essay's measure of him: the treatise gave French lustre, but the poems, most of them, give only an example, until the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets* show "the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality" (BEL §21; see Æsthetic value).

The critic's sense is the book's method. Pater's essays proceed by illustration: "as I have illustrated the early strength of the Renaissance by the story of Amis and Amile ... so I shall illustrate that other element, its early sweetness" (FRE §19); Nicolette "is the best illustration of the quality I mean" (FRE §24); "And now, finally, let me illustrate some of the characteristics of this School of Giorgione" (GIO §19). Works of the same

generation "unconsciously illustrate each other" (PRE §8; see General culture), Giorgione is "but an illustration of a valuable general caution we may abide by in all criticism" (GIO §25; see Negative criticism), and Goethe "illustrates a union of the Romantic spirit ... with Hellenism" (WIN §48). The illustrative example, for Pater, is not a decoration of an argument but its evidence, and a single person or story may carry a whole movement.

The third sense comes in the Botticelli essay, where Botticelli "becomes the illustrator of Dante" (BOT §3; see Painter's vision). There the illustration is a picture that renders a text, and Pater's praise of it, that the design is "no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision" (BOT §3), can be read as the visual form of Du Bellay's doubt about translation (see Law of translation). The Botticelli sense can be read as naming a passage from one medium into another, and what is valued there is the light the new medium gives.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "illustrate", "illustration" or "illustrator" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The writings of Joachim du Bellay are the most perfect illustration of the Renaissance's last phase in France.

**PRE §8** Products of the same generation unconsciously illustrate each other.

**FRE §19** Pater illustrates the early strength of the Renaissance by Amis and Amile, and will illustrate its sweetness by another story.

**FRE §24** Nicolette is the best illustration of the quality Pater means.

**PIC §5** The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century illustrates the faith of that age in all oracles.

**BOT §3** Botticelli becomes the illustrator of Dante, and his illustrations are crowded with incident.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's drawings, set in a series, illustrate his type of womanly beauty.

**LEO §24** Salaino's devotion to Leonardo illustrates his usual choice of pupils.

**GIO §19** Pater will illustrate some of the characteristics of the School of Giorgione.

**GIO §25** Giorgione is but an illustration of a valuable general caution in criticism.

**BEL §8** The problem of Du Bellay's *Deffense et Illustration* is how to illustrate or ennoble the French language.

**BEL §13** Much of Du Bellay's poetry illustrates the age and school to which he belonged.

**WIN §48** Goethe illustrates a union of the Romantic spirit with Hellenism, and the preponderance of the Hellenic element.

## See also

À la mode; Æsthetic value; Aftermath; Animation; Combined action; Ennoble; General culture; Law of translation; Negative criticism; Painter's vision.

## Imagery

*imagery*

Attested: *imagery* (PIC §§5, 11, 14, 15; BOT §§3, 8; LEO §21; BEL §§13, 16). Images taken together: the figures of a writer, the pictured things of a painter. In the Pico essay the word is a refrain. The allegorical interpretation has its "strange web of imagery" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation); Pico's commentary on Beniveni has "a profusion of imagery borrowed indifferently" from every source (PIC §11; see Cabala); "This constant tendency to symbolism and imagery gives Pico's work a figured style" (PIC §14; see Figured style); and the artists valued "the imagery of the Greek religion" for its own sake (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation). Pico's imagery can be read as borrowed and made to mean, the artists' as loved for itself; the later essays mostly keep the second sense. Botticelli "meant all this imagery to be altogether pleasurable" (BOT §8); in Leonardo "the idea is stricken into colour and imagery" (LEO §21); and the Pleiad poets can trifle even with death: "The imagery of death serves for delicate ornament" (BEL §16).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Artistic reconciliation; Cabala; Figured style.

## Impotence

*impotence*; *impotent*

Attested: *impotence* (WIN §44); *impotent* (WIN §36). Impotence, from the Latin *impotentia*, is want of power; in Latin it could also mean want of self-control, a power that cannot master itself. Pater uses the noun in his account of Greek tragedy, where the conflict that grieves the harmony of the Hellenic ideal first appears: tragedy can make such a conflict "a spectacle of the dignity, not of the impotence, of the human spirit" (WIN §44; see Dignity of human nature). The antithesis is the essay's measure of tragic art. A play that shows man helpless before forces too great for him is a spectacle of impotence; Greek tragedy shows the same forces and gives the spirit its dignity within them. The essay's last paragraph asks the same of the modern

novel, where the network of natural law is the tragic situation and "certain groups of noble men and women work out for themselves a supreme dénouement" (WIN §53; see Dénouement). The adjective appears earlier, in the image of the artist who defines "the focus where rays, in themselves pale and impotent, unite and begin to burn" (WIN §36; see Realise): the elements of a situation are powerless alone and kindle only when the art brings them together. In both places impotence is the condition art overcomes, by serenity in tragedy, by concentration in the poetry of situations.

## See also

Dénouement; Dignity of human nature; Hellenic ideal; Realise.

# Insoluble element of prose

*The residue of theology in the depths of Dante's poetry · The Renaissance an insoluble element of prose*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An insoluble element of prose is a residue of the prosaic that poetry cannot dissolve.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Dante's orthodoxy, "referring all human action to the simple formula of purgatory, heaven and hell, leaves an insoluble element of prose in the depths of Dante's poetry" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** BOT §5.

## Meaning

The metaphor is from chemistry. A substance is insoluble when it will not dissolve in a solvent, and it stays in the vessel as a sediment. Pater's Preface had already made the critic a chemist, disengaging a virtue "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Virtue). Here the solvent is poetry, which dissolves its materials into feeling and music, and the element that will not dissolve is prose: statement, classification, doctrine.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that separates Botticelli from Dante: "But he is far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5; see Conventional orthodoxy), which leaves the residue quoted above (see Universal formula).

The prose is the formula. Dante's poem sorts every soul into one of three places, and "simple" judges the sorting: all human action, in its mixture and uncertainty, is referred to three heads. A formula is the opposite of a sentiment. It applies the same measure to everyone, where poetry, in Pater's

sense, finds the peculiar quality of each. "In the depths" places the residue at the foundation, not the surface: Dante's poetry is everywhere, but beneath it lies a theology that will not melt.

The judgement is bold. Dante is the poet the essay most admires, whose "tried companion" was Giotto, and the measure of Botticelli's visionariness (BOT §4; see Visionary painter). Pater does not deny his poetry. He says that its theology is prose, and the comparison can be read as making Botticelli, in this one respect, the freer poet. The next paragraph shows what the freedom gives: Botticelli accepts the middle world that Dante's formula had no place for but the vestibule of hell (BOT §6; see Middle world).

The book's other uses of "prose" are literal, the prose of *Aucassin and Nicolette* alternating with its songs (FRE §21) and the "perfectly transparent, flexible, and chaste" prose of Du Bellay (BEL §8). Only here is prose a quality inside poetry. Read beside Pater's later essay "Style", the sentence can be taken to say that prose is not bad, but that it is bad in the depths of a poem: a formula that the poet has not made his own.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §5** Dante's conventional orthodoxy, referring all action to purgatory, heaven and hell, leaves an insoluble element of prose in the depths of his poetry.

## Elsewhere in Pater

In "Style" (1888) Pater would call imaginative prose "the special and opportune art of the modern world", and make the writer's task "the transcript of his sense of fact rather than the fact".[373] The Botticelli sentence uses the word in the older, slighting sense, the prosaic.

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase.

## See also

Conventional orthodoxy; Middle world; Terza rima; Universal formula; Virtue; Visionary painter.

# Kingdom of sentiment

*kingdom of sentiment*

Attested: *kingdom of sentiment* (FRE §20). The realm of refined feeling, imagined as a state with its own citizens. "The central love-poetry of Provence, the poetry of the Tenson and the Aubade, of Bernard de

[373] Walter Pater, "Style", *Fortnightly Review*, December 1888; reprinted in *Appreciations* (1889).

Ventadour and Pierre Vidal, is poetry for the few, for the elect and peculiar people of the kingdom of sentiment" (FRE §20; see Aubade; Tenson). "Elect" and "peculiar people" are words of the Bible for a chosen nation: the First Epistle of Peter is written to the "elect" (1 Peter 1:2) and calls them "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9, in the King James Version), and "kingdom" can be heard as recalling the kingdom of heaven. The language can be read as making the lovers a church of their own, as the essay later calls such love "a strange rival religion" (FRE §32; see Idolatry). Below this poetry Pater sets a wider literature reaching "an audience which the concentrated passion of those higher lyrics left untouched" (FRE §20), of which M. Fauriel thought Aucassin and Nicolette a later version. Earlier in the essay the Renaissance itself is the movement in which "the human mind wins for itself a new kingdom of feeling and sensation and thought" (FRE §6).

## See also

Aubade; Idolatry; Sentiment; Tenson.

# La poésie chantée

*The sung poetry of Villon and the old French poets, the native music the Pleiad meant to join to the classical · The Renaissance*

*la poésie chantée*; *songs*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sung poetry: verse made for the voice and for music, the rhymed song of the French tradition.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pater names "the rhymed, unscanned verse of Villon and the old French poets, la poésie chantée" (BEL §15).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §15 renders the phrase "Sung poetry", and says that it "points to the relation of lyric verse to actual singing".

**A place to read.** BEL §15.

## Meaning

*Chanter* is to sing, and *la poésie chantée* is poetry sung, as against poetry read or recited. French lyric was from its beginnings a sung art, the art of the trouvères and their songs, and its music was the music of rhyme and of the counted syllable. Pater sets it against a music that belongs to the page and the trained ear, the scanned quantity of Latin and Greek.

## Use in the book

The phrase names the native French music in the paragraph that describes the Pleiad's ambition. "With this was united the desire to taste a more exquisite and various music than that of the older French verse, or of

the classical poets. The music of the measured, scanned verse of Latin and Greek poetry is one thing; the music of the rhymed, unscanned verse of Villon and the old French poets, la poésie chantée, is another" (BEL §15). The sung poetry is rhymed and unscanned: its music is the echo and the voice, not the measure. The Pleiad wished to join the two in a double music (BEL §15; see Double music), and the phrase can be read as naming the half of the union that was France's own.

The essay is full of songs, and they trace the history of the sung poetry from its origin to the essay's end. "In poetry, the Gothic spirit in France had produced a thousand songs" (BEL §1; see Figured style); "Villon's songs and Clouet's painting" show the higher touch (BEL §3; see Ennoble); the old French chanson, often rude and formless in its essence, became in Ronsard's hands a Pindaric ode (BEL §4; see Pindaric ode). The Renaissance, on this account, took the native song and gave it structure. It did not stop singing. The serious Goudimel "set Ronsard's songs to music" (BEL §16; see Double music), and, though Pater does not say so, Ronsard's own *Amours* of 1552 were printed with a supplement of musical settings, by Pierre Certon, Clément Janequin, Goudimel and Marc-Antoine Muret, so that the sonnets could be sung.[374]

The test of the sung poetry comes when Pater turns to Malherbe, whose reform displaced the Pleiad. "The poetry of Malherbe came, with its sustained style and weighty sentiment, but with nothing that set people singing" (BEL §13; see À la mode). "Nothing that set people singing" is the charge against classical correctness, and it can be read as Pater's own preference. The poetry that sings is the poetry that lives in people's mouths, as the living words of the *Deffense* "wing their way daily through the mouths of men" (BEL §9; see Dead words).

The essay's last poem is a song. Du Bellay's best poem is a song that the winnowers "are supposed to sing as they winnow the corn" (BEL §23; see Vanneur). It is a translation from a Latin poem, and yet its form, Pater says, is all Du Bellay's own (BEL §23; see Untranslatable charm). The sung poetry, which the Pleiad had meant to combine with the classical, comes at the essay's close in its own right: an Italian poem in Latin made into a French song, with rhyme, short lines and no scanning at all (BEL §§25–27; see Doulce haleine). The book had begun its account of this music in the first essay, where the songs of *Aucassin and Nicolette*, "not rhymed even, but only imperfectly assonant", show "people just growing aware of the elements of a new music in their possession" (FRE §21; see Music of rhymed poetry). The Du Bellay essay finds the same music, three centuries on, at its height.

[374] Pierre de Ronsard, *Les Amours* (Paris: veuve Maurice de La Porte, 1552), with a supplement of music by Certon, Janequin, Goudimel and Muret.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Du Bellay essay in which a song, a chanson or singing is named, in the order of the book.

**BEL §1** The Gothic spirit in France had produced a thousand songs.

**BEL §2** The old Gothic chansons de geste are the counterpart of the Gothic cathedrals.

**BEL §3** Villon's songs and Clouet's painting show the higher touch.

**BEL §4** The old French chanson became in the hands of Ronsard a Pindaric ode.

**BEL §13** The poetry of Malherbe had nothing that set people singing.

**BEL §15** The rhymed, unscanned verse of Villon and the old French poets is la poésie chantée.

**BEL §16** Goudimel set Ronsard's songs to music.

**BEL §23** Du Bellay's best poem is a song the winnowers are supposed to sing.

## See also

À la mode; Chanson de geste; Daintiness; Dead words; Double music; Doulce haleine; Ennoble; Figured style; Gothic manner; Music of rhymed poetry; Pindaric ode; Untranslatable charm; Vanneur.

# Law of translation

*Du Bellay's rule that a translator must not go beyond his author, and his proof that the rule makes words cold · The Renaissance*

*the law of translation*; *translation*; *translate*; *translator*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The rule of faithful translation, that the translator keeps within the limits of his author.

**In *The Renaissance*.** A translation that keeps the law fails: "observing the law of translation,—not to expatiate beyond the limits of the author himself, your words will be constrained, cold and ungraceful" (BEL §10).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §10 says that the example of *le naïf* "gives Pater a way to discuss what may disappear when a text is recast in another language".

**A place to read.** BEL §10.

## Meaning

A law of translation is a rule a translator obeys, and Du Bellay states the one he means: *n'espacer point hors des limites de l'auteur*, not to wander beyond the bounds of the author. It is the rule of fidelity, that the translator

adds nothing and takes his freedom only within the original. Du Bellay states it in order to show its cost.

## Use in the book

The tenth paragraph opens on the age itself: "It was an age of translations" (BEL §10). Du Bellay translated two books of the *Æneid*, and others thought translation the true means of ennobling French (BEL §10; see Ennoble). Du Bellay "moderates their expectations", and Pater gives his reasons in his own English version of the *Deffense*: "'I do not believe that one can learn the right use of them'—he is speaking of figures and ornament in language—'from translations, because it is impossible to reproduce them with the same grace with which the original author used them'" (BEL §10). Then comes the law and its consequence. Each language has "I know not what peculiarity of its own", and if you force yourself to express its naturalness in another, "observing the law of translation,—not to expatiate beyond the limits of the author himself, your words will be constrained, cold and ungraceful" (BEL §10). The French has *observant la loi de traduire* (I.5).[375] The law is kept, and keeping it makes the writing cold. Fidelity to the words loses what made the words worth translating.

Du Bellay's test follows. "To prove this, read me Demosthenes and Homer in Latin, Cicero and Virgil in French, and see whether they produce in you the same affections which you experience in reading those authors in the original" (BEL §10). The proof is an appeal to the reader's feelings, and it can be read as an æsthetic criticism before the name: the value of a work is the impression it makes, and a translation that makes a different impression has failed whatever its accuracy.

Pater's book carries the doctrine from languages to the arts. The Giorgione essay begins by rejecting the view that poetry, music and painting are "but translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought", and holds that each art has a beauty "untranslatable into the forms of any other" (GIO §1; see Untranslatable charm). Du Bellay's peculiarity of each language becomes the untranslatable charm of each art. The Botticelli essay had made the same point in practice: the words of a poet "must be lowered in key when translated into visible form" (BOT §3; see Lower in key), and Botticelli's design for the Inferno is "no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision" (BOT §3; see Painter's vision). The good translator, in every case, can be read as breaking the law: he expatiates beyond the limits of his author, because he must make in his own medium a form that the original medium had.

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[375] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 5: *d'autant que chaque langue a je ne sais quoi propre seulement à elle, dont si vous efforcez exprimer le naïf dans une autre langue, observant la loi de traduire, qui est n'espacer point hors des limites de l'auteur, votre diction sera contrainte, froide et de mauvaise grâce.*

The Du Bellay essay supplies the example. Du Bellay's best poem is itself a translation, "an Italian product transplanted into that green country of Anjou; out of the Latin verses of Andrea Navagero, into French", and yet "the form of the poem as it stands, written in old French, is all Du Bellay's own" (BEL §23; see Untranslatable charm). The poet who stated the law of translation can be read as writing his masterpiece by breaking it. Pater adds a note of his own to the poem, pointing to Andrew Lang's "graceful translation" in *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France* (BEL §24), and so the essay, at the head of the poem, sends its reader to a translation of a translation, offered as graceful. The doctrine can be read as reaching its limit there. Translation cannot carry the naturalness of a work across; it can make a new naturalness, and that is what the critic praises.

The book's other translations are of persons and of learning: Sir Thomas More translating the life of Pico (PIC §§5, 7), Ficino translating Plato and Plotinus into Latin (PIC §§6–7; MIC §14), Winckelmann becoming "the enthusiastic translator of Herodotus" (WIN §5). They are the work of the revival, the carrying of the ancient world into the languages of the new, and the essay on Du Bellay can be read as the book's reflection on what that carrying could and could not do.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "translate", "translated", "translation", "translator" or "untranslatable" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §5** The life of Pico seemed worthy to be translated out of the Latin by Sir Thomas More.

**PIC §6** Pico came to Florence on the day Ficino finished his translation of Plato into Latin.

**PIC §7** Sir Thomas More translates the biographer's words, and Ficino resolves on the translation of Plotinus.

**PIC §11** More turned Pico's thoughts into English, and another English translator added them to the Imitation.

**BOT §3** A poet's words must be lowered in key when translated into visible form; Botticelli's design is no mere translation of Dante.

**MIC §14** Ficino's Latin translation of Plato had made Plato more than a name in Italy.

**GIO §1** Poetry, music and painting are not translations of one fixed quantity of thought; each art has a beauty untranslatable into another.

**GIO §3** Each art has its own order of impressions and an untranslatable charm.

**GIO §10** Each art has its untranslatable order of impressions.

**BEL §10** Translation cannot carry over the naturalness of a language; observing the law of translation makes words cold.

**WIN §5** At Halle Winckelmann becomes the enthusiastic translator of Herodotus.

**WIN §33** Into the romantic arts may be translated every delicacy of thought and feeling.

## In this edition

Pater's own note at BEL §24, kept by the edition, reads: "A graceful translation of this and some other poems of the *Pleiad* may be found in *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*, by Mr. Andrew Lang." The edition's notes give English for the French phrases of the Du Bellay essay, and at BEL §10 render *nous favorisons toujours les étrangers* as "We always favor foreigners" and *le naïf* as "Its natural manner".

## See also

Affection; Ennoble; Figure; Le naïf; Lower in key; Painter's vision; Untranslatable charm; Vanneur.

# Le discours fatal des choses mondaines

*Du Bellay's phrase for the fated course of worldly things, which Pater reads as the language of affairs · The Renaissance*

*le discours fatal des choses mondaines*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The fated course of the things of this world; in Pater's gloss, "that discourse about affairs which decides men's fates".

**In *The Renaissance*.** French must be Du Bellay's medium for "le discours fatal des choses mondaines" (BEL §11).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §11 renders the phrase "The fateful course of worldly affairs", and says that "Pater adapts the phrase for the language in which consequential worldly business takes place."

**A place to read.** BEL §11.

## Meaning

*Discours*, in sixteenth-century French, could mean a course or progress, from the Latin *discursus*, a running to and fro, as well as a speech or treatise; *fatal* is fated, decreed by destiny; *les choses mondaines* are the things of the world. Read with the first sense, the phrase is the fated course of worldly things, the turning of fortune by which kingdoms rise and fall. Read with the second, it is a discourse, a speech about worldly things, that decides fate. The context in the *Deffense* points to the first; Pater, with his gloss, chooses the second.

## Use in the book

Pater sets the phrase at the climax of his account of Du Bellay's plea for the mother-tongue. French, the "starveling stock", is the only language in which Du Bellay can speak movingly: "that, or none, must be for him the medium of what he calls, in one of his great phrases, le discours fatal des choses mondaines—that discourse about affairs which decides men's fates" (BEL §11; see Starveling stock; Mother-tongue). The gloss makes the phrase a claim for the vernacular. On this reading the language of the people is the language in which the world's business is done, and a poet who writes in it writes in the medium where fates are decided. The paragraph has already said that Du Bellay pleads "for freedom, impulse, reality, not in literature only, but in daily communion of speech" (BEL §11; see Mother-tongue), and the gloss carries that daily speech up to the level of destiny.

In the *Deffense* the phrase names something else, a subject for odes: the fated course of worldly things, the old lyric theme of mutability, the changes of fortune that the poet contemplates. Pater has turned the theme into a medium, and the course of things into a discourse about them.

The adaptation can be read as true to the essay, if not to the treatise. The life Pater tells is that of a poet who must do the world's business. In Rome Du Bellay was "burdened with the weight of affairs" (BEL §12; see Home-sickness), and his *Regrets* convey "the ennui of a dreamer who must plunge into the world's affairs" (BEL §21; see Ennui). A man whose daily work was the discourse of affairs that decide men's fates, in the household of a cardinal and diplomat, wrote his best poems about the wish to be free of it. Pater's gloss gives the phrase the weight of that life. The edition's note, which restores Du Bellay's sense, lets the reader see both.

"Fatal" comes once more in the book, and "fatality" once, both in the Winckelmann essay, and both keep the sense of destiny. The gods of the pagan world bleed "by some sad fatality" (WIN §25; see Heathen sorrow), and in the essay's last paragraph Pater speaks of "the nobler or less noble attitude with which we watch their fatal combinations", the combinations of natural laws that make modern necessity (WIN §53; see Sense of fate). There the fatal course of things is no longer a theme for an ode but the web in which modern life is caught. Du Bellay's phrase, at the beginning of that history, can be read as the Renaissance form of the same thought, a fate still outside us, in the course of the world.

## Places to read

The paragraph of the phrase, with every other paragraph in which "fatal" or "fatality" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BEL §11** French must be Du Bellay's medium for le discours fatal des choses mondaines, the discourse about affairs which decides men's fates.

**WIN §25** The pagan makes gods bleeding by some sad fatality, to console him by their wounds.

**WIN §53** There is something in the nobler or less noble attitude with which we watch the fatal combinations of natural laws.

## Pater's sources

The phrase is Du Bellay's, from the second book of the *Deffense*, where among the kinds of poem the French poet should choose he tells him to sing odes still unknown to the French Muse, and names their subjects: "the praises of the gods and of virtuous men, the fatal course of worldly things, the cares of young men, such as love, free wines, and all good cheer".[376] The list is Horace's, from the *Art of Poetry*, where the Muse gives the lyre gods and the sons of gods, the victorious boxer and the winning horse, "the cares of young men and free wine" to sing; the fated course of things is Du Bellay's addition.[377]

## See also

Ennoble; Ennui; Heathen sorrow; Home-sickness; Mother-tongue; Sense of fate; Starveling stock; Vulgar tongue.

# Le naïf

*The native, unforced quality of a language, which translation cannot carry across · The Renaissance*

*le naïf*; *naïve*; *naïvely*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The natural, inborn quality of a thing, what belongs to it by birth; in Du Bellay, the native turn of a language.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For each language has I know not what peculiarity of its own; and if you force yourself to express the naturalness (le naïf) of this in another language … your words will be constrained, cold and ungraceful" (BEL §10).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §10 renders *le naïf* as "Its natural manner", and says that "The noun refers to an idiom's native or unforced quality."

**A place to read.** BEL §§1, 10.

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[376] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book II, ch. 4: *les louanges des dieux et des hommes vertueux, le discours fatal des choses mondaines, la sollicitude des jeunes hommes, comme l'amour, les vins libres, et toute bonne chère*.

[377] Horace, *Ars poetica* 83–85.

## Meaning

The French *naïf* comes from the Latin *nativus*, born, inborn, natural, the word that also gives "native". In the sixteenth century *le naïf* of a thing was its natural character, its own unforced manner; only later did "naïve" come to mean artless to the point of simplicity. Pater's English "naturalness" renders the older sense, and his adjective "naïve" keeps something of it: the naïve is the first, the unreflecting, what belongs to a thing before art or doubt has touched it.

## Use in the book

The noun comes once, in Du Bellay's argument against translation. Each language "has I know not what peculiarity of its own", and whoever tries "to express the naturalness (le naïf) of this in another language", observing the law of translation, will write constrained, cold and ungraceful words (BEL §10; see Law of translation). The naïf is the peculiarity seen from inside: what is natural to one language is peculiar to every other. Du Bellay's "I know not what", *je ne sais quoi*, marks it as something felt and not defined, and, though Pater does not say so, the phrase became, a century later, a term of French criticism for the charm that cannot be named.[378] The naïf is untranslatable because it is native. It belongs to the language as a man's accent belongs to his birthplace.

The essay's first paragraph had already used the adjective of the French native style, and set it beside the word it shares a root with. The Italian painters at Fontainebleau came "to have their later Italian voluptuousness attempered by the naïve and silvery qualities of the native style" (BEL §1; see Attemper). Naïve and native stand together, and the passage can be read as the visual form of Du Bellay's doctrine: the native style has a quality the foreign one lacks, and in France the foreign is tempered by it, not the native replaced.

The book's other uses of "naïve" keep the sense of the first and unreflecting. Botticelli's illustrations blend three phases of a scene "with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety" (BOT §3; see Pictorial propriety); his angels depress their heads "so naïvely" (BOT §7); the earlier Florentine style that Leonardo mastered had a "naïve and limited sensuousness" (LEO §20; see Sensuousness); a crowd passed in "naïve excitement" through the chamber where his cartoon of Saint Anne hung (LEO §29). The Winckelmann essay raises the word to a principle. "The art of sculpture records the first naïve, unperplexed recognition of man by himself" (WIN §34; see Godship), and the last paragraph names what the modern spirit has lost: "That naïve, rough sense of freedom, which supposes man's will to be limited, if at all, only by a will stronger than his, he can never have again" (WIN §53; see Sense of fate). The naïve is the first state of a thing, a people

[378] Dominique Bouhours, *Les Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* (Paris, 1671), the fifth dialogue, "Le je ne sais quoi".

or a mind, and the modern can admire it but not return to it. Pater's use can be set beside the distinction Schiller drew between the naive poet, who is nature, and the sentimental poet, who seeks it.[379]

The two senses meet in the Du Bellay essay. The naïf of a language, its native naturalness, is what translation cannot carry; the naïve quality of the French style is what tempered the Italian. The essay's last poem has it in its form: a Latin subject made French, so that its form, Pater says, is all Du Bellay's own (BEL §23; see Untranslatable charm).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "naïf", "naïve" or "naïvely" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §3** Botticelli's illustrations blend three phases of a scene with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety.

**BOT §7** The angels depress their heads so naïvely.

**LEO §20** Leonardo had mastered the earlier Florentine style, with its naïve and limited sensuousness.

**LEO §29** A crowd passed in naïve excitement through the chamber where the cartoon hung.

**BEL §1** Italian voluptuousness is attempered by the naïve and silvery qualities of the native style.

**BEL §10** Translation cannot express the naturalness, le naïf, of a language.

**WIN §34** Sculpture records the first naïve, unperplexed recognition of man by himself.

**WIN §53** The naïve, rough sense of freedom man can never have again.

## See also

Attemper; Figure; Godship; Law of translation; Pictorial propriety; Sense of fate; Sensuousness; Untranslatable charm.

# Li gentix

*Li gentix*

Attested: *Li gentix* (FRE §30). Old French, "the noble one", from the Latin *gentilis*, belonging to a *gens* or clan, and so well-born; the same word gives English "gentle" and "gentleman". It is the third of the epithets Pater quotes from the songs of Aucassin and Nicolette: "Aucassin, li biax, li blons, / Li gentix, li amorous" (FRE §30). The note at FRE §30 renders the lines "Aucassin, the handsome, the fair-haired, the noble, the loving", and

[379] Friedrich Schiller, *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795–96).

says that gentix "describes noble birth or bearing as well as personal grace". The note adds that "The lightness of the description is in tension with the physical effects of Aucassin's desire". Pater sets the couplet between Dante's lord of love and his own description of Aucassin, "slim, tall, debonair, dansellon", who "faints with love, as Dante fainted" (FRE §31; see Dansellon; Ideal intensity of love).

## See also

Dansellon; Ideal intensity of love; Love-god.

### Liefer

*liefer*

Attested: *liefer* (PIC §11). Rather, more willingly; the comparative of "lief", dear or glad, from Old English *lēof*. "Had liefer" is "would rather". The word comes in Pater's version of More's English of a passage from Pico's treatise *On Being and the One* (*De ente et uno*), where Pico turns to address the poet and scholar Angelo Politian, to whom the book is dedicated:[380] "'Love God,' Pico writes to Angelo Politian, 'we rather may, than either know Him, or by speech utter Him. And yet had men liefer by knowledge never find that which they seek, than by love possess that thing, which also without love were in vain found.'" (PIC §11). Pater shortens More a little, leaving out "while we be in this body", and writes "men" in place of More's *we*, but keeps his archaic English. He sets the passage after a saying he gives to the French moralist Joseph Joubert, "It is not hard to know God, provided one will not force oneself to define Him" (PIC §11). The two sayings can be read as one thought: God is reached by another way than definition, and love possesses what knowledge seeks in vain.

## See also

Disembodied beauty.

### Literary form

*Poetry in Pater's widest sense, all writing that pleases by its form, which the Winckelmann essay names as the one art wide enough for modern life · The Renaissance*

*this varied literary form*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The shape of a written work as distinct from its content; in Pater, literature itself, considered as an art of form.

[380] Thomas More, *The Life of John Picus, Earl of Mirandola* (London, about 1510).

**In *The Renaissance*.** Only in literature, "this varied literary form", can art command the resources to deal with modern life (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§52–53.

## Meaning

"Form", from the Latin *forma*, shape, is in criticism the shape a work takes as distinct from its matter: arrangement, rhythm, style, all that can be changed without changing what is said. "Literary form" is then the form proper to writing. Pater's phrase is wider than the usual sense. He does not mean the forms of literature, the sonnet or the novel, but literature as a whole, defined by its form, and he calls that whole "poetry".

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, at the end of the series of the arts. Sculpture fitted Hellenic humanism, painting the middle age, and "music and poetry have their fortune in the modern world" (WIN §52; see Correspondence). Pater then widens the word "poetry" to take in all literature that pleases by its form: poetry is all literary production that gives pleasure "by its form, as distinct from its matter" (WIN §53; see Pleasure; Matter and form). "Only in this varied literary form can art command that width, variety, delicacy of resources, which will enable it to deal with the conditions of modern life" (WIN §53). The reason is the modern subject. What modern art must do is "so to rearrange the details of modern life, so to reflect it, that it may satisfy the spirit" (WIN §53; see Freedom), and modern life is intricate, entangled, governed by a network of law (WIN §53; see Magic web). Only literature has means enough to follow it.

The definition settles which works Pater means. His examples, a few sentences later, are not poems but novels, "Goethe's romances" and "the romances of Victor Hugo" (WIN §53; see Dénouement). Literary form includes prose fiction, and the essay can be read as ending by giving the novel the place that sculpture held in Greece: the art in which the mind of an age finds its adequate expression.

The phrase can be read as the counterweight to the essay's praise of sculpture. Sculpture triumphs by limitation, holding colour only by convention and giving up background and situation (WIN §§34, 37; see Plastic art); literature triumphs by "width, variety, delicacy of resources", the very things sculpture gave up. The contrast is not a ranking. Each art fits its moment, and the modern moment needs the art of the many resources, as the Greek needed the art of the few. But Pater keeps one Greek requirement for the modern art: it must please "by its form", and the romances he praises reflect upon modern life "blitheness and repose" (WIN §53; see Blitheness). Literary form, at the close of the essay, is the means by

which the Greek serenity may yet be carried into a world that sculpture can no longer hold.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph that ends the series of the arts with music and poetry, in the order of the book.

**WIN §52** Sculpture corresponds to Hellenic humanism, painting to the middle age; music and poetry have their fortune in the modern world.

**WIN §53** Only in this varied literary form, poetry in the widest sense, can art command the resources to deal with modern life.

## Elsewhere in Pater

In "Style" (1888; collected in *Appreciations*, 1889) Pater makes the claim directly: imaginative prose is "the special and opportune art of the modern world" (see Prose).[381]

## See also

Blitheness; Correspondence; Dénouement; Freedom; Magic web; Matter and form; Overwrought delicacy; Plastic art; Pleasure; Prose.

# Literary sense

*the literary sense*

Attested: *the literary sense* (CON §6; C73 §7). The phrase means the taste for literature, the capacity to be moved by writing as writing, and Pater uses it of its birth in one man. "One of the most beautiful passages of Rousseau is that in the sixth book of the Confessions, where he describes the awakening in him of the literary sense" (CON §6). The next sentence gives its occasion: "An undefinable taint of death had clung always about him, and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by mortal disease" (CON §6). The literary sense wakes under the sentence of death. In the sixth book of the *Confessions*, at Les Charmettes, the young Rousseau, believing himself dying, resolves to draw from the little life left him all the use he can, and writes that he only began to live when he regarded himself as a dead man.[382] He chose, Pater says, intellectual excitement, which he found in the writings of Voltaire (CON §6; see Intellectual excitement); Rousseau tells of that reading in the fifth book, and Pater's "sixth book" joins the two. The story can be read as Pater's parable for the Conclusion's argument:

[381] Walter Pater, "Style", *Fortnightly Review*, December 1888; reprinted in *Appreciations* (London, 1889).

[382] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Confessions*, Book VI: *Ne pouvant prolonger ma vie, je résolus de tirer du peu qu'il m'en restoit tout le parti qu'il m'étoit possible*; *je ne commençai de vivre que quand je me regardai comme un homme mort.*

every life is under the same sentence, "we are all condamnés" (CON §6; see Condamnés), and Rousseau's response as one form of the right one. The 1873 text had "One of the most beautiful places in the writings of Rousseau" (C73 §7), and "stricken by mortal disease" for "smitten".

## See also

Condamnés; Indefinite reprieve; Intellectual excitement; Interval.

# Lyrical poetry

*The highest and most complete form of poetry, because in it the matter can least be detached from the form · The Renaissance*

*lyrical poetry*; *lyrics*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Poetry of song and feeling, short and musical, as against narrative and drama.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "But the ideal types of poetry are those in which this distinction is reduced to its minimum; so that lyrical poetry, precisely because in it we are least able to detach the matter from the form, without a deduction of something from that matter itself, is, at least artistically, the highest and most complete form of poetry" (GIO §7).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §7 says that the boy sings "Take, O take those lips away" in *Measure for Measure*, act 4, scene 1, and that "In Pater's example, a song condenses the emotional atmosphere of a whole play".

**A place to read.** GIO §7.

## Meaning

The Greek *lyrikos* means of or for the lyre: lyric poetry was first poetry sung to the lyre, and the name kept the bond with music when the poems were no longer sung. In the criticism of Pater's century the lyric was the poetry of personal feeling. Pater's definition is formal rather than personal. A lyric is the kind of poem in which matter and form are least separable, and its rank follows from that.

## Use in the book

The definition stands in the seventh paragraph, the essay's application of its law to poetry. Poetry "works with words addressed in the first instance to the pure intelligence; and it deals, most often, with a definite subject or situation" (GIO §7). It may carry "moral or political aspiration, as often in the poetry of Victor Hugo", and then "it is easy enough for the understanding to distinguish between the matter and the form, however much the matter … has been penetrated by the informing, artistic spirit"

(GIO §7; see Informing expression). Against such poetry stands the lyric: "But the ideal types of poetry are those in which this distinction is reduced to its minimum; so that lyrical poetry, precisely because in it we are least able to detach the matter from the form, without a deduction of something from that matter itself, is, at least artistically, the highest and most complete form of poetry" (GIO §7).

The argument is a test of separation. In a poem of ideas one can state the ideas and lose only the style; in a lyric, to state the matter is to lose part of the matter itself, because the matter was in the form. "At least artistically" limits the claim: Pater does not say that the lyric is the greatest poetry by every measure, only by the measure of art. The next sentence goes further: the very perfection of such poetry depends "in part, on a certain suppression or vagueness of mere subject" (GIO §7; see Vagueness of subject). The examples are Blake's "most imaginative compositions" and Shakespeare's songs, "as preeminently in that song of Mariana's page in Measure for Measure, in which the kindling force and poetry of the whole play seems to pass for a moment into an actual strain of music" (GIO §7). The song "Take, O take those lips away" has hardly any subject: lips, eyes, kisses, a forsaken love. Its meaning is its music, and at that moment the play becomes song.

The lyric can be read as standing to poetry as music stands to the arts: the kind in which the condition of music is nearest. The Du Bellay essay can be read as the book's example. Du Bellay's song of the winnower, "a composition in which the matter is almost nothing, and the form almost everything" (BEL §23; see Matter and form), is a lyric of the slightest subject, and Pater praises it for exactly that.

The ranking had a precedent in Pater's century. John Stuart Mill, in "The Two Kinds of Poetry" (1833), had held that lyric poetry, as the earliest kind, was also "more eminently and peculiarly poetry than any other", the kind most natural to a poetic temperament.[383] Mill's reason was feeling: for him poetry was feeling confessing itself in solitude, and the lyric its purest voice. Pater's reason is form: the lyric is highest because its matter cannot be detached. The two can be read as the Romantic and the aesthetic defences of the same kind.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "lyrical" or "lyrics" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §20** A lighter literature reached an audience which the concentrated passion of the higher lyrics left untouched.

[383] John Stuart Mill, "The Two Kinds of Poetry", *Monthly Repository*, n.s. 7 (October 1833); reprinted as the second part of "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" in *Dissertations and Discussions* (London, 1859), vol. 1. The first part, "What is Poetry?" (*Monthly Repository*, January 1833), calls poetry "feeling, confessing itself to itself in moments of solitude".

**GIO §7** Lyrical poetry, in which the matter can least be detached from the form, is artistically the highest and most complete form of poetry.

## See also

Abstract colour; Condition of music; Informing expression; Matter and form; Vagueness of subject.

## Madrigal

*madrigals*

Attested: *madrigals* (MIC §8). A short lyric poem of Italian origin, freer in form than the sonnet, usually on love and often written to be sung; in the sixteenth century the word named also the polyphonic song that set such a poem. Michelangelo wrote many, and Guasti's edition prints them as a class of their own beside the sonnets. Pater uses the word in the eighth paragraph of the essay, after finding a delight in "carnal form and colour" beneath the calm of the sonnets (MIC §8; see Carnal; Platonic calm): in the sonnets, "and still more in the madrigals, he often falls into the language of less tranquil affections" (MIC §8; see Penitence). The madrigal, looser and more musical than the sonnet, can be read as letting through the passion that the sonnet's Platonic form holds down. The phrase "still more" carries, on this reading, a judgement about form: the stricter the poem, the calmer its surface; the freer the poem, the more it betrays.

## See also

Carnal; Penitence; Platonic calm.

## Marriage of Faust and Helena

*that marriage of Faust and Helena*; *Euphorion*

Attested: *marriage of Faust and Helena*, *Euphorion* (WIN §48). In the third act of the second part of Goethe's *Faust* (1832), Faust, the restless modern seeker, wins Helen of Troy, called up from the world of the dead, and their child is Euphorion, "a genius without wings", as Phorkyas calls him, who climbs ever higher on the crags and, when at last a pair of wings unfolds, throws himself into the air and falls to his death; Goethe told Eckermann that he had Byron in mind.[384] Pater's own note gives the place, "Faust, Th. ii. Act. 3". He makes the marriage the emblem of Goethe's achievement: "Goethe illustrates a union of the Romantic spirit, in its adventure, its variety, its profound subjectivity of soul, with Hellenism, in

[384] Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens* (Leipzig, 1836), 5 July 1827.

its transparency, its rationality, its desire of beauty—that marriage of Faust and Helena, of which the art of the nineteenth century is the child, the beautiful lad Euphorion, as Goethe conceives him, on the crags, in the 'splendour of battle and in harness as for victory,' his brows bound with light" (WIN §48). "Goethe illustrates, too, the preponderance in this marriage of the Hellenic element; and that element, in its true essence, was made known to him by Winckelmann" (WIN §48). Pater does not mention Euphorion's fall, and the omission can be read as tact or as hope: the art of the nineteenth century is shown at its height, armed for victory, not at the moment of its fall, which Goethe made the figure of Byron's death at Missolonghi. The note at WIN §48 says that Pater uses the episode "to imagine a modern art born from both Romantic restlessness and Greek form".

## See also

Hellenism; Im Ganzen; Romantic school.

# Mother-tongue

*The language learned first, at home, which for Du Bellay as Pater reads him is the only medium of what is moving and passionate · The Renaissance*

*mother-tongue*; *native tongue*; *vulgar tongue*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The language a person learns first, from mother and nurse, before any study.

**In *The Renaissance*.** What Du Bellay is really pleading for, Pater says, is the language "in which one will have the utmost degree of what is moving and passionate" (BEL §11).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** BEL §§11–12.

## Meaning

The English "mother tongue" answers the medieval Latin *lingua materna* and the French *langue maternelle*. The idea is older than the phrase. At the opening of his treatise on the vernacular Dante defines vernacular speech as the speech we take in without any rule, imitating our nurse, and sets it above the "secondary" speech of grammar, Latin, which is learned by long study.[385] In France the phrase entered the law ten years before Du Bellay's treatise: the ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts of 1539 required that judgements and all other legal acts be pronounced, registered and delivered to the parties *en langage maternel françois et non autrement*,

[385] Dante Alighieri, *De vulgari eloquentia* I.i.2–4: *vulgarem locutionem asserimus quam sine omni regula nutricem imitantes accipimus*.

"in the mother tongue, French, and not otherwise".[386] Against the "vulgar" tongue, the speech of the *vulgus*, the crowd, "mother tongue" is the word of affection: the same language seen from the cradle rather than from the schools.

## Use in the book

Pater uses "mother-tongue" once, at the point where his account of Du Bellay's treatise turns from argument to feeling. The effort to ennoble French, to give it grace, number, perfection and the painter's last touch, is gathered up in one judgement: "what Du Bellay is really pleading for is his mother-tongue, the language, that is, in which one will have the utmost degree of what is moving and passionate" (BEL §11; see Dernière main). The word "really" marks the reading as Pater's. The *Deffense* argues for French as a learned language, fit for philosophy and the great genres; Pater makes the plea one for the language of emotion, and so for the language a man feels in. The next sentence carries it beyond letters: "in pleading for the cultivation of the French language, he is pleading for no merely scholastic interest, but for freedom, impulse, reality, not in literature only, but in daily communion of speech" (BEL §11). Freedom, impulse and reality are the qualities the dead languages lack, "shut up in books as in reliquaries" (BEL §11; see Reliquary), and "communion" can be read as giving daily speech something of a sacrament's dignity, as if the living language were the true shrine and the books the false one. With this starveling stock Du Bellay "must speak delicately, movingly, if he is ever to speak so at all" (BEL §11; see Starveling stock): a man has one language in which he can be moving, and it is not of his choosing.

The next paragraph turns the argument into a life. Studies that came too late made Du Bellay "a lover of his own homely native tongue" (BEL §12; see Dead words), and through that fortunate shortcoming "he became national and modern" (BEL §12; see National and modern). The treatise's plea for the mother-tongue is, on Pater's showing, the poet's own history: neglected as a boy, learned too late, he was saved for French by the very lateness of his learning.

The book's other name for the same language is the scholar's. Abelard, it appears, composed many verses "in the vulgar tongue", which the young men already sang on the quay (FRE §3), and wrote his treatises in Latin while composing songs in the vulgar tongue (FRE §7; see Vulgar tongue); Pico himself, long before Savonarola's "bonfire of vanities", had destroyed his "love-songs in the vulgar tongue" (PIC §11). In the Du Bellay essay the scholar's word is Du Bellay's own, even as he protests against "some learned men who think that our vulgar tongue is wholly incapable of erudition and good literature" (BEL §9; see Vulgar tongue). The essay can be read as moving from the one name to the other. It quotes Du Bellay defending the

[386] Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts (August 1539), art. 111.

vulgar tongue, and then, in Pater's own voice, renames it the mother-tongue, the language not of the crowd but of the home, and the change of name is the argument: a language one was born to is not vulgar.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater names a mother, native or vulgar tongue, in the order of the book.

**FRE §3** Abelard, it appears, composed many verses in the vulgar tongue, which the young men sang on the quay.

**FRE §7** Abelard composed songs in the vulgar tongue and wrote his treatises in Latin.

**PIC §11** Long before Savonarola's bonfire of vanities, Pico had destroyed his love-songs in the vulgar tongue.

**BEL §9** Du Bellay protests against learned men who think the vulgar tongue incapable of erudition.

**BEL §11** What Du Bellay is really pleading for is his mother-tongue, for freedom, impulse and reality in daily speech.

**BEL §12** Studies that came too late made Du Bellay a lover of his own homely native tongue.

## Pater's sources

The *Deffense* has the thought Pater draws out, and once the word: in its last chapter the good minds of the age, Italians among them, "have nonetheless turned to their mother tongue".[387] In the chapter on the impossibility of equalling the ancients in their own languages, Du Bellay says that the ancients used languages they had sucked in "with the nurse's milk", and that French is despised for no other reason than that "from childhood and without study we learn it, the others with great pains and industry".[388] Pater's "mother-tongue" names what that sentence describes, and his "daily communion of speech" answers its picture of a language learned without study, at home.

## See also

Dead words; Dernière main; Le discours fatal des choses mondaines; Music of language; National and modern; Reliquary; Starveling stock; Vulgar tongue.

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[387] Du Bellay, *Deffence*, book II, ch. 12: *se sont néanmoins convertis à leur langue maternelle*.

[388] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 11: *sucées avec le lait de la nourrice; dès enfance et sans étude nous l'apprenons, les autres avec grand'peine et industrie*.

*The power of a language's sound, which for Du Bellay enters into the inmost part of things · The Renaissance*
*the music and dignity of languages*; *music*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The pleasure of a language's sound, its rhythms, vowels and cadences, felt apart from its sense.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Du Bellay recognised the force of "the music and dignity of languages" (BEL §11).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; its Key Words entry "Music" belongs to the Giorgione essay, where music is "the art in which form and subject are most fully at one".

**A place to read.** BEL §§11, 15.

## Meaning

The Greek *mousikē* was the art of the Muses, and it took in words, melody and dance together: Greek lyric was sung, and its metres were the measures of the music. When the arts parted, the word "music" went with the melody, and "the music of language" became a figure for what the words kept of it, their sound and movement. In the sixteenth century the figure was still close to the fact. The French poets of the Pleiad wrote odes and songs to be sung, and their theory of verse was a theory of sound.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in Pater's account of what Du Bellay's treatise was for. "He recognised of what force the music and dignity of languages are, how they enter into the inmost part of things" (BEL §11). Each word claims more than a grammarian would. Music is given "force", not charm, and paired with dignity, as if the sound of a language were part of its rank; and the two together "enter into the inmost part of things", which can be read as saying that the sound of words is not laid over the world but goes into it, so that a thing named in a noble and musical tongue is itself changed. The sentence goes on to the plea for French in "daily communion of speech" (BEL §11; see Mother-tongue), and the order is the argument: a language's music is the reason why it matters which language one speaks.

Four paragraphs later the music becomes the Pleiad's whole ambition. The school wished "to taste a more exquisite and various music than that of the older French verse, or of the classical poets" (BEL §15; see La poésie chantée), and set out to join the measured music of Latin and Greek to the rhymed music of Villon and the old French songs (BEL §15; see Double music; La poésie chantée). The paragraph ends with an appetite beyond its means, "a music of greater compass perhaps than words can possibly yield"

(BEL §15; see Double music). Between the two paragraphs the essay can be read as tracing a decline: Du Bellay's music of language is a power, entering into things; the Pleiad's music is a pleasure, to be tasted and drained to "the last drops of sweetness" (BEL §15). The paragraph shows the school's music turning to luxury, and the essay's later account of a jaded audience, which loves "a constant change of rhyme in poetry" (BEL §17; see Rhetoric in architecture), completes the picture.

The book had watched the music of language being born. In the songs of *Aucassin and Nicolette*, "which seem always on the point of passing into true rhyme, but which halt somehow" (FRE §21; see Music of rhymed poetry), people are "just growing aware of the elements of a new music in their possession" (FRE §21). The Du Bellay essay, which ends the same French story, shows the music in its full possession and its excess. The Romanticists' return to the Pleiad, "in their eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery" (BEL §13; see Romantic school), extends the story into Pater's own century.

The Giorgione essay gives the music of language its place among the arts. The true poetical quality "comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing" (GIO §1; see Rhythmical language), and in Shakespeare's song of Mariana's page "the kindling force and poetry of the whole play seems to pass for a moment into an actual strain of music" (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). The essay on Du Bellay found in a sixteenth-century theory of language what the Giorgione essay makes a principle of art: that the sound of a work is not its dress but part of its substance.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Pater speaks of the music of words or verse, in the order of the book.

**FRE §21** The songs of Aucassin and Nicolette show people growing aware of a new music, the music of rhymed poetry.

**GIO §1** The poetical quality comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing.

**GIO §7** In the song of Mariana's page the poetry of a play passes for a moment into an actual strain of music.

**BEL §11** Du Bellay recognised the force of the music and dignity of languages.

**BEL §13** The Romanticists, eager for strange music and imagery, took up the Pleiad again.

**BEL §15** The Pleiad sought a double music, the measured verse of the ancients and the rhymed verse of the French.

**BEL §16** Except in their eagerness for music, the poets of the Pleiad seem never quite in earnest.

## See also

Double music; La poésie chantée; Lyrical poetry; Mother-tongue; Music of rhymed poetry; Rhetoric in architecture; Rhythmical language; Romantic school.

## Music of rhymed poetry

*music of rhymed poetry*

Attested: *music of rhymed poetry* (FRE §21). The music that rhyme gives to verse, as distinct from the measured music of Greek and Latin metre. "A novel art is arising, the music of rhymed poetry" (FRE §21), and in the songs of Aucassin and Nicolette, which never quite reach true rhyme, Pater sees "people just growing aware of the elements of a new music in their possession" (FRE §21; see Assonant). The Du Bellay essay completes the story. There the rhymed, unscanned verse of Villon and the old French poets, *la poésie chantée*, is set beside the measured verse of Latin and Greek, and the Pleiad would join the two in a double music (BEL §15; see La poésie chantée; Double music). The music that was arising in the thirteenth century is, in the sixteenth, the native music the Pleiad wished to join to the classical.

## See also

Assonant; Double music; La poésie chantée; New artistic sense; Rhyme; Rubric.

## New artistic sense

*new artistic sense*

Attested: *new artistic sense* (FRE §21). A new faculty of taste, the power to feel a kind of beauty not felt before. Of the songs of Aucassin and Nicolette Pater says that "here, as elsewhere in that early poetry, much of the interest lies in the spectacle of the formation of a new artistic sense" (FRE §21; see Assonant; Music of rhymed poetry). The sense can be read as formed in the audience as much as in the poets: people are "anticipating how pleasant such music might become" (FRE §21). The phrase can be read as naming one of the book's lasting interests, the beginnings of things. The earliest phases of the Renaissance have "the freshness which belongs to all periods of growth in art" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis), and Botticelli has "the freshness, the uncertain and diffident promise, which belong to the earlier Renaissance itself" (BOT §10).

## See also

Ascêsis; Assonant; Music of rhymed poetry.

## Number

*number*

Attested: *number*, in the sense of rhythm (BEL §11); elsewhere it names the study of number in the Preface (PRE §2) and is a count in twelve further paragraphs. Number, in the old language of rhetoric and verse, is rhythm: the Latin *numerus* was the measure of syllables in prose or verse, and English "numbers" long meant verse itself. Pater uses the word once in that sense, in his list of what Du Bellay wished to give the French language: "grace, number, perfection" (BEL §11; see Dernière main). Number can be read as standing between grace and perfection as the craftsman's quality, the regular measure that a language can be taught. Du Bellay's treatise uses the word itself: in the chapter on the word *rime* it cites Cicero to the effect that whatever falls under some measure and judgement of the ear is called *numerus* in Latin and *rhythmos* in Greek, in prose as well as in verse.[389] Cicero's own sentence is in the *Orator*.[390] Alexander Pope gave the English use its most famous line: "I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came".[391]

### See also

Dernière main; Rhyme; Rhythmical language.

## Occasional poetry

*Poems written at odd moments, on the margins of sketches, which bring us nearer to Michelangelo than any work made for reputation · The Renaissance*

*occasional*; *occasional and informal character*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Occasional poetry is poetry written for an occasion, or at odd occasions, not as part of a planned literary career.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is a consequence of the occasional and informal character of his poetry, that it brings us nearer to himself, his own mind and temper, than any work done only to support a literary reputation could possibly do" (MIC §9).

**In this edition.** The first note at MIC §9 says that Michelangelo's great-nephew "published an edited collection in 1623".

**A place to read.** MIC §9.

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[389] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book II, ch. 8.

[390] Cicero, *Orator* 67.

[391] Alexander Pope, *An Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot* (1735), l. 128.

## Meaning

In the language of literary history, occasional verse is written for a particular event, a wedding, a death, a gift, as against the poet's planned works. Pater's sense is wider and more personal: poems written on occasion, as feeling arose, by a man who was not by profession a poet.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the middle of the ninth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "It is a consequence of the occasional and informal character of his poetry, that it brings us nearer to himself, his own mind and temper, than any work done only to support a literary reputation could possibly do. His letters tell us little that is worth knowing about him—a few poor quarrels about money and commissions. But it is quite otherwise with these songs and sonnets, written down at odd moments, sometimes on the margins of his sketches, themselves often unfinished sketches, arresting some salient feeling or unpremeditated idea as it passed" (MIC §9).

The passage makes informality a virtue. A poet who writes for reputation shapes his work for readers; Michelangelo, writing "at odd moments", shaped his only for himself, and so his poems show "his own mind and temper". The letters, which should be intimate, are about money; the poems, which might be literary exercises, are the true record. "Arresting some salient feeling or unpremeditated idea as it passed" makes the poems snapshots of the inner life, caught in passing. "Themselves often unfinished sketches" joins them to his sculpture: the poems share the incompleteness of the marbles (see Incompleteness).

The paragraph then tells their history, and the history explains why a true study had only just become possible. A few of the sonnets became, almost within his lifetime, "a subject of academical discourses" (MIC §9; see Platonic academy); Benedetto Varchi's lecture of 1547 was one. They were first collected in 1623 by the great-nephew, Michelangelo Buonarroti the younger, who "re-wrote the sonnets in part" (MIC §9; see Autograph), and the book lay neglected through the eighteenth century, "through the influence of that French taste which despised all compositions of the kind, as it despised and neglected Dante. 'His reputation will ever be on the increase, because he is so little read,' says Voltaire of Dante" (MIC §9). Voltaire's joke, in his *Philosophical Dictionary*, is Pater's emblem of the taste that could not value informal or difficult poetry; Guasti's edition of 1863, from the autographs, made "a true study" of the poems possible (MIC §9; see Collate).

The informal poems carry the essay's argument. The interest of Michelangelo's poems is that "they make us spectators of this struggle; the struggle of a strong nature to adorn and attune itself" (MIC §9; see Attune), and only occasional poems could show a struggle: finished literary work

would show its result. The poems are a record of the attuning, written down as it happened.

The phrase belongs, on this reading, with the book's defences of the fragment and the unfinished. Michelangelo's unfinished statues, Leonardo's notebooks, the "morsels of deeper colour" gathered from *Aucassin and Nicolette* in the first essay (FRE §29): Pater values the work that keeps the trace of its making, and the occasional poem, scribbled on a sketch, is such a work. Its imperfection is the price of its closeness.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "occasional" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §9** The occasional and informal character of Michelangelo's poetry brings us nearer to himself than any work done for reputation.

**WIN §25** The beginnings of ritual, in the usages of patriarchal life, were at first as occasional and unfixed as the sentiment they expressed.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §9 says that "Michelangelo's great-nephew published an edited collection in 1623. Later access to manuscript readings also makes it possible to see the significance of masculine addressees, including Tommaso de' Cavalieri, in the poetry."

## See also

Attune; Autograph; Collate; Incompleteness; Platonic academy.

# Ondelette

*ondelette*

Attested: *ondelette* (BEL §16). French, "little wave": *onde*, wave, from the Latin *unda*, with the double diminutive ending *-el-ette*. Pater gives it first in his list of the Pleiad's diminutives, the sign of a mythology and a passion made small enough to play with (BEL §16; see Diminutive), and the note at BEL §16 renders it "Little wave". The diminutive ending runs through the French verse the essay quotes. Belleau's swallows are *arondelles* (BEL §6), a diminutive of the Old French *aronde*, from the Latin *hirundo*; modern French has replaced it with *hirondelle*, a diminutive borrowed from Old Provençal, with no smallness left in it; Du Bellay's French language is a *vergette*, a little shoot (BEL §11; see Pauvre plante et vergette). The word had a later life no one could have foreseen: in the early 1980s the French geophysicist Jean Morlet and the physicist Alex Grossmann gave the name,

*ondelette* in French and "wavelet" in English, to a small wave-form used in analysing signals.[392]

## See also

Diminutive; Ephemeral; Pauvre plante et vergette; Raillery.

## Or dient et content et fabloient

*Or dient et content et fabloient*

Attested: *Or dient et content et fabloient (ici on conte)* (FRE §22). Old French, "Now they speak, tell, and relate the tale", the heading set before each prose section of Aucassin and Nicolette; Pater adds a gloss in modern French, *ici on conte*, here one tells. "Each division of prose" is introduced "by the rubric, Or dient et content et fabloient" (FRE §22; see Rubric). The plural "they" can be read as fitting Pater's view that the piece "was probably intended to be recited by a company of trained performers" (FRE §22), though his own gloss, ici on conte, takes it impersonally. The note at FRE §22 calls the line "A formula introducing a spoken passage", whose "three verbs give the change of performance mode an audible rhythm".

## See also

Cantefable; Or se cante; Rubric.

## Or se cante

*Or se cante*

Attested: *Or se cante (ici on chante)* (FRE §22). Old French, "Now it is sung", the heading set before each song of Aucassin and Nicolette; *cante* is the Picard form of *chante*, and Pater glosses it in modern French, *ici on chante*. "The songs are introduced by the rubric, Or se cante" (FRE §22; see Rubric), and what follows it is the tale's assonant verse, stanzas of twenty or thirty lines on one vowel sound (FRE §21; see Assonant), some of it with its music preserved (FRE §22; see Cantefable). The same verb is in the name the piece gives itself, *cantefable*, a sung tale (FRE §21; see Cantefable). The note at FRE §22 calls it "A formula introducing a sung passage".

## See also

Assonant; Cantefable; Or dient et content et fabloient; Rubric.

[392] Alex Grossmann and Jean Morlet, "Decomposition of Hardy Functions into Square Integrable Wavelets of Constant Shape", *SIAM Journal on Mathematical Analysis* 15 (1984).

## Orthography

*orthography*

Attested: *orthography* (BEL §14). Orthography is correct spelling, from the Greek *orthographia*, right writing. Pater uses the word in his portrait of Ronsard as a scholar: "But he has the ambition not only of being a courtier and a lover, but a great scholar also; he is anxious about orthography, about the letter è Grecque, the true spelling of Latin names in French writing, and the restoration of the letter i to its primitive liberty—del' i voyelle en sa première liberté" (BEL §14). The list descends from spelling in general to single letters, and its pedantry is the point: "His poetry is full of quaint, remote learning. He is just a little pedantic, true always to his own express judgment, that to be natural is not enough for one who in poetry desires to produce work worthy of immortality" (BEL §14). The judgment is not Ronsard's in those words. It is the title of a chapter of Du Bellay's treatise, "That nature is not enough for one who in poetry wishes to make a work worthy of immortality".[393] Ronsard did care about spelling. His *Abbregé de l'art poëtique françois* of 1565 tells the young poet to avoid all superfluous spelling and to put no letters in words that he does not pronounce in reading them,[394] a reformer's rule that would make writing follow speech. Pater's paragraph can be read as setting the two sides of the Pleiad together: the scholar who would reform the alphabet and the poets whose forged words "had only an ephemeral existence" (BEL §14; see Ephemeral).

### See also

Ephemeral; Immortality; Primitive liberty.

## Pauvre plante et vergette

*pauvre plante et vergette*

Attested: *pauvre plante et vergette* (BEL §11). French, "poor plant and little shoot": *vergette* is the diminutive of *verge*, a rod or twig, from the Latin *virga*. Pater sets the phrase beside his English for it, "this starveling stock" (BEL §11; see Starveling stock), and the note at BEL §11 renders it "A poor plant and little shoot", a figure of "the supposedly weak stock of a vernacular that can nonetheless be made to grow". The French is not quite Du Bellay's: the third chapter of the *Deffense*'s first book calls the language *si pauvre et nue*, "so poor and bare", and says that it is *comme une plante et vergette*, "like a plant and little shoot", and Pater has joined the two. The

[393] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book II, ch. 3: *Que le naturel n'est suffisant à celuy qui en poësie veult faire œuvre digne de l'immortalité.*

[394] Pierre de Ronsard, *Abbregé de l'art poëtique françois* (Paris, 1565): *Tu eviteras toute orthographie superflue, et ne mettras aucunes lettres en tels mots si tu ne les prononces en les lisant.*

figure is a gardener's. In the same chapter Du Bellay says that French has not yet flowered, still less borne all the fruit it could, and he tells how the Romans treated their own language as a good husbandman treats a wild plant: they moved it from the wild into a garden, cut away its useless branches, and grafted on good ones drawn from Greek.[395] The plant is weak not by nature but for want of cultivation, and Du Bellay had said as much in his first chapter, which Pater quotes: languages "are not born like plants and trees, some naturally feeble and sickly, others healthy and strong" (BEL §9; see Freewill). Pater's essay keeps the garden. Du Bellay's own youth was lost "like the flower which no shower waters, and no hand cultivates" (BEL §12; see National and modern). The poor plant of the treatise can be read as growing, in the essay, into the one flower that Pater finds in Du Bellay, "the sweetest flower of his genius" (BEL §23; see Vanneur).

## See also

Ce fleur particulier; Freewill; National and modern; Ondelette; Starveling stock; Vanneur.

## Personification

*personification*

Attested: *personification* (MIC §15). The figure of speech that gives a person's form to a thing or an idea: Love as a lord, a city as a lady. Pater uses the word in the list of the ways Michelangelo is like Dante: he recalls him "in the personification of Amor" (MIC §15; see Amor; Gentile). Dante had defended the figure in the *Vita Nuova* (XXV; see Amor). The same paragraph gives Michelangelo a second personification, political rather than amorous: "Above all, he resembles Dante in the warmth and intensity of his political utterances, for the lady of one of his noblest sonnets was from the first understood to be the city of Florence; and he avers that all must be asleep in heaven, if she, who was created 'of angelic form' for a thousand lovers, is appropriated by one alone, some Piero, or Alessandro de' Medici" (MIC §15). The poem Pater calls a sonnet is in fact a madrigal, "Per molti, donna, anzi per mille amanti", whose closing lines he quotes in the same paragraph (see Surfeiting of desire).[396] Florence as a lady wronged by the tyranny of one family is the personification of a republican; Michelangelo had worked on the fortifications of the city in its "last struggle for liberty" (MIC §8), and left Florence for good in 1534, under Duke Alessandro. The two personifications, Love and Florence, can be read as the two passions the

[395] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, ch. 3.

[396] Michelangelo, madrigal "Per molti, donna, anzi per mille amanti" (Girardi 249).

paragraph finds in him, the lover's and the citizen's, both expressed in Dante's way.

## See also

Amor; Gentile; Surfeiting of desire.

## Pindaric ode

*The Greek choral ode of Pindar, with its strophe and antistrophe, into which Ronsard made the old French song · The Renaissance*

*Pindaric ode*; *ode*; *Odes*; *Pindar*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An ode on the model of Pindar, the Greek choral poet of the fifth century BC: lofty, intricate, built of stanzas that answer one another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The old French chanson "became in the hands of Ronsard a Pindaric ode" (BEL §4).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §4 says that Pater "invites the reader to notice the visible pattern of short and long lines as well".

**A place to read.** BEL §§4–7.

## Meaning

Pindar of Thebes wrote odes for victors at the games of Olympia, Delphi, Nemea and the Isthmus, of which four books survive. They were sung and danced by a chorus, and most are built in triads, a strophe and an antistrophe in the same metre followed by an epode in another, repeated through the poem. Their manner is high: myth, maxim and praise follow one another in sudden turns, and their metres are complex. To later poets "Pindaric" meant the grand style of lyric. It meant also, after Abraham Cowley's *Pindarique Odes* of 1656, which took Pindar's metres to be irregular and imitated them in rhymed stanzas of unequal lines, an ode of irregular stanzas; Ronsard, a century earlier, had kept the triads.

## Use in the book

The fourth paragraph of the Du Bellay essay gives Ronsard's reform its form. "So the old French chanson, which, like the old northern Gothic ornament, though it sometimes refined itself into a sort of weird elegance, was often, in its essence, something rude and formless, became in the hands of Ronsard a Pindaric ode. He gave it structure, a sustained system, strophe and antistrophe, and taught it a changefulness and variety of metre which keep the curiosity always excited, so that the very aspect of it, as it lies written on the page, carries the eye lightly onwards, and of which this is a good instance:—" (BEL §4). The sentence's first word joins the ode to the third paragraph's softening of French work (BEL §3; see Castigation). The

rude song is to the ode as the Gothic mass is to its refined surface, and what Ronsard brings is structure: a system sustained through the poem, stanzas that answer one another (see Antistrophe; Strophe), and a variety of metre that the eye can see on the page (see Changefulness). Pater does not quote it, but Du Bellay himself gave the ode to Ronsard: the preface to the enlarged *Olive* of 1550 says that the ode, "in its true and natural style", had been brought into French by Pierre de Ronsard,[397] whose first four books of *Odes* appeared the same year, opening with Pindaric odes in triads to the king and the great.

The instance Pater gives of that changefulness is not a Pindaric ode at all. It is two stanzas of Rémy Belleau's "Avril", a light song of short and long lines (BEL §§5–6). The choice can be read as telling. What Pater values in the Pindaric reform is not Pindar's grandeur, his myths and his heroic praise, but the order and variety it brought to the French song, which a slight poem shows as well as a great one. The essay's taste runs, from this paragraph to the last, toward the small thing perfectly handled.

The book's other odes confirm the taste. Ronsard's fame, Pater says, has rested, "as many critics have thought, on the eighteen lines of one famous ode" (BEL §23; see Vanneur). Pater does not name it, but the ode to Cassandre that begins *Mignonne, allons voir si la rose*, eighteen lines in three stanzas of six, fits the description, and it is no Pindaric ode but a song on the rose and the passing of youth. The poet who made the French song Pindaric is remembered, on this reading, for a song. The same sentence sets beside Ronsard the English poet Thomas Gray (1716–1771), famous for his *Elegy*; Gray had also published, in 1757, two Pindaric odes in strict triads, *The Progress of Poesy* and *The Bard*, which are not what his fame rests on either. In the thirteenth paragraph the Queen of Scots, "at whose desire Ronsard published his Odes", reads him in her northern prison (BEL §13; see Exotic). Elsewhere the ode is Wordsworth's, the "Ode on the Recollections of Childhood" (PRE §5; see Active principle), and Pindar's own: Winckelmann excuses the delay of a promised essay "in the words of Pindar", who had told a boy victor that a debt paid with interest ends reproach (WIN §15; see ἰδέᾳ τε καλὸν, ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον). The note at WIN §15 identifies the poem as the tenth Olympian, which "treats the overdue song as a debt".

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which an ode, Pindar or the Pindaric is named, in the order of the book.

**PRE §5** Wordsworth's faculty transforms whole compositions, like the Ode on the Recollections of Childhood.

[397] Joachim du Bellay, *L'Olive augmentée depuis la premiere edition* (Paris, 1550), "Au lecteur": *l'Ode, quand à son vray et naturel stile, representée en nostre langue par Pierre de Ronsard*.

**BEL §4** The old French chanson became in the hands of Ronsard a Pindaric ode, with strophe and antistrophe.

**BEL §13** The Queen of Scots, at whose desire Ronsard published his Odes, read him in her northern prison.

**BEL §23** Ronsard's fame has rested, many critics have thought, on the eighteen lines of one famous ode.

**WIN §15** Winckelmann excuses a delay in the words of Pindar, who had kept Agesidamus waiting for an ode.

## See also

Active principle; Antistrophe; Castigation; Changefulness; Exotic; Formlessness; Gothic manner; La poésie chantée; Sonnet; Strophe; Vanneur.

## Platonic commentary

*a Platonic commentary*

Attested: *a Platonic commentary* (PIC §11). Pico's *Commento*, his explanation in Italian of a poem on heavenly love by his friend Beniveni (Girolamo Benivieni in modern usage). He was writing it when he already had plans for the Conclusions.[398] "It was in another spirit that he composed a Platonic commentary, the only work of his in Italian which has come down to us, on the 'Song of Divine Love'—secondo la mente ed opinione dei Platonici" (PIC §11; see Secondo la mente ed opinione dei Platonici). "In another spirit" sets it against the love-songs he had destroyed (see Vulgar tongue): the poet of earthly love becomes the commentator on heavenly. The commentary borrows its imagery "indifferently from the astrologers, the Cabala, and Homer, and Scripture, and Dionysius the Areopagite" (PIC §11; see Cabala), and "attempts to define the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty" (PIC §11; see Unseen beauty). Pater's essay can be read as preferring the commentary's subject to its learning: the ascent it describes glows (PIC §14), while its array of learning is "ambitious" (PIC §11).

## See also

Cabala; Secondo la mente ed opinione dei Platonici; Unseen beauty; Vulgar tongue.

[398] Brian P. Copenhaver, "Giovanni Pico della Mirandola", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, section 1.

*The seven French poets around Ronsard and Du Bellay, named after the stars · The Renaissance*

*Pleiad*; *the celestial Pleiad*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Pleiades, the cluster of seven stars in Taurus; by a figure, a group of seven brilliant persons.

**In *The Renaissance*.** With "that strange love of emblems which is characteristic of the time", Ronsard's school "called themselves the Pleiad" (BEL §7).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §7 says that "Membership can vary across lists, a point anticipated by Pater's image of the minor stars."

**A place to read.** BEL §§7–8, 13–18.

## Meaning

In Greek myth the Pleiades were the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione, set among the stars. The cluster that bears their name has seven names but shows six stars to the eye, and Ovid says that they are called seven but are usually six.[399] In the third century BC the name was given to seven tragic poets at the court of Ptolemy II in Alexandria, and the French poets took it from them. The friends around Ronsard more often called themselves the Brigade; Ronsard took the name of the Pleiad from a comparison made by friends of his, the humanists Marc-Antoine Muret and Jean Dorat, and he used it only twice.[400] The fixed seven, and the habit of speaking of the Pleiad as a school, belong to later literary history.

## Use in the book

Pater names the school in the seventh paragraph, after the stanzas of Belleau's "Avril". "That is not by Ronsard, but by Remy Belleau, for Ronsard soon came to have a school. Six other poets threw in their lot with him in his literary revolution,—this Remy Belleau, Antoine de Baif, Pontus de Tyard, Étienne Jodelle, Jean Daurat, and lastly Joachim du Bellay; and with that strange love of emblems which is characteristic of the time, which covered all the works of Francis the First with the salamander, and all the works of Henry the Second with the double crescent, and all the works of Anne of Brittany with the knotted cord, they called themselves the Pleiad; seven in all, although, as happens with the celestial Pleiad, if you scrutinise this constellation of poets more carefully you may find there a great number of minor stars" (BEL §7). Pontus de Tyard (1521–1605) was a poet and

[399] Ovid, *Fasti* IV.170: *quae septem dici, sex tamen esse solent*.

[400] Mireille Huchon, introduction to *La Pléiade: Poésie, poétique* (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2024).

philosopher who became bishop of Chalon-sur-Saône; Étienne Jodelle (1532–1573) wrote *Cléopâtre captive*, played in 1553, the first French tragedy on the classical model; Jean Daurat, or Dorat (1508–1588), was the Hellenist who taught Ronsard, Baïf and Du Bellay at the Collège de Coqueret in Paris. Pater's sentence makes the name an emblem like the king's salamander, a device worn for show, and then tests the emblem against the sky: a constellation looked at closely has more stars than its name allows. The joke can be read as Pater's judgement of the school. It was less a body of seven than a taste shared by many, and the essay will value it as a taste.

The eighth paragraph gives the school its manifesto. Du Bellay's treatise struck the first note "of this literary revolution" (BEL §8; see Literary revolution), and in many ways his prose "is a more characteristic example of the culture of the Pleiad than any of its verse" (BEL §8; see Prose). In the ninth, Du Bellay, "developing the theories of the Pleiad", lights upon "many principles of permanent truth and applicability" (BEL §9; see Classical culture). The Pleiad can be read, on Pater's account, as first of all a critical movement, a school that knew what it was doing, and the essay's interest in it is the interest of the critic in a theory as much as of the reader in poems.

The thirteenth paragraph tells the school's fortune. The interest of its poetry "depends not so much on the impress of individual genius upon it" as on the circumstance "that it was once poetry à la mode" (BEL §13; see À la mode). Malherbe displaced it, and his admirers saw in it "only the latest trumpery of the middle age" (BEL §13; see À la mode); then "the time arrived when the school of Malherbe also had had its day; and the Romanticists, who in their eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery, went back to the works of the middle age, accepted the Pleiad too with the rest; and in that new middle age which their genius has evoked, the poetry of the Pleiad has found its place" (BEL §13; see Romantic school). The sentence makes taste a matter of seasons, and its "new middle age" is the nineteenth century's, Pater's own.

The paragraphs that follow are a portrait of the school in its habits. They draw a poetry "not for the people, but for a confined circle" (BEL §14), "insatiable of music" (BEL §15; see Double music) and yet "never quite in earnest" (BEL §16; see Double music), with the charm of "an exquisite faintness" (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise), and true to its age and its country (BEL §18; see Physiognomy). The portrait is affectionate and severe at once, and it prepares the essay's close, where one small poem of Du Bellay's has "in the highest degree, the qualities, the value, of the whole Pleiad school of poetry" (BEL §28; see Pure effect). The school is summed up not in its theory or its ambition but in a winnower's song.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the Pleiad is named, in the order of the book.

**BEL §7** Six poets joined Ronsard, and with the time's love of emblems they called themselves the Pleiad.

**BEL §8** Du Bellay's prose is in many ways a more characteristic example of the culture of the Pleiad than any of its verse.

**BEL §9** Developing the theories of the Pleiad, Du Bellay lighted on principles of permanent truth.

**BEL §13** The Pleiad's poetry was rejected by Malherbe's admirers and accepted again by the Romanticists.

**BEL §14** The poets of the Pleiad forged strange words for themselves which had only an ephemeral existence.

**BEL §15** A double music was the ambition of the Pleiad.

**BEL §16** Except in their eagerness for music the poets of the Pleiad seem never quite in earnest.

**BEL §18** The poetry of the Pleiad is true to the physiognomy of its age and to its country.

**BEL §24** Pater's note sends the reader to Andrew Lang's translations of this and other poems of the Pleiad.

**BEL §28** The winnower's song has the qualities of the whole Pleiad school of poetry.

## Later readings

The revival Pater describes had a book at its head. Sainte-Beuve's *Tableau historique et critique de la poésie française et du théâtre français au XVIe siècle* (1828) returned Ronsard and his friends to French readers in the years of the Romantic movement, and Pater's "Romanticists" who accepted the Pleiad can be taken to include its author, whom the essay quotes.[401]

## In this edition

The Glossary's entry for "Pléiade" reads: "The name associated with the group of sixteenth-century French poets that included Du Bellay and Ronsard."

## See also

À la mode; Classical culture; Double music; Emblematical; Literary revolution; Orthography; Physiognomy; Prose; Pure effect; Romantic school; Une fadeur exquise.

[401] Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, *Tableau historique et critique de la poésie française et du théâtre français au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1828).

# Poésie intime

*Intimate poetry, in which the poet portrays his own moods and takes the reader into his confidence · The Renaissance*

*poésie intime*; *intimate*; *intimacy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French, "intimate poetry": the poetry of private feeling, in which the poet confides his moods.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Sainte-Beuve ranks Du Bellay's *Antiquités de Rome* and *Regrets* "as what has been called poésie intime" (BEL §21).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §21 says that Pater "treats intimacy as especially audible in the poems written under the pressure of absence".

**A place to read.** BEL §21.

## Meaning

French *intime*, from the Latin *intimus*, innermost, is what belongs to the inner life and to the closest ties. The phrase *poésie intime* belongs to French criticism of the Romantic period, which used it for a poetry of private feeling and private life, the poet's moods and household rather than the great themes. Sainte-Beuve, the critic Pater cites, was also a poet of that kind: his *Vie, poésies et pensées de Joseph Delorme* (1829), published the year after his *Tableau* of sixteenth-century poetry, gave the inward life of an obscure young man in a prose life, poems and thoughts.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the twenty-first paragraph of the Du Bellay essay, at the turn from the school to the man. Du Bellay's chief interest is that he is a characteristic specimen of his age (BEL §21; see Æsthetic value), but the highest interest needs "something individual, inventive, unique" (BEL §21; see Originality). Pater then reports where a critic found it. "This impress M. Sainte-Beuve thought he found in the Antiquités de Rome, and the Regrets, which he ranks as what has been called poésie intime, that intensely modern sort of poetry in which the writer has for his aim the portraiture of his own most intimate moods, and to take the reader into his confidence" (BEL §21). The definition has two parts, and they are different acts. The first is portraiture, the poet painting his moods as a painter paints a face (see Portraiture); the second is confidence, the poet taking the reader in. A poem can portray a mood without confiding it. *Poésie intime*, on this definition, does both: it makes the mood a likeness and the reader a friend.

"Intensely modern" is the essay's paradox, a modern quality in a poet of the sixteenth century, and Pater handles it with care. He finds other instances in that age, in Montaigne's *Essays* and the carvings of the church of Brou (BEL §21; see Intimité), and then reserves his judgement: "M.

Sainte-Beuve has perhaps exaggerated the influence of this quality in Du Bellay's Regrets" (BEL §21), though the very name of the book recalls Rousseau and a generation of self-pitying poets (BEL §21; see Ennui; Pity). The reservation is answered by a place: "It was in the atmosphere of Rome, to him so strange and mournful, that these pale flowers grew up" (BEL §21). The flowers are pale because they grew in exile, and the journey that he deplored "brought out all its originality" (BEL §21; see Originality). Only after this does Pater agree with the critic: in effect, he says, you do find "intimacy, intimité, here" (BEL §21; see Intimité), and what he finds is small, not a great sorrow but "the sense of loss in passing days", ending in home-sickness (BEL §21; see Home-sickness). The essay's *poésie intime* can be read as a poetry whose intimacy is its modesty: the poet confides because what he has to confide is slight.

The book's other uses of "intimate" and "intimacy" give the word its range. In the Provençal poetry of the first essay "earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety" makes itself felt (FRE §2; see Liberty of the heart), and the spirit that goes abroad from Abelard's house has "its intimacy, its languid sweetness, its rebellion" (FRE §4; see Sweetness). The art of fifteenth-century Florence has "that intimate impress of an indwelling soul" (ROB §1; see Indwelling soul), Michelangelo, penetrated by the inwardness of the middle age, lived "a life full of intimate experiences" (ROB §9; see Inwardness), and Leonardo had the power "of an intimate presence in the things he handled" (LEO §10; see Intimate presence). In the della Robbia essay *intimité* is "the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods, and manner of apprehension" (ROB §13; see Intimité). The other uses are of friendships and conversations (PIC §7; MIC §§10, 16; LEO §17) and of the "intimate alliance with mind" to which the art of fifteenth-century Italy owes much of its dignity (PRE §8). Across the book intimacy is the inward made present, in a song, a carving, a face or a friendship, and the *poésie intime* of the Du Bellay essay is its form in verse.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which *intime*, *intimité*, "intimate" or "intimacy" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §8** The art of fifteenth-century Italy owes much of its grave dignity to its intimate alliance with mind.

**FRE §2** In Provençal poetry earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety, makes itself felt.

**FRE §4** The spirit going abroad from Abelard's house has its intimacy, its languid sweetness, its rebellion.

**PIC §7** Ficino and Pico fall into a conversation deeper and more intimate than men usually do at first sight.

**ROB §1** Their sculpture shares the intimate impress of an indwelling soul.

**ROB §9** Michelangelo lived not an outward life like the Greek but a life full of intimate experiences, sorrows, consolations.

**ROB §13** Intimité is the seal on a man's work of what is most inward in his moods.

**MIC §10** Michelangelo's closer intimacy with Vittoria Colonna began about 1542.

**MIC §16** Members of the early Oratory were among Michelangelo's friends.

**LEO §10** Leonardo had the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled.

**LEO §17** Leonardo is found in intimate relations with men of science.

**BEL §21** Sainte-Beuve ranks the *Antiquités de Rome* and the *Regrets* as poésie intime, and you do find intimacy there.

## See also

Æsthetic value; Ennui; Home-sickness; Indwelling soul; Intimate presence; Intimité; Inwardness; Liberty of the heart; Originality; Pity; Portraiture; Sweetness.

# Poetical quality

*The quality proper to a poem, which comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing · The Renaissance*

*poetical quality*; *poetical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What makes a poem a poem rather than a description or a reflection set in verse.

**In *The Renaissance*.** One of the functions of æsthetic criticism is "to define in a poem that true poetical quality, which is neither descriptive nor meditative merely, but comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing" (GIO §1).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §7 says: "In Pater's example, a song condenses the emotional atmosphere of a whole play."

**A place to read.** GIO §§1, 7.

## Meaning

"Poetical", from the Greek *poiētikos*, belonging to making, is what belongs to poetry. Pater's "poetical quality" is defined first, like the pictorial charm, by what it is not, and then, unlike it, by what it is: not description,

not meditation, but "the element of song in the singing". The definition can be read as reaching back to the root of the lyric, when poems were sung.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that sets out the duties of criticism (GIO §1; see Pictorial charm). The poetical quality is "neither descriptive nor meditative merely": a poem may describe a scene or reflect on a truth, but neither makes it a poem. It "comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language" (GIO §1; see Rhythmical language), and the last phrase defines it by a figure: "the element of song in the singing". The quality is in the handling of the words' sound and rhythm, not in their sense: two poems may say the same thing, and only one of them sing.

The seventh paragraph applies the definition and is fair to what it excludes. Poetry "works with words addressed in the first instance to the pure intelligence" (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). Poetry may find "a noble and quite legitimate function in the conveyance of moral or political aspiration", and then the understanding can still tell the matter from the form (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry; Informing expression). "Noble and quite legitimate" grants the didactic poem its place. It is a lower place by the measure of art, because its matter can be stated apart, and the paragraph goes on to the lyric, in which matter and form can least be told apart (see Lyrical poetry; Vagueness of subject).

The adjective "poetical" changes its meaning from one art to another, and the change can be read as part of the argument. In a poem the poetical quality is the song, not the subject. In a picture "anything definitely poetical" belongs to the subject, and the true pictorial quality is "quite independent" of it (GIO §2; see Pictorial quality); the pictorial charm is "neither a mere poetical thought or sentiment" (GIO §1). What is poetical in a picture is what a poem could say; what is poetical in a poem is what no paraphrase could. The Botticelli essay had used the word of a painter, Botticelli being "before all things a poetical painter" (BOT §3; see Poetical painter), and the Winckelmann essay of a character "in itself not poetical" that a situation glorifies (WIN §36). Each time the poetical is a quality of feeling that the art must find its own means to express.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "poetical" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §1** Pagan story came to be regarded as the subject of a purely artistic or poetical treatment.

**BOT §3** Botticelli is before all things a poetical painter.

**GIO §1** Criticism is to define in a poem that true poetical quality, the element of song in the singing.

**GIO §2** The true pictorial quality is independent of anything definitely poetical in the subject.

**BEL §21** Du Bellay is a characteristic specimen of the poetical taste of his age.

**WIN §24** Greek religion is a ritualistic system and a cycle of poetical conceptions.

**WIN §36** Painting and poetry choose a special situation which lifts or glorifies a character in itself not poetical.

## See also

Informing expression; Lyrical poetry; Pictorial charm; Pictorial quality; Poetical painter; Rhythmical language; Vagueness of subject.

## Primitive liberty

*primitive liberty*; *première liberté*

Attested: *primitive liberty* (BEL §14). Primitive is first, original, from the Latin *primitivus*; liberty is freedom. Pater gives the phrase to Ronsard the scholar, who was anxious, among other points of spelling, about "the restoration of the letter i to its primitive liberty—del' i voyelle en sa première liberté" (BEL §14; see Orthography). The note at BEL §14 renders the French "Of the vowel i in its original freedom" and says that the issue "concerns the letter i as a vowel, distinct from its historical use for a consonantal value". Latin wrote one letter for the vowel *i* and the consonant now written *j*, and French reformers of Ronsard's time, Louis Meigret first, proposed to separate them, as they proposed to separate *u* from *v*; Ronsard's preface of 1550 looks forward to that reform. Ronsard's own complaint points also to another rival. The preface to his *Odes* of 1550, answering the charge that the book's spelling is inconstant, attacks "that frightful hook of a y", written in words where it sounds no different from the *i* of *ire* or *simple*.[402] The liberty Ronsard wanted for the vowel can be read as freedom from both usurpers, the *j* that shared its shape and the *y* that took its place. The phrase has a mock-heroic ring in Pater's English. Liberty is one of the book's great words, the liberty of the heart in the poetry of Provence (FRE §2; see Liberty of the heart), and here it is given to a single letter, as if the Pleiad's learning were as small and exact as its diminutives.

## See also

Liberty of the heart; Orthography; Primitive form.

[402] Pierre de Ronsard, *Les Quatre Premiers Livres des Odes* (Paris, 1550), "Au lecteur": *cét epouvantable crochet d'y*.

# Profane poetry

*Poetry outside the temple, the voice of the medieval Renaissance · The Renaissance*

*profane poetry*; *profane*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Profane poetry is secular poetry, poetry not of the church: love song, romance, and the verse of courts and streets.

**In *The Renaissance*.** What the French writers have in view when they speak of a medieval Renaissance is "not so much the ecclesiastical art of the middle age", but "rather its profane poetry, the poetry of Provence, and the magnificent after-growth of that poetry in Italy and France" (FRE §2). The adjective returns for the mixture of "the sacred and the profane" in Renaissance mythology (PIC §15) and for Leonardo, "the most profane of painters" (LEO §25).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** FRE §2, with LEO §25.

## Meaning

The Latin *profanus* joins *pro*, before or outside, to *fanum*, a temple: the profane is what stands outside the sacred precinct. In English it kept that sense beside the later one of irreverence. Pater uses the first: profane poetry is not impious poetry but poetry whose subject is this world.

## Use in the book

The phrase draws the line along which the French writers Pater follows look for their medieval Renaissance: what "those French writers have in view" is not so much the church's art, whose secular and rebellious spirit Pater grants in passing (FRE §2; see Secular spirit), "but rather its profane poetry, the poetry of Provence, and the magnificent after-growth of that poetry in Italy and France" (FRE §2; see After-growth). The profane poetry can be read as the place where what is half hidden in the church's art stands out unmixed: in it, Pater says, earthly passion, the liberty of the heart, makes itself felt (FRE §2; see Earthly passion; Liberty of the heart).

In the later uses the profane stands beside the sacred rather than against it. The mythology of the Italian Renaissance grew from the mixture of the sacred and the profane (PIC §15; see Sacred and profane). Botticelli "infuses his profane and sacred persons" alike with one "peculiar sentiment" (BOT §5; see Profane and sacred; Wistfulness of exiles). And Leonardo, who "handles sacred subjects continually", is "the most profane of painters" (LEO §25; see Conventional associations). In Leonardo, profane means the given subject used for art's own ends.

The book can be read as tracing the profane from its first voice in the poetry of Provence to its full power in Leonardo, and as refusing to make the profane the enemy of the sacred. The first essay closes with a saints' life about an earthly friendship (FRE §33; see Traditional friendship), and the Pico essay with a mythology that is both at once. The profane is the outside of the temple, not its contrary.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "profane" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §2** The French writers have in view less the church's art than its profane poetry, the poetry of Provence and its after-growth.

**PIC §15** The mythology of the Italian Renaissance grew from the mixture of the sacred and the profane.

**BOT §5** Botticelli's profane and sacred persons alike are comely and in a certain sense like angels, but with a sense of displacement or loss about them.

**LEO §25** Though he handles sacred subjects continually, Leonardo is the most profane of painters.

## See also

After-growth; Conventional associations; Earthly passion; Liberty of the heart; Medieval Renaissance; Profane and sacred; Sacred and profane; Secular spirit; Traditional friendship; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Prose

*prose*

Attested: *prose* (FRE §§7, 21, 22, 23, 24; BOT §5; BEL §8). Prose is speech not in verse, from the Latin *prosa*, short for *prosa oratio*, straightforward speech, from *prorsus*, straight ahead. Pater's account of Du Bellay's treatise rests on a judgement of prose, borrowed from Sainte-Beuve: "It is a remarkable fact," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "and an inversion of what is true of other languages, that, in French, prose has always had the precedence over poetry" (BEL §8). Du Bellay's own prose is "perfectly transparent, flexible, and chaste" (BEL §8; see Flexible life), and Pater draws the consequence: "In many ways it is a more characteristic example of the culture of the Pleiad than any of its verse; and those who love the whole movement of which the Pleiad is a part, for a weird foreign grace in it, and may be looking about for a true specimen of it, cannot have a better than Joachim du Bellay and this little treatise of his" (BEL §8). The best specimen of a school of poets is a treatise in prose, and the claim fits Sainte-Beuve's: if French prose has always come first, a French poetic movement will be seen most clearly in its prose. The first essay had already watched French prose

romance begin, early in the thirteenth century (FRE §7), and found in *Aucassin and Nicolette* a prose that, one may suspect, "was only put together to connect a series of songs" (FRE §21; see Cantefable), yet with its own "quaint fragments of early French prose" (FRE §§23–24). In the Botticelli essay prose is a figure for what poetry cannot dissolve, "an insoluble element of prose in the depths of Dante's poetry" (BOT §5; see Insoluble element of prose). The essay on Du Bellay, which finds a poet's prose more characteristic of his school than its verse, can be read as looking forward to Pater's claim, in the essay "Style", that imaginative prose is "the special and opportune art of the modern world" (see Insoluble element of prose).[403]

## See also

Cantefable; Flexible life; Insoluble element of prose; Pleiad; Style.

## Prose romance

*prose romance*; *romances*

Attested: *prose romance* (FRE §7); *romances* (WIN §53). A romance is a tale of adventure and love, at first in verse in the Romance vernacular; prose romance is its later form, from which the novel grew. "It is only a little later, early in the thirteenth century, that French prose romance begins; and in one of the pretty volumes of the Bibliothèque Elzevirienne some of the most striking fragments of it may be found, edited with much intelligence" (FRE §7; see Comradeship). Among them is the story of Amis and Amile. The word returns at the end of the last essay in its modern sense. In "Goethe's romances, and even more in the romances of Victor Hugo, we have high examples of modern art dealing thus with modern life", with men entangled in the web of necessity (WIN §53; see Sense of fate). The book can be read as running from the first French prose romance to the modern novel, in whose romances Pater finds his "high examples" of art equal to modern life.

## See also

Comradeship; Romantic school; Sense of fate.

## Racy

*racy*

Attested: *racy* (FRE §19; LEO §28). Having the characteristic flavour of its origin, as a wine of its soil; from "race" in the old sense of the stock or flavour of a thing, and so vigorous, pungent, lively. Amis and Amile is "a

[403] Walter Pater, "Style", *Appreciations* (London, 1889).

story which comes from the North, in which a certain racy Teutonic flavour is perceptible" (FRE §19; see Strength), and the flavour is part of its strength, set against the sweetness of the South. The word returns for Leonardo's lost equestrian model of Francesco Sforza: what such work could be, "of what nobility, amid what racy truthfulness to fact", may be judged from the bronze Colleoni at Venice by Verrocchio, Leonardo's master (LEO §28). In both places "racy" is praise of vigour.

## See also

Strength; Trouvère.

## Raillery

*railleries*; *satiric*

Attested: *railleries* (BEL §16); *satiric* (BEL §16). Raillery is good-humoured mockery, banter, from the French *raillerie*; the verb *railler*, to mock, gave English "rail" as well, but raillery keeps the lighter sense. Pater uses the word in his account of the Pleiad's play: its poets "are full of fine railleries" and delight in diminutives (BEL §16; see Diminutive). Raillery is the tone of a circle that "can amuse itself with art, poetry, intrigue" in an age of troubles, and the paragraph says how the tone changes: "And sometimes their gaiety becomes satiric, for, as they play, real passions insinuate themselves, and at least the reality of death" (BEL §16). The sentence can be read as dividing raillery from satire by what gets in: raillery mocks what does not matter, the boy Love and the toy mythology; satire begins when something real enters the game, and "insinuate" makes the entry stealthy, as if passion and death came in unasked through the play itself. "At least" is Pater's scruple: if not real passion, then at least real death. The Pleiad's answer to the intrusion is to make it ornament again, weaving death into their verses (BEL §16; see Vanity of life), and the essay can be read as admiring the skill and doubting the cure.

## See also

Diminutive; Le beau sejour du commun jour; Ondelette; Vanity of life.

## Rhyme

*rhyme*; *rhymed*

Attested: *rhyme* (FRE §21; BEL §§1, 15, 17); *rhymed* (FRE §21; BEL §15). Rhyme is the agreement of sound at the ends of lines. The English word comes from the French *rime*, and took its *h* about 1600 from the belief that it was the Latin *rhythmus*, the Greek *rhythmos*, measured motion; the derivation is still disputed, and some derive *rime* from a

Frankish word for number. Du Bellay made the derivation a theory. In the *Deffense* he argues that *rime* is properly the Greek *rhythmos*, a name for all that the ear measures, in prose as in verse (see Number), and that the like-sounding endings of French lines should properly be called *homoioteleuton*, "ending alike"; he credits the invention of rhymed verse, after Jean Lemaire de Belges, to Bardus, a king of the Gauls, who founded the order of the bards.[404] Pater's history of rhyme is French too, and begins in the first essay with songs "not rhymed even, but only imperfectly assonant", which "seem always on the point of passing into true rhyme, but which halt somehow" (FRE §21; see Assonant; Music of rhymed poetry). By Ronsard's time rhyme has mastered its art: his poems have "their fanciful combinations of rhyme" (BEL §1; see Figured style), and the Pleiad wished to unite the music of classical measure to "the swift, flitting, swallow-like motion of rhyme" (BEL §15; see Double music). The simile can be read as answering the swallows of Belleau's "Avril", *ces arondelles qui vont*, quoted a few paragraphs before (BEL §6). In the seventeenth paragraph the taste has gone further, and the Pleiad's jaded audience "love a constant change of rhyme in poetry" (BEL §17; see Rhetoric in architecture). Across the essay rhyme is the native French music, against the measured music of the ancients, and its history, from the halting songs of *Aucassin* to the ever-changing rhymes of the court, is the history of French poetry in small.

## See also

Assonant; Double music; Figured style; Music of rhymed poetry; Number; Rhetoric in architecture; Scansion.

## Rhythmical language

*rhythmical language*; *rhythmical words*

Attested: *rhythmical words* (GIO §1); *rhythmical language* (GIO §1). Rhythm, the Greek *rhythmos*, measured motion, is the patterned recurrence of stress and pause in speech or music. Pater uses the two phrases in the first paragraph of the Giorgione essay, and the difference between them is the paragraph's argument. Popular criticism treats the arts as translations of one fixed thought, "supplemented by certain technical qualities of colour, in painting; of sound, in music; of rhythmical words, in poetry" (GIO §1; see Untranslatable charm). There rhythm is an addition, a technical finish laid on a thought that could exist without it. A few sentences later the true poetical quality "comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, the element of song in the singing" (GIO §1; see Poetical quality). Now rhythm is the medium itself, and the poem is made in it. "Words" become

[404] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book II, ch. 8.

"language", and "technical qualities" become "inventive handling" (see Mode of handling). The change can be read as the whole doctrine of the essay applied to verse: the lyric is highest because in it "we are least able to detach the matter from the form" (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry), and in verse the form is the rhythm.

## See also

Lyrical poetry; Mode of handling; Poetical quality; Untranslatable charm.

# Rubric

*The headings that mark song and speech in Aucassin and Nicolette · The Renaissance*

*rubric*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A rubric is a heading or direction in a manuscript or a liturgical book, so called because it was written in red.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Aucassin and Nicolette "The songs are introduced by the rubric, Or se cante (ici on chante) and each division of prose by the rubric, Or dient et content et fabloient (ici on conte)" (FRE §22).

**In this edition.** The notes at FRE §22 render the two rubrics "Now it is sung (here one sings)" and "Now they speak, tell, and relate the tale (here one tells the story)".

**A place to read.** FRE §§21–22.

## Meaning

The Latin *rubrica* is red earth, red ochre, and then the red-lettered title of a law; in medieval books the headings, initials and directions were written in red to stand out from the black text. In the church's service books the rubrics are the instructions, telling the priest what to do and when, and the word came to mean any prescribed direction.

## Use in the book

Pater uses the word in his account of how the tale was performed. After describing it as a cantefable, prose with songs "inserted at irregular intervals" (FRE §21; see Cantefable), he imagines it in the hands of players, a company of trained performers, many of them probably children (FRE §22; see Cantefable): "The songs are introduced by the rubric, Or se cante (ici on chante) and each division of prose by the rubric, Or dient et content et fabloient (ici on conte)" (FRE §22; see Or se cante; Or dient et content et fabloient). He gives each Old French formula with a modern French gloss,

and the notes give the English. Some of the music survives (FRE §22; see Cantefable), and some details suggested to M. Fauriel "the notion that the words had been accompanied throughout by dramatic action" (FRE §22).

The word is a choice. Pater could have said heading or direction; "rubric" brings the scriptorium and the service book into the tale, and the alternation of sung and spoken parts, each announced, can be read as giving a secular romance the shape of an office. The two rubrics also mark the art Pater values in the piece. "Or se cante" announces the songs, the part in which Pater sees a new music arising (FRE §21; see Music of rhymed poetry), and the rubric for the prose, with its three verbs, speak, tell and relate, insists that telling is a craft too. The rubrics show the tale as performance, and they can be read as support for Pater's claim that it "aims at a purely artistic effect" (FRE §22): a work that tells its audience when it will sing and when it will speak knows that it is art.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs, with the paragraph that describes the cantefable.

**FRE §21** The writer calls the piece a cantefable, a tale in prose helped forward by songs.

**FRE §22** The songs are introduced by the rubric Or se cante, the prose by Or dient et content et fabloient; some of the music survives.

## In this edition

The notes at FRE §22 gloss the two rubrics as formulas introducing a sung and a spoken passage (see Or se cante; Or dient et content et fabloient). The note at FRE §21 adds that "The labels inside the work signal to its audience when the mode changes".

## See also

Cantefable; Music of rhymed poetry; Or dient et content et fabloient; Or se cante.

# Scansion

*scanned*; *unscanned*; *scan*; *measured*

Attested: *scanned*, *unscanned*, *scan* (BEL §15); *measured* (BEL §§15, 28). To scan verse is to measure it foot by foot, from the Latin *scandere*, to climb, a sense perhaps taken from the rise and fall of the foot that beats the time. Classical verse scans by quantity, the long and short syllables of Greek and Latin; French verse counts syllables and marks the line with rhyme. Pater sets the two against each other in the fifteenth paragraph of the Du Bellay essay, the measured, scanned verse of the ancients and the rhymed,

unscanned verse of Villon (BEL §15; see La poésie chantée), and gives the Pleiad the ambition "to make verse which should scan and rhyme as well, to search out and harmonise the measure of every syllable" (BEL §15; see Double music). To make French scan was to give its syllables quantities that the language does not clearly mark, and the attempt, carried furthest by Baïf's measured verse, did not last (see Double music). The essay's last word on measure is not about verse at all. In the barns of La Beauce, Pater writes, one seems to hear "the measured motion of the fans" (BEL §28; see Winnowing-fan), and the essay, which in its fifteenth paragraph gave the Pleiad the ambition to scan, can be read as ending with a measure that needs no scanning, the rhythm of work heard with a child's pleasure.

## See also

Double music; La poésie chantée; Number; Rhyme; Winnowing-fan.

## Scholastic prolixity

*the scholastic prolixity*

Attested: *the scholastic prolixity* (PIC §11); *scholastic* also at PIC §13 and in two further paragraphs (FRE §4; BEL §11). Wordy length in the manner of the schools; the Latin *prolixus* is "poured out", extended. Pico's destroyed love-songs in Italian "would have been so great a relief to us, after the scholastic prolixity of his Latin writings" (PIC §11; see Vulgar tongue; Scholastic philosophy). The phrase is the essay's plainest complaint about Pico as a writer, and it is made in the first person plural: "to us", the modern readers who must turn his pages. It returns in softened form two paragraphs later, where Pico, "in spite of the scholastic character of those writings, is really interesting" (PIC §13; see Natural piety). The two judgements can be read as the essay's method: the writings are prolix and scholastic, the man is interesting in spite of them, and Pater's essay rescues the man from the prose. The lost Italian songs would have shown him without the schools.

## See also

Natural piety; Scholastic philosophy; Vulgar tongue.

## Secondo la mente ed opinione dei Platonici

*secondo la mente ed opinione dei Platonici*

Attested: *secondo la mente ed opinione dei Platonici* (PIC §11). Italian, "according to the mind and opinion of the Platonists". The phrase stands in Pater's account of Pico's commentary on Beniveni's "Song of Divine Love", in the Italian and then in Pater's own English, word for word (PIC §11; see Platonic commentary). The phrase can be read as a disclaimer as well as a

description: Pico expounds the poem according to the Platonists' mind, not necessarily his own, and not the Church's. The edition's note at PIC §11 renders it "according to the understanding and opinion of the Platonists", and adds that "Pico's commentary uses Benivieni's poem to discuss the soul's ascent from sensible to intelligible beauty" (see Unseen beauty).

## See also

Platonic commentary; Unseen beauty.

# Sense of fate

*Fate hung on trivial objects, in story and in modern life · The Renaissance sense of fate*; *fates*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A sense of fate is the feeling that human lives are ruled by a necessity beyond choice, and in a story the art that makes that necessity felt.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The two cups of Amis and Amile heighten "That sense of fate, which hangs so much of the shaping of human life on trivial objects, like Othello's strawberry handkerchief" (FRE §10).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §10 recalls Othello's handkerchief and sets the cups against it.

**A place to read.** FRE §10, the last two sentences, with WIN §53.

## Meaning

"Fate" is the Latin *fatum*, what has been spoken, the decree of the gods. The sense of fate is less a belief than a feeling, and in literature an effect: the reader feels that what happens had to happen. Pater locates it in an unexpected place, in small objects on which great things turn.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes Pater's account of the two cups in Amis and Amile. The cups, alike as the friends are, cross and recross in the narrative and serve the heroes almost like living things (FRE §10; see Handiwork). "That sense of fate, which hangs so much of the shaping of human life on trivial objects, like Othello's strawberry handkerchief, is thereby heightened" (FRE §10). In Shakespeare's tragedy a handkerchief spotted with strawberries, Othello's first gift to Desdemona, dropped, picked up and passed to Iago, becomes the proof of a false charge and the cause of her death.[405] Pater sets the medieval cups beside it as the same device: fate works through things.

The comparison is pointed, as the note at FRE §10 observes, since the cups and the handkerchief work in opposite directions. The handkerchief destroys a marriage by a false likeness of guilt; the cups save a friendship by a

[405] Shakespeare, *Othello* 3.3.

true likeness of origin, and it is by the cup that Amile knows his leprous comrade at the gate (FRE §12; see Inward similitude). Fate in Amis and Amile can be read as providential, and the story's strangest turns, the angel's command and the children's return to life, as fate's work too. The phrase can be read as joining the two senses Pater gives the cups: they are objects of beauty, enjoyed for themselves, and objects of fate, on which lives hang.

The word comes once more, in the plural, in the Du Bellay essay, where French must be the medium of what Du Bellay calls *le discours fatal des choses mondaines* (BEL §11; see Le discours fatal des choses mondaines). The idea returns in the last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay in a modern form. For us necessity is no longer a "mythological personage" to be fought but "a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53; see Necessity; Magic web), and the question is whether art can give the spirit "an equivalent for the sense of freedom" within it (WIN §53). The book moves from a fate that hangs on a cup to a necessity woven through and through us; the sense of fate becomes, at the end, the condition modern art must meet.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph where men's fates are named and the paragraph on modern necessity.

**FRE §10** The cups heighten that sense of fate which hangs so much of human life on trivial objects, like Othello's handkerchief.

**BEL §11** French must be Du Bellay's medium for the discourse about affairs which decides men's fates.

**WIN §53** For us necessity is not a mythological personage without us but a magic web woven through us.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §10 identifies the handkerchief as the one "Iago uses to make Othello suspect Desdemona's fidelity", and observes that "The cups have an opposite function in the French story".

## See also

Handiwork; Inward similitude; Le discours fatal des choses mondaines; Magic web; Necessity.

# Situation

*The special circumstance into which a character is thrown, which painting and poetry develop and sculpture renounces · The Renaissance*

*situation*; *situations*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The circumstances in which a person stands at a given moment; in drama and fiction, the combination of circumstances that makes a scene.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Painting and poetry lift a character by "some special situation"; sculpture, which cannot, presents the type (WIN §§36–37).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §36 identifies *Le Byron de nos Jours* as the subtitle of Browning's *Dîs Aliter Visum* and says that Pater's concern is "the carefully staged moment in which the characters briefly become interesting".

**A place to read.** GIO §§5, 7; WIN §§36–37, 39, 53.

## Meaning

*Situation* is from the medieval Latin *situatio*, from *situs*, site: first the place where a thing stands, then the state of affairs in which a person stands. In the criticism of drama it came to mean the moment of a plot in which the characters are so placed as to bring out passion, and that is Pater's sense. Behind the word lies an old question about poetry. Aristotle had argued in the *Poetics* that tragedy represents not people but actions and a life, and that there could be a tragedy without character but not without action.[406] Pater divides the arts by the same question and gives different answers for each.

## Use in the book

The word's chief place is the thirty-sixth paragraph. Painting and poetry can make any character interesting, because they can develop "some special situation, which lifts or glorifies a character" (WIN §36; see Character). To realise such a situation the artist may need "the most cunning detail" (WIN §36; see Realise). Then the example, from the poems of Robert Browning. "His poetry is pre-eminently the poetry of situations. The characters themselves are always of secondary importance; often they are characters in themselves of little interest; they seem to come to him by strange accidents from the ends of the world" (WIN §36). Browning throws such a character into some situation, or apprehends it in some delicate pause of life (WIN §36; see Pause in time), and the poem Pater chooses is "Le Byron de nos Jours" ("The Byron of our day"), the subtitle of "Dîs Aliter Visum" ("The gods saw it otherwise") in *Dramatis Personae* (1864), a monologue in which a woman recalls, ten years later, the moment when a man held back from speaking. "Those two jaded Parisians are not intrinsically interesting: they begin to interest us only when thrown into a choice situation" (WIN §36). To make the moment appreciable takes a cobweb of allusions and an artificial light "constructed and broken over the chosen situation" (WIN §36; see Discriminate), and yet the poem has the clear ring of a central

[406] Aristotle, *Poetics* 6, 1450a15–25.

motive, and gives the impression of a single creative act (WIN §36; see Creative act).

The thirty-seventh paragraph draws the law. Painting needs all its resources to produce such effects at all, with "subordinate but significant detail" (WIN §37; see Subordinate but significant detail), and poetry all of its to produce them "in a pre-eminent degree", "language in its most purged form, its remote associations and suggestions, its double and treble lights" (WIN §37; see Purge). "These appliances sculpture cannot command" (WIN §37), and in it "not the special situation, but the type" is all-important (WIN §37; see Type). In poetry and painting "the situation predominates over the character", and in sculpture the reverse (WIN §37; see Character). Of sculpture: "Excluded by the proper limitation of its material from the development of exquisite situations, it has to choose from a select number of types intrinsically interesting—interesting, that is, independently of any special situation into which they may be thrown" (WIN §37). The thirty-ninth paragraph adds the corollary. "Endless as are the attitudes of Greek sculpture, exquisite as is the invention of the Greeks in this direction, the actions or situations it permits are simple and few" (WIN §39).

The word has a wider life in the book. The Giorgione essay calls the "given incidents or situation" of a poem its "mere matter", which all art strives to make nothing without the form (GIO §5; see Matter and form), and says that poetry deals "most often, with a definite subject or situation" (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). The Winckelmann essay itself opens Winckelmann's Roman years with the word: "Winckelmann's first years in Rome present all the elements of an intellectual situation of the highest interest" (WIN §14). It ends with the modern novel, in which the network of natural law "becomes the tragic situation, in which certain groups of noble men and women work out for themselves a supreme dénouement" (WIN §53; see Dénouement). And the Conclusion keeps the word: only "the roughness of the eye" makes any two persons, things, situations seem alike (CON §5; see Discriminate).

The uses can be read as one argument. Sculpture shows the type and needs no situation; the modern arts, and the modern life they serve, have only situations. Pater's own essays can be read as written in the modern way: each begins from a character and finds the situation that lifts it: Winckelmann in Rome, Michelangelo in old age, Leonardo at the court of Milan. The phrase "intellectual situation" in the fourteenth paragraph can be read as Pater's name for his method, which treats a life as Browning treats his Parisians and a poem as a moment of passion thrown into relief.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "situation" or "situations" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §23** The charm of Aucassin and Nicolette is in a turn of peculiar lightness and grace given to the situations and traits of sentiment.

**PIC §2** The pagan gods, in exile, fell into embarrassments that resembled tragical situations of their earlier life.

**GIO §5** The mere matter of a poem, its given incidents or situation, should be nothing without the form.

**GIO §7** Poetry deals, most often, with a definite subject or situation.

**WIN §14** Winckelmann's first years in Rome present all the elements of an intellectual situation of the highest interest.

**WIN §36** Painting and poetry lift a character by some special situation; Browning's poetry is pre-eminently the poetry of situations.

**WIN §37** Painting and poetry need all their resources for the situation; in sculpture the character predominates over the situation.

**WIN §39** The actions or situations Greek sculpture permits are simple and few.

**WIN §53** The network of law becomes the tragic situation, in which noble men and women work out a supreme dénouement.

**CON §5** Only the roughness of the eye makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike.

**C73 §6** Only the roughness of the eye makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike.

## Pater's sources

Pater does not cite it, but Browning himself, dedicating the reissue of *Sordello* in 1863, said that his stress lay on "the incidents in the development of a soul", and that little else was worth study.[407] Pater's "situations" and Browning's "incidents" describe the same art from two sides: the poet's from the soul that develops, the critic's from the moment in which it is caught.

## See also

Character; Creative act; Dénouement; Discriminate; Lyrical poetry; Matter and form; Pause in time; Purge; Realise; Romantic arts; Self-reflexion; Subordinate but significant detail; Type.

[407] Robert Browning, dedication of *Sordello* to Joseph Milsand, in *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning* (London, 1863).

## Sonnet

*sonnet*; *sonnets*; *Sonnetz*

Attested: *sonnet* (MIC §10; GIO §§4, 16); *sonnets* (MIC §§8, 9, 10, 12, 15; BEL §19); *Sonnetz* (BEL §19). The sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines, from the Italian *sonetto*, a little sound or song. It was made in thirteenth-century Sicily, and Petrarch made it the love poem of Europe. In the book it is first Michelangelo's form: Pater reads "the Platonic calm of the sonnets" (MIC §8; see Carnal), tells their history from manuscript through the edition of 1623 to Guasti's collation of the autograph (MIC §9; see Autograph), and notes that the lady of one of the noblest was from the first understood to be the city of Florence (MIC §15). In the Giorgione essay the sonnet stands for poetry in a comparison with sculpture, "between a sonnet and a relief" (GIO §4), and Rossetti's sonnet on the *Fête champêtre* is "a delightful sonnet by a poet whose own painted work often comes to mind" (GIO §16; see Giorgionesque). In the Du Bellay essay the sonnet is French: the Pleiad's characteristics are most abundant in "Du Bellay's Olive, a collection of sonnets in praise of a half-imaginary lady, Sonnetz a la louange d'Olive" (BEL §19; see Feux divins). Pater's French title is close to the one the royal privilege gave the book in 1549, *Cinquante Sonnetz à la louange de l'Olive*, "Fifty sonnets in praise of Olive".[408] The *Deffense* had told the French poet to write sonnets, "no less learned than pleasant", an Italian invention;[409] and in the preface to the enlarged *Olive* of 1550 Du Bellay said that the sonnet had been made French from Italian, as he believed, by Mellin de Saint-Gelais (about 1491–1558), the court poet of Francis I.[410] The *Olive* itself was the first sequence of sonnets in French.

### See also

Autograph; Carnal; Feux divins; Giorgionesque; Pindaric ode.

## Spell-word

*spell-word*; *spell*

Attested: *spell-word* (LEO §21); *spell* (LEO §§14, 34). The Old English *spell* was a story or a saying, and then a form of words with magical power; a spell-word is the word that works the charm. Pater uses it of Goethe, as a warning set beside Leonardo: "The name of Goethe himself reminds one how great for the artist may be the danger of over-much science; how

[408] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), "Extraict du privilege".

[409] Du Bellay, *Deffence*, book II, ch. 4: *ces beaux sonnets, non moins docte que plaisante invention italienne*.

[410] Joachim du Bellay, *L'Olive augmentée depuis la premiere edition* (Paris, 1550), "Au lecteur": *le Sonnet d'italien devenu françois, comme je croy, par Mellin de Sainct Gelais*.

Goethe, who, in the Elective Affinities and the first part of Faust, does transmute ideas into images, who wrought many such transmutations, did not invariably find the spell-word, and in the second part of Faust presents us with a mass of science which has almost no artistic character at all" (LEO §21; see Transmutation of ideas into images). The spell-word is the word that changes idea into image; without it, knowledge stays knowledge. The figure can be read beside the poem "Wünschelrute" ("The Divining Rod", written 1835, published 1838) of the German poet Joseph von Eichendorff, where a song sleeps in all things and the world begins to sing if only one hits on the magic word.[411] The noun in the essay has the same magic. Leonardo's "nature had a kind of spell in it" (LEO §14; see Fascination), and at Rome the hesitation that had made him "like one under a spell" came upon him with double force (LEO §34; see Political indifferentism).

## See also

Alchemy; Bien-être; Fascination; Political indifferentism; Transmutation of ideas into images.

## Starveling stock

*starveling stock*

Attested: *starveling stock* (BEL §§11, 12). A starveling is a starved creature, lean and weak, from "starve" with the diminutive *-ling*; a stock is the stem of a plant, the stock into which a graft is set, and by a figure a line of descent. Pater uses the phrase twice for the French language as Du Bellay found it. The first time it translates the French beside it: "By aid of this starveling stock—pauvre plante et vergette—of the French language, he must speak delicately, movingly, if he is ever to speak so at all" (BEL §11). The French joins two phrases of Du Bellay's treatise (see Pauvre plante et vergette). The second time the phrase stands alone, in the account of Du Bellay's youth: the Greek and Latin poets made him a lover of his own homely native tongue, "that poor starveling stock of the French language" (BEL §12; see Dead words). Pater's English is harsher than the French. Du Bellay's plant is young, not yet in flower; Pater's is starved, a thing of hunger, and "starveling" was a word of abuse, as when Falstaff calls Prince Hal a starveling.[412] The harshness serves the argument. The poorer the stock, the more the cultivation counts, and the essay's word "stock" carries the other sense too, for in the third paragraph the higher touch of French art shows "like nobler blood in a lower stock" (BEL §3; see Ennoble). A

[411] Joseph von Eichendorff, "Wünschelrute" (written 1835; first printed in the *Deutscher Musenalmanach*, 1838).

[412] Shakespeare, *1 Henry IV* II.iv.

starveling stock can be ennobled, in the plant by grafting and in the family by blood, and Du Bellay's treatise can be read as proposing both.

## See also

Dead words; Ennoble; Le discours fatal des choses mondaines; Mother-tongue; Pauvre plante et vergette.

## Stongen

*stongen*

Attested: *stongen* (FRE §8). Middle English, "stung", the past participle of *stingen*. In the line from Chaucer's Knight's Tale that Pater quotes, Palamon, a prisoner in a tower at Athens, cries out at his first sight of Emelya in the garden below "As that he stongen were unto the herte" (FRE §8; see Bleynte). The note at FRE §8 says that "'stongen' means stung or pierced". Pater's text has "As that"; the Riverside Chaucer reads "As though he stongen were unto the herte" (Knight's Tale, I.1079). The sting is the wound of love, and Pater hears in it also the wound to a friendship (FRE §9; see Comradeship).

## See also

Bleynte; Classical motive; Comradeship.

## Strophe

*strophe*; *stanzas*

Attested: *strophe* (BEL §4); *stanzas* (PRE §5; FRE §21). A strophe is a stanza; the Greek *strophē*, a turning, named the stanza of a choral ode, and the antistrophe the stanza that answered it (see Antistrophe). Pater uses the Greek word once, in his account of Ronsard's reform of the French song: Ronsard "gave it structure, a sustained system, strophe and antistrophe" (BEL §4; see Pindaric ode). Elsewhere the book's word is the English one. The songs of *Aucassin and Nicolette* are "stanzas of twenty or thirty lines apiece, all ending with a similar vowel sound" (FRE §21; see Assonant), long and unequal, and Wordsworth's "Stanzas on Resolution and Independence" are among the poems his faculty transforms (PRE §5; see Active principle). The French verse quoted in the Du Bellay essay is strophic in the Pleiad's sense, its stanzas equal and patterned: the two stanzas of Belleau's "Avril", with their short lines set among long (BEL §§5–6; see Changefulness), and the three stanzas of six short lines of Du Bellay's winnower's song (BEL §§25–27; see Vanneur). Set beside the assonant stanzas of *Aucassin*, they can be read as showing the change the essay describes, from a chanson "often, in its essence, something rude and

formless" to a patterned stanza that "carries the eye lightly onwards" (BEL §4; see Changefulness).

## See also

Active principle; Antistrophe; Assonant; Changefulness; Pindaric ode; Vanneur.

# Tenson

*The Provençal debate poem · The Renaissance*
*Tenson*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A tenson is a debate poem of the troubadours, in which two poets, or a poet and an imagined opponent, argue a question in alternate stanzas.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The central love-poetry of Provence, the poetry of the Tenson and the Aubade, of Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal, is poetry for the few" (FRE §20).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §20 defines the word: "A tenson is a debate poem, commonly arranged as alternating speeches".

**A place to read.** FRE §20.

## Meaning

The Occitan *tenso* means a dispute or quarrel; it comes from a late Latin *tensio* or *tentio*, a straining or contention, from *tendere*, to stretch or strive. In the tenson each speaker takes stanzas in turn, keeping the same rhymes, and the subject is often love: whether it is better to love a lady of high or low degree, whether the lover should speak or keep silent. A related form, the *partimen*, offers a choice between two answers and asks the other poet to defend the one he takes.

## Use in the book

The tenson and the aubade are Pater's two names for the central love-poetry of Provence, the poetry of Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal, the troubadours Bernart de Ventadorn, of the second half of the twelfth century, and Peire Vidal, of about 1200 (FRE §20; see Aubade; Troubadour). The pairing can be read as covering the range of the love-lyric, argument and lament, the head and the heart: the tenson debates love, the aubade suffers it. Both are poetry for the elect of the kingdom of sentiment (FRE §20; see Kingdom of sentiment), and below them, Pater says, there was probably a lighter literature with a wider audience, of which M. Fauriel thought Aucassin and Nicolette the only surviving version (FRE §20).

The tenson is named only once, but the debate it stands for can be read as running through the essay. Aucassin's speech on hell is an answer in a dispute, made "when he is threatened with the pains of hell, if he makes Nicolette his mistress" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The essay itself can be read as built like a tenson, with two stories set against each other: one from the North, of strength, the other from the South, of sweetness (FRE §19; see Strength; Sweetness), and a closing turn from the "note of defiance" of the one to the "harmony of human interests" of the other (FRE §33; see Unity of culture). Abelard, whose legend opens the essay's stories, was the great disputant of his age, and his songs, M. de Rémusat says, were probably "in the taste of the Trouvères" (FRE §3; see Trouvère). The Provençal debate poem can be read as standing at the head of a literature that argued about love as the schools argued about universals.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**FRE §20** The poetry of the Tenson and the Aubade is the central love-poetry of Provence, poetry for the few.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §20 defines the tenson as "a debate poem, commonly arranged as alternating speeches", and says that Pater uses it with the aubade "to evoke a Provençal tradition of formally elaborate love poetry" (see Aubade).

## See also

Antinomianism; Aubade; Kingdom of sentiment; Strength; Sweetness; Troubadour; Trouvère; Unity of culture.

# Terza rima

*terza rima*

Attested: *terza rima* (BOT §5). Italian, "third rhyme": the verse form of Dante's *Commedia*, in which, as the edition's note puts it, "the middle rhyme of one stanza governs the outer rhymes of the next, as in ABA BCB CDC". Dante invented it, and the form was taken up by Florentine poets after him, among them Palmieri for his poem (see Incarnation); in English Shelley used it in the "Ode to the West Wind" (1820). The chain of rhymes is never closed until the end, and each tercet reaches into the next. Pater names the form once, as the verse of a Florentine philosopher's poem, the kind of work about which, Pater says, artists "so entire as Botticelli are usually careless" (BOT §5; see Alexandrian philosophy). The poem in Dante's verse carried a doctrine that Dante's theology condemned, the

neutral angels made men, and Botticelli, who "wrote a commentary on Dante", may have let it "come and go across him" (BOT §5).

## See also

Alexandrian philosophy; Incarnation; Insoluble element of prose.

# Troubadour

*The lyric poets of Provence and their exclusive art · The Renaissance Troubadours*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The troubadours were the lyric poets of southern France, northern Spain and Italy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who wrote in Occitan, the language of Provence, chiefly about love.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Aucassin and Nicolette has "that faint air of overwrought delicacy, almost of wantonness, which was so strong a characteristic of the poetry of the Troubadours. The Troubadours themselves were often men of great rank; they wrote for an exclusive audience, people of much leisure and great refinement" (FRE §24). Pater names two of them, Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal (FRE §§20, 31), and his own note speaks of "that old world of the Troubadours" (FRE §32).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §3 says that the term troubadours "usually designates poets composing in Occitan", as against the trouvères of the north.

**A place to read.** FRE §24, the first three sentences.

## Meaning

The Occitan *trobador* is one who composes, from *trobar*, to compose, invent, find; the verb is probably from an unattested late Latin *tropare*, to make tropes, from *tropus*, which in late Latin could mean a song. The troubadours made the lyric of love an art of strict forms and fine distinctions, and their poetry spread to the trouvères of northern France, the Minnesänger of Germany and the poets of Sicily and Tuscany.

## Use in the book

The troubadours stand behind the whole account of Provençal poetry in the first essay, though Pater uses the word only in one paragraph of the text and in one of his own notes. Their central love-poetry, the tenson and the aubade, is "poetry for the few" (FRE §20; see Tenson; Aubade), and Pater names two of its poets, Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal. Bernart de Ventadorn, as he is called in Occitan, wrote in the second half of the twelfth century, Peire Vidal about 1200. The love they sang is the "earthly passion" of the medieval Renaissance (FRE §2; see Earthly passion), and Dante, "the

perfect flower of ideal love", is "the central expression and type" of the experiences their age knew (FRE §29; see Ideal intensity of love).

In FRE §24 Pater describes their influence on Aucassin and Nicolette, and with it their social world. Pater finds in the tale the Troubadours' "faint air of overwrought delicacy" (FRE §24; see Overwrought delicacy). "The Troubadours themselves were often men of great rank; they wrote for an exclusive audience, people of much leisure and great refinement, and they came to value a type of personal beauty which has in it but little of the influence of the open air and sunshine" (FRE §24; see Beauty). The art is aristocratic and indoor, and Nicolette is its image (FRE §24; see Overwrought delicacy). Pater's note on the men of fashion in Aucassin's hell adds the word *parage*, peerage, "which came to signify all that ambitious youth affected most on the outside of life, in that old world of the Troubadours" (FRE §32).

The love-god of the troubadours appears once in person, when Aucassin rides to battle in his image, "as Pierre Vidal met him" (FRE §31; see Love-god). The book can be read as setting the troubadours at the source of the sweetness it follows through the Renaissance, and as marking their limits: an art for the few, refined to the edge of languor (FRE §24), though Pater also hears in the tale "the profound and energetic spirit of the Provençal poetry itself" (FRE §29).

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which the word occurs, in the text and in Pater's own note, with the paragraphs that name the troubadours Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal.

**FRE §20** The poetry of the Tenson and the Aubade, of Bernard de Ventadour and Pierre Vidal, is poetry for the few.

**FRE §24** The overwrought delicacy of Troubadour poetry runs through the tale; the Troubadours were often men of great rank, writing for an exclusive audience.

**FRE §31** Aucassin is the image of the Provençal love-god as Pierre Vidal met him.

**FRE §32** In Pater's own note, parage came to signify all that ambitious youth affected most, in that old world of the Troubadours.

## Pater's sources

Pater's "often men of great rank" holds for the first troubadour known by name, William IX, duke of Aquitaine and count of Poitou (1071–1126). It does not hold for the two he names. The thirteenth-century lives of the

troubadours, the *vidas*, make Bernart de Ventadorn the son of a servant at the castle of Ventadorn and Peire Vidal the son of a furrier of Toulouse.[413]

## In this edition

The note at FRE §3 sets the troubadours, who usually composed in Occitan, beside the trouvères of the langue d'oïl (see Trouvère). Pater's own note at FRE §32 glosses *parage*, "peerage", as a term "of frequent recurrence" with the troubadours.

## See also

Aubade; Beauty; Earthly passion; Ideal intensity of love; Love-god; Overwrought delicacy; Tenson; Trouvère.

# Trouvère

*The poets of northern France, and Abelard's place among them · The Renaissance*

*Trouvères*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The trouvères were the poets of northern France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who wrote in the French of the north, the *langue d'oïl*, and took their lyric art from the troubadours of the south.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Abelard "composed many verses in the vulgar tongue: already the young men sang them on the quay below the house. Those songs, says M. de Rémusat, were probably in the taste of the Trouvères, 'of whom he was one of the first in date, or, so to speak, the predecessor'" (FRE §3).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §3 distinguishes the trouvères, who "composed in the northern French langue d'oïl", from the troubadours of Occitan.

**A place to read.** FRE §3.

## Meaning

The Old French *trovere*, nominative of *troveor*, answers to the Occitan *trobaire*, *trobador*; it comes from *trover*, to find or compose. The trouvères took up the forms of the troubadour lyric and added the epic and romance of the north; among them were Chrétien de Troyes, the Châtelain de Coucy and Thibaut of Champagne. Their language is the ancestor of modern French.

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[413] The *vidas* of Bernart de Ventadorn and Peire Vidal, in J. Boutière and A.-H. Schutz, *Biographies des troubadours* (2nd ed., Paris, 1964).

## Use in the book

Pater uses the word once, to give Abelard a place in literary history. In the house of the canon of Notre-Dame Abelard made verses in the vulgar tongue, which the young men sang on the quay below (FRE §3; see Vulgar tongue). The quotation that follows is the historian's: "Those songs, says M. de Rémusat, were probably in the taste of the Trouvères, 'of whom he was one of the first in date, or, so to speak, the predecessor'" (FRE §3). Charles de Rémusat, the French statesman and philosopher, had written the life and thought of Abelard. "Probably" is his, and Pater keeps it.

The phrase does more than date the songs. It makes the scholar a poet, and a forerunner of a northern lyric tradition, so that Abelard joins in his person the two liberties of the essay, the intellect's and the heart's (FRE §2; see Liberty of the intellect; Liberty of the heart). "It is the same spirit which has moulded the famous 'letters,' written in the quaint Latin of the middle age" (FRE §3): the songs in French and the letters in Latin are one passion in two languages. The essay's own geography follows. Amis and Amile is a story "which comes from the North" (FRE §19; see Racy), and Aucassin and Nicolette, though it "connects itself with the literature of Provence", survives "written in the French of the latter half of the thirteenth century" (FRE §§19–20). The trouvères' north and the troubadours' south meet in the book Pater reads.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**FRE §3** Abelard's songs in the vulgar tongue were probably, Rémusat says, in the taste of the Trouvères, whose predecessor, so to speak, he was.

## Pater's sources

Pater quotes Rémusat's *Abélard* and follows it closely: "It appears that he composed many verses in the vulgar tongue" renders Rémusat's *Il paraît qu'il en composa beaucoup en langue vulgaire*, and "probably" his *vraisemblablement*. The songs themselves are lost, but Heloïse remembers them in her first letter to Abelard: he made love songs in verse that were sung everywhere, and they carried her name with them.[414]

## In this edition

The note at FRE §3 says that "Trouvères composed in the northern French langue d'oïl", while "The related term troubadours usually designates poets composing in Occitan", and that "Pater moves between these traditions in setting up the two stories".

[414] Charles de Rémusat, *Abélard*, 2 vols (Paris, 1845), vol. I, book I ("Vie d'Abélard"); Heloïse, first letter to Abelard (Letter 2 in the collection).

## See also

Liberty of the heart; Liberty of the intellect; Racy; Troubadour; Vulgar tongue.

## Unction

*unction*

Attested: *unction* (PIC §1). Anointing with oil, in the rites of the Church; and from that, the quality of religious speech that moves the heart, a warmth of devotion in a preacher or a hymn. The restored Greek literature had made the fifteenth century familiar, "at least in Plato, with a style of expression concerning the earlier gods, which had about it something of the warmth and unction of a Christian hymn" (PIC §1). The word is chosen from the Christian side. To say that Plato spoke of the gods with "unction" is to hear in pagan speech the tone of Christian devotion, as Pater does elsewhere in hearing the old gods in Christian pictures (see Sacred and profane). The consequence follows at once: the fifteenth century "was too familiar with such language to regard mythology as a mere story; and it was too serious to play with a religion" (PIC §1). Plato's warmth toward the gods, read in the age of the Christian hymn, is one reason the question of reconciliation was a serious one (see Reconciliation).

## See also

Reconciliation; Sacred and profane.

## Vagueness of subject

*suppression or vagueness of mere subject*; *vagueness*

Attested: *suppression or vagueness of mere subject* (GIO §7); *vagueness* (WIN §27). Pater uses the phrase in his account of the lyric. The very perfection of such poetry "often appears to depend, in part, on a certain suppression or vagueness of mere subject, so that the meaning reaches us through ways not distinctly traceable by the understanding" (GIO §7; see Lyrical poetry). The qualifications are many, "often", "appears", "in part", "a certain", and they keep the claim from becoming a rule that vague poems are good. What is suppressed is "mere subject", the part of a poem that could be stated; the form can be read as staying exact. The examples are some of Blake's most imaginative compositions and, often, Shakespeare's songs, above all the song of Mariana's page (GIO §7). The Winckelmann essay uses the noun for a vagueness of another kind. In the East, "from a vagueness, a want of definition, in thought, the matter presented to art is unmanageable, and the forms of sense struggle vainly with it" (WIN §27; see Inwardness). The two uses can be read as marking where vagueness helps

and where it harms. In the lyric the subject is vague and the form exact, so the meaning passes through the form; in Eastern art the thought itself is vague, and no form can master it.

## See also

Inwardness; Lyrical poetry; Pictorial definition; Poetical quality.

# Vanneur

*vanneur*; *D'un vanneur de blé aux vents*; *vanne*

Attested: *vanneur* (BEL §24); *vanne* (BEL §27). French, "winnower", from *vanner*, to winnow, from the Latin *vannus*, the winnowing-fan (see Winnowing-fan). The word is in the title of the poem that ends the Du Bellay essay, *D'un vanneur de blé aux vents* (BEL §24), which the note at BEL §24 renders "From a winnower of wheat to the winds". Pater brings Du Bellay home to write it: in the cooler air of his own country, "under its skies of milkier blue, the sweetest flower of his genius sprang up" (BEL §23). The flower is one poem, and Pater sets it among the fames that rest on a single piece: "There have been poets whose whole fame has rested on one poem, as Gray's on the Elegy in a Country Churchyard, or Ronsard's, as many critics have thought, on the eighteen lines of one famous ode" (BEL §23). Du Bellay "has almost been the poet of one poem", carried into French out of the Latin of Andrea Navagero (BEL §23; see Law of translation), and its form is all his own (BEL §23; see Untranslatable charm). "It is a song which the winnowers are supposed to sing as they winnow the corn, and they invoke the winds to lie lightly on the grain" (BEL §23). Navagero's poem, "Vows to the Breezes", in his *Lusus*, speaks of its offerer in the third person, the rustic Idmon, who gives the breezes garlands and scatters baskets full of fragrant saffron, and asks them to soften the heat and part the empty chaff while he winnows at midday.[415] Du Bellay's winnower has no name and speaks for himself, offers violets, lilies, roses and pinks, and asks only for the wind's sweet breath on the plain while he toils in the heat (BEL §§25–27; see Doulce haleine). The chaff has gone, and Pater's "lie lightly on the grain" can be read as catching the change: the winds are asked not to divide grain from chaff, only to be gentle. The title of Du Bellay's collection *Divers jeux rustiques*, of 1558, where the poem was printed, can be read as echoing Navagero's, *jeux* for *lusus*.

## See also

Doulce haleine; La poésie chantée; Law of translation; Pindaric ode; Strophe; Untranslatable charm; Winnow; Winnowing-fan.

[415] Andrea Navagero, *Orationes duae carminaque nonnulla* (Venice, 1530), *Lusus*, "Vota ad auras": *Aurae, quae levibus percurritis aera pennis*.

## Vesture

*vesture*

Attested: *vesture* (FRE §17). Clothing, garments, through Old French from the late Latin *vestitura*; the word was familiar from the English Bible, as in the prophecy fulfilled at the Crucifixion, "upon my vesture did they cast lots" (Matthew 27:35, in the King James Version). In Pater's English of Amis and Amile, Amile clothes his healed friend "in his best robes", and his wife, seeing the two come to church, cannot tell them apart: "I know well the vesture of them both, but I know not which of them is Amile" (FRE §17; see Doppelgänger). The old word belongs to the style of Pater's translation, which keeps "Dame", "Tierce" and "It is convenient" (FRE §§13, 18; see Convenient; Tierce), and can be read as giving the medieval story the cadence of scripture.

### See also

Convenient; Doppelgänger; Tierce.

## Viand

*viand*

Attested: *viand* (PIC §12). An article of food, a dish, from the Old French *viande*, food, itself from the Latin *vivenda*, things to live on. The word is More's, in Pater's quotation of his English Life of Pico. After his conversion Pico "did not become a monk; only he became gentle and patient in disputation; retaining 'somewhat of the old plenty, in dainty viand and silver vessel,' he gave over the greater part of his property to his friend, the mystical poet Beniveni, to be spent by him in works of charity" (PIC §12; see Disputation). The old word keeps the period, as "liefer" does a paragraph earlier (see Liefer). The words "somewhat of the old plenty" are the important qualification: Pico renounced, but not entirely. He kept good food and silver plate; the greater part of his property went, through Beniveni, "chiefly in the sweet charity of providing marriage-dowries for the peasant girls of Florence" (PIC §12). The ascetic in him was a gentle one, which is the essay's portrait of him throughout.

### See also

Disputation; Liefer.

## Vulgar tongue

*The vernacular, the language of love songs and of a nation's letters · The Renaissance*

*vulgar tongue*; *vulgar*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The vulgar tongue is the vernacular, the spoken language of a people, as against Latin, the language of the church and the schools.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Abelard "composed many verses in the vulgar tongue" (FRE §3) and "composes songs in the vulgar tongue", though he "writes also in Latin" his treatises (FRE §7). Pico destroyed "those love-songs in the vulgar tongue" (PIC §11). Du Bellay is surprised at "the odd opinion of some learned men who think that our vulgar tongue is wholly incapable of erudition and good literature" (BEL §9).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §9 renders the French phrase as "That elegance and abundance found in the Greek and Latin languages".

**A place to read.** FRE §§3 and 7, with BEL §9.

## Meaning

The Latin *vulgus* is the common people, and the *lingua vulgaris* their speech. "Vulgar" in the phrase means common, not coarse; the vernaculars, Italian, French, Provençal, were the vulgar tongues of Europe beside the learned Latin. The phrase has a famous ancestor in Dante's treatise *De vulgari eloquentia*, on eloquence in the vernacular, written about 1303–05.

## Use in the book

The phrase marks a division of labour in Abelard's life. "It appears that he composed many verses in the vulgar tongue: already the young men sang them on the quay below the house" (FRE §3; see Trouvère). The letters of Abelard and Heloïse are "written in the quaint Latin of the middle age" (FRE §3), and "Abelard, though he composes songs in the vulgar tongue, writes also in Latin those treatises in which he tries to find a ground of reality below the abstractions of philosophy" (FRE §7; see Human experience). Latin is the language of thought and of the soul's outpouring; the vulgar tongue is the language of love songs sung in the street. The medieval Renaissance, on this reading, speaks the vernacular when it speaks of the heart (see Liberty of the heart; Profane poetry).

The Pico essay repeats the division with a sadder end. Pico, who "had loved much and been beloved by women", had, long before Savonarola's famous "bonfire of vanities", "destroyed those love-songs in the vulgar tongue, which would have been so great a relief to us, after the scholastic prolixity of his Latin writings" (PIC §11; see Bonfire of vanities; Scholastic philosophy). Pater's regret is plain, and it can be read as a regret for the man behind the scholar.

The Du Bellay essay makes the vulgar tongue the subject of a manifesto. Du Bellay's object is to adjust French culture to the rediscovered classical culture (BEL §9; see Classical culture), against those who "despaired of the

French language altogether" (BEL §9). Pater quotes him: languages, he says, "are not born like plants and trees, some naturally feeble and sickly, others healthy and strong and apter to bear the weight of men's conceptions, but all their virtue is generated in the world of choice and men's freewill concerning them", and he cannot express his surprise "at the odd opinion of some learned men who think that our vulgar tongue is wholly incapable of erudition and good literature" (BEL §9). In pleading for French, Pater adds, Du Bellay "is pleading for no merely scholastic interest, but for freedom, impulse, reality" (BEL §11). The book can be read as following the vernacular from Abelard's street songs to Du Bellay's defence: the medieval Renaissance sang in it, the Italian scholars wrote their love poems in it, and the French Renaissance made it the equal of Greek and Latin. The adjective "vulgar" alone comes in four further paragraphs, in its common senses.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §3** Abelard composed many verses in the vulgar tongue, sung by the young men on the quay.

**FRE §7** Abelard composes songs in the vulgar tongue and writes his treatises in Latin.

**PIC §11** Pico destroyed his love-songs in the vulgar tongue, which would have relieved the scholastic prolixity of his Latin.

**BEL §9** Du Bellay wonders at those who think the French vulgar tongue incapable of erudition and good literature.

## Pater's sources

Du Bellay's words come from his manifesto for the Pleiad, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (1549), whose first book argues that the virtue of a language lies in the will and labour of those who use it. Pater translates from the first book.[416]

## In this edition

The note at BEL §9 renders *cette élégance et copie qui est en la langue Greque et Romaine* as "That elegance and abundance found in the Greek and Latin languages", and explains that "Copie comes from Latin copia, 'abundance'".

## See also

Bonfire of vanities; Classical culture; Human experience; Liberty of the heart; Profane poetry; Scholastic philosophy; Trouvère.

[416] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book I, chapters 1 and 10.

## ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις

*"The power of the wing": Plato's image for the soul's power to rise, which Pater gives to Greek myth · The Renaissance*

*ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις*; *the power of the wing*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Greek, "the power of the wing", from *pteron*, feather or wing, and *dynamis*, power.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Mythology brought to the ritual of Greek religion "ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις, the power of the wing" (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §26 says that "Plato uses the wing as the image of the soul's power to rise toward the divine", and that Pater "transfers it to the mobility of myth in his account of Greek religion".

**A place to read.** WIN §§25–26.

## Meaning

The words are the subject of a sentence in Plato's *Phaedrus*, after its opening verb *pephyken*, "is by nature". "It is the nature of the wing's power to bring the weighty up on high, lifting it to the region the gods inhabit", Socrates says; the divine is beautiful, wise and good, and by these the soul's plumage is fed and grows, while by the ugly and the evil it wastes away.[417] The soul that loses its wings is borne down until it lays hold of something firm, makes its home there and takes an earthly body. Later in the myth the wings grow again at the sight of a beautiful face, and the soul, warmed, feels them sprout with an itching like that of teething.[418] The wing is thus the soul's power of ascent, fed by beauty, lost in the fall into the body and recovered through love.

## Use in the book

Pater quotes the three words in the twenty-sixth paragraph, at the turn of his account of Greek religion. The ritual, rising from the pagan sentiment, is fixed and "unprogressive" (WIN §26; see Ritual). More definite conceptions come from mythology, "itself not due to a religious source at all", which develops into a body of religious conceptions "entirely human in form and character" (WIN §26; see Myth). To the ritual mythology brought itself, "ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις, the power of the wing" (WIN

[417] Plato, *Phaedrus* 246c–e: *πέφυκεν ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις τὸ ἐμβριθὲς ἄγειν ἄνω μετεωρίζουσα ᾗ τὸ τῶν θεῶν γένος οἰκεῖ*.

[418] Plato, *Phaedrus* 251a–c; the immortality of the soul, 245c–246a.

§26; see Ascension), an element of refinement and ascension. The ritual stays where it was; the myth rises.

The transfer changes the subject of the image but keeps its parts. In Plato the wing belongs to the soul, and it lifts the soul toward the gods; in Pater it belongs to myth, and it lifts a religion toward art. In Plato the wing is fed by the beautiful; in Pater the myth, as it rises, becomes art, "the æsthetic element" (WIN §26; see Myth), which expands with the freedom of the intellect while the ritual stays fixed. And the promise of "an endless destiny" that myth brings can be read as answering to the immortality that the *Phaedrus* proves of the soul just before the myth of the wings begins: myth would then be the immortal part of Greek religion, as the soul is of man.

The paragraph before has set a different wing beside this one. Under the breath of religious initiators a few, in Isaiah's words, "rise up with wings as eagles" (WIN §25; see Ascension). In the first image the wings belong to a few men; in the second, to the poetry of a whole people. The second, too, leaves the many behind for a time: the religion of myth "does not at once, and for the majority, become the higher Hellenic religion" (WIN §26; see Polytheism). Near its close the twenty-sixth paragraph gives a third form of the rising power, the Dorian worship of Apollo, "the aspiring element, by force and spring of which Greek religion sublimes itself" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities; Sublime).

The phrase can be read as Pater's way of placing the essay under Plato's protection at the moment it describes the origin of Greek art. The book has named the *Phaedrus* for the enthusiasm of Winckelmann (WIN §14; see Enthusiasm) and has echoed its Greek for his intuition (WIN §19; see φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος). Here it borrows the dialogue's central image for the rise of art itself, and, in doing so, takes the power of ascent from the philosopher's soul and gives it to the poet's myth.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph before it on the few who rise up with wings as eagles, in the order of the book.

**WIN §25** The breath of religious initiators passes over the religions of mankind; a few rise up with wings as eagles.

**WIN §26** Mythology brought to the unprogressive ritual element the power of the wing, an element of refinement and ascension.

## Later readings

Plotinus, in the treatise on the descent of the soul into the body, gathered Plato's reasons for the descent and named among them the *Phaedrus*, in which the shedding of the wings is the cause of the soul's arrival here; elsewhere in the same treatise he speaks of the soul's "shedding

of its wings" as its enchaining in the body.[419] For Plotinus the lost wing explains the fall of the soul; for Pater the wing is what lifts a religion out of its fall into ritual.

## See also

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Ascension; Chthonian divinities; Enthusiasm; Myth; Polytheism; Ritual; Sublime.

## A house not made with hands

*a house not made with hands*

Attested: *a house not made with hands* (WIN §4). The phrase is from Saint Paul, who says in the Second Letter to the Corinthians that if the earthly house of our tent is pulled down, we hold from God a building, a house not made with hands, everlasting, in the heavens.[420] The Greek is *oikia acheiropoiētos*, a house not handmade, and the word *acheiropoiētos* was later used of sacred images held to be made without human hands. Pater puts the phrase in quotation marks and applies it to the young Winckelmann: "To him, closely limited except on the side of the ideal, building for his dark poverty 'a house not made with hands,' it early came to seem more real than the present" (WIN §4). What came to seem more real is the antique world, which to most of us "still remains faint and remote" (WIN §4; see Remote beauty). Paul's house is the resurrection body, waiting in heaven; Pater's is a house of the imagination built in poverty, and its heaven is ancient Greece. The borrowing can be read as typical of the essay, which takes the language of Christian hope for a pagan longing, and of Winckelmann, who built his ideal Greece long before he saw a Greek statue. The same paragraph finds in his plans of travel "a wistful sense of something lost to be regained" (WIN §4; see Wistfulness of exiles), the exile's longing that the essay's motto, *Et ego in Arcadia fui*, "I too was in Arcadia", names.

## See also

Et ego in Arcadia fui; Remote beauty; Wistfulness of exiles.

## Absolution

*absolution*; *absolved*

Attested: *absolution* (FRE §6); *absolved* (PIC §8; WIN §12). Release from sin, pronounced by a priest in the church's name, from the Latin *absolvere*, to loose. In the legend of Tannhäuser "the erring knight makes his

[419] Plotinus, *Enneads* IV.8.1 and IV.8.4.

[420] 2 Corinthians 5:1.

way to Rome, to seek absolution at the centre of Christian religion"; the Pope answers that his soul may be saved when the staff in his hand blossoms, "and no sooner"; "and it came to pass not long after that the dry wood of a staff which the Pope had carried in his hand was covered with leaves and flowers" (FRE §6; see Venusberg). Abelard too, Pater says, was on his way to Rome when he died, and "What might have happened had he reached his journey's end is uncertain" (FRE §6). The note at FRE §6 reads the flowering staff as "making visible the possibility of grace beyond his judgment". Pico "was finally absolved, by a brief of Alexander the Sixth" in 1493, after his theses were questioned (PIC §8). The last use moves from the church to criticism: Winckelmann's conversion to Rome cost him "absolute sincerity", "Yet at the bar of the highest criticism, perhaps, Winckelmann may be absolved" (WIN §12).

## See also

Eternal justice; Venusberg.

## Addolorata

*addolorata*

Attested: *addolorata* (WIN §26). Italian, "the sorrowing one", the Virgin of the Sorrows, *Madonna Addolorata*, as the note at WIN §26 explains: "Our Lady of Sorrows". The devotion fixed on the seven sorrows of Mary, from Simeon's prophecy that a sword would pierce her soul to the burial of her son, and its images show her with a heart pierced by a sword or seven swords; the hymn *Stabat mater dolorosa*, "the sorrowing mother stood", is its poem. Pater uses the word at the climax of a list of the Christian-seeming things in Greek religion: "Greek religion too has its mendicants, its purifications, its antinomian mysticism, its garments offered to the gods, its statues worn with kissing, its exaggerated superstitions for the vulgar only, its worship of sorrow, its addolorata, its mournful mysteries" (WIN §26). The Greek *addolorata* can be read as Demeter mourning Persephone, the grieving mother of the Eleusinian mysteries; Pater gives the Christian name to the pagan figure, and the note says that he "draws an analogy between Christian devotional sorrow and certain Greek cults". The next sentence states the point: scarcely a wild or melancholy note of the medieval church, Pater says, was not anticipated by Greek polytheism (WIN §26; see Heathen sorrow). The word turns the usual contrast round. The Greeks are not all daylight, nor the Christians all gloom; the sorrowing mother belongs to both.

## See also

Antinomian mysticism; Chthonian divinities; Heathen sorrow; Worship of sorrow.

## Age of Faith

*Age of Faith*

Attested: *Age of Faith* (FRE §32). A name for the middle ages as a time of undivided belief. Pater puts it in quotation marks as the name of a view he corrects: the antinomian element in the middle age is "for the most part ignored by those writers who have treated it preeminently as the 'Age of Faith'" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The phrase had been made familiar by Catholic Romantic writing such as Kenelm Henry Digby's *Mores Catholici; or, Ages of Faith* (1831–40), an eleven-volume picture of medieval piety.[421] Against it Pater sets the Romantic school in France, which recognised the "rebellious and antinomian element" (FRE §32; see Romantic school). The same paragraph warns against "what is often in one all-embracing confusion called the middle age" (FRE §32).

### See also

Antinomianism; Medieval Renaissance; Romantic school.

## Albigensian movement

*Albigensian movement*

Attested: *Albigensian movement* (FRE §32). The Cathar heresy of the south of France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, named from the town of Albi; its believers held a dualist faith and rejected the church's sacraments. Innocent III called a crusade against it in 1208, and the war that followed, to 1229, broke the courts of the southern nobles under whom the troubadours had flourished. Pater names it among the things the antinomian spirit touched: "The Albigensian movement, connected so strangely with the history of Provençal poetry, is deeply tinged with it" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). He does not say what the connection is. It can be taken as a shared country, a shared patronage and a shared ruin: the poetry of Provence and the heresy grew in the same courts and fell in the same war.

### See also

Antinomianism; Troubadour.

## Ambrosia

*ambrosia*; *nectar*

[421] Kenelm Henry Digby, *Mores Catholici; or, Ages of Faith*, 11 vols (London, 1831–40).

Attested: *ambrosia* (PIC §2); *nectar* (PIC §2). The food of the Greek gods, as nectar was their drink; the Greek *ambrosia* means "immortality", and the gods' diet was what kept them deathless. In Homer the gods eat no bread and drink no wine, and so have no blood and are called immortal.[422] The word comes in the story of the exiled gods that Pater quotes from Heine's *Gods in Exile*. Driven out by the monks, "Many of these unfortunate emigrants, now entirely deprived of shelter and ambrosia, must needs take to vulgar handicrafts, as a means of earning their bread", and many whose sacred groves had been confiscated hired themselves out as wood-cutters in Germany, "and were forced to drink beer instead of nectar" (PIC §2; see Iconoclastic zealot; Sacred grove). The joke is Heine's and it has an edge. Without ambrosia the gods must earn their bread like men; Apollo, recognised on account of his beautiful singing, is tried and executed, and when the people come to drive a stake through his body "they found the grave empty" (PIC §2; see Vampire).

## See also

Iconoclastic zealot; Sacred grove; Vampire.

## Angelic mind

*angelica mens*; *the intelligence of angels*; *angelic*

Attested: *angelica mens* (PIC §9), in Pater's English "the intelligence of angels" (PIC §9); *angelic* in two further paragraphs (PIC §13; MIC §15). The Latin *mens* is the mind as the power of understanding. In the scholastic doctrine Pico inherited, the angels are pure intelligences, knowing without senses or reasoning, and stand next below God in the scale of being.[423] In the little world of man the angelic mind is the highest created part, after reason and before "a likeness to God" (PIC §9; see Little world; Likeness to God). In Pico's great world the angels are the third level of the system of correspondences, above the starry heavens: every earthly thing answers to a reality in the heavens, "and this again of some law of the angelic life in the world beyond the stars" (PIC §13; see Correspondence; Seraphic intelligence). Man's dignity, on Pico's theory, is that he brings "the dust under his feet into sensible communion with the thoughts and affections of the angels" (PIC §10; see Dignity of human nature).

## See also

Correspondence; Dignity of human nature; Likeness to God; Little world; Seraphic intelligence.

[422] Homer, *Iliad* 5.341–342.

[423] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I, qq. 54–58, on the knowledge of the angels.

## Anodyne

*anodyne*; *opiates*

Attested: *anodyne*, *opiates* (WIN §25). An anodyne is a medicine that relieves pain, from the Greek *anōdynos*, painless, from *an-*, not, and *odynē*, pain; by extension, anything that soothes without curing. Pater uses the word at the end of his account of the pagan sentiment that underlies all religions, the sadness of man before death and the powers of nature, and the rituals that grow from it. "Such pagan worship, in spite of local variations, essentially one, is an element in all religions. It is the anodyne which the religious principle, like one administering opiates to the incurable, has added to the law which makes life sombre for the vast majority of mankind" (WIN §25). The figure is a physician's, and its candour is the point. Ritual does not cure the condition of mankind, which is incurable; it eases it, as opium eases a dying patient. The sentence can be read as the most sceptical in the book, and as careful in its sympathy: the religious principle is the physician, and the anodyne is given in mercy. Pater does not mention it, but the German philosopher Karl Marx had published in 1844 that religion "is the opium of the people";[424] Pater's anodyne has the same drug in it, without Marx's call to abolish the illusory happiness it gives.

### See also

Heathen sorrow; Ritual.

## Anti-natal state

*The life of the soul before birth, which Platonic lovers remember in the face they love · The Renaissance*

*anti-natal state*; *pre-existence*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The state before birth: in Platonic doctrine, the life the soul led among the forms before it entered a body.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Is it carnal affection, or, *del suo prestino stato* (of Plato's anti-natal state) *il raggio ardente*?" (MIC §10).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §10 renders the Italian "The burning ray of its former state", and says that "Pater interposes his own reference to Plato's prenatal state into the wording".

**A place to read.** MIC §§10, 14, with WIN §19.

[424] Karl Marx, "Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung", *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* (Paris, 1844): *Sie ist das Opium des Volkes*.

## Meaning

"Anti-natal" is Pater's spelling of the word more often written "ante-natal": the prefix is the Latin *ante*, before, not the Greek *anti*, against, as in the older spellings "antichamber" and "antidate". The phrase names the soul's life before birth. Plato tells of it in several dialogues. In the *Meno* and the *Phaedo* Socrates argues that learning is recollection, the soul recovering what it knew before it was born.[425] In the *Phaedrus* the soul, before its fall into a body, followed the gods round the heavens and saw beauty itself shining; on earth, the sight of a beautiful face reminds it of what it saw, and the wings of the soul begin to grow again.[426] Love is thus a kind of memory.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is in the tenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, on his approach to Vittoria Colonna. Michelangelo, Pater divines from the sonnets, debated whether this last passion "would be the most unsoftening, the most desolating of all" (MIC §10; see Dolce amaro), and Pater puts the debate as a question: "Is it carnal affection, or, *del suo prestino stato* (of Plato's anti-natal state) *il raggio ardente*?" (MIC §10; see Carnal).

The parenthesis is Pater's. The Italian says only "the burning ray of its former state"; Pater interposes the gloss, as the edition's note observes, and so names the doctrine behind the line. The question is the Platonic lover's: is the love he feels a desire of the body, or a ray from the soul's former life, the light of beauty seen before birth and recognised again in a face? The words *il raggio ardente*, "the burning ray", make the remembered beauty fire, one of the two images of the poems (MIC §14; see Refining fire).

The fourteenth paragraph gives the doctrine a second place, where Michelangelo explains love at first sight by a former life (MIC §14; see Previous state of existence): love at first sight, on this account, is recognition. The sentence closes the paragraph that sets the Platonic tradition against Dante's (see Bodily form), and Dante's love begins in this life, with a child seen in Florence; Michelangelo's, on this reading, begins before life.

The Winckelmann essay gives the doctrine a third form, applied to knowledge rather than love. Winckelmann seems to realise "that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge", as if his mind had been lover and philosopher at once in some earlier life and were beginning its career again (WIN §19; see Reminiscence; φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος).

The three places show, on this reading, Pater's sympathy with a doctrine he does not believe. Plato's pre-existence explains love and learning alike as recovery, and Pater, who elsewhere insists that we have only "the impression of the individual in his isolation" (CON §3; see Impression), lets the myth stand as the best description of certain experiences: the shock of recognition

[425] Plato, *Meno* 81b–86b; *Phaedo* 72e–77a.

[426] Plato, *Phaedrus* 246a–251c; the soul that has philosophised with love, 249a.

in love, the intuition that seems older than study. The Michelangelo essay can be read as giving the doctrine a dark counterpart at its close, the relapse after death "into the formlessness which preceded life" (MIC §20; see Formlessness): what Plato's soul knew before birth as light, Michelangelo's late thought knows as shapelessness.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the soul's state before birth occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §10** Michelangelo debated, Pater divines from the sonnets, whether his love was carnal affection or the burning ray of Plato's anti-natal state.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo explains love at first sight by a former life.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann seems to realise the fancy of a forgotten knowledge, as if he had been lover and philosopher in some phase of pre-existence.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §10 says: "English: The burning ray of its former state. Italian. Read il raggio ardente with the preceding phrase. Pater interposes his own reference to Plato's prenatal state into the wording." The note at WIN §19 points to the *Phaedrus*, "where memory of the forms and love can restore wings to the soul".

## See also

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Bodily form; Carnal; Dolce amaro; Formlessness; Impression; Previous state of existence; Refining fire; Reminiscence.

# Antinomian mysticism

*antinomian mysticism*

Attested: *antinomian mysticism* (WIN §26). Antinomian is against the law, from the Greek *anti*, against, and *nomos*, law; mysticism is the pursuit of union with the divine beyond ordinary knowledge. An antinomian mysticism is one that holds the initiate above the rules that bind others. Pater lists it among the Greek anticipations of the medieval church, between "its purifications" and "its garments offered to the gods" (WIN §26; see Addolorata). The phrase can be read as pointing to the Orphic and Dionysiac cults, whose initiates claimed a purity of their own and whose ecstasies broke the ordinary order of the city. It recalls the first essay of the book, where Pater found an antinomian element in the middle age itself, the "spirit of rebellion and revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the

time" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism), and Aucassin choosing hell with Nicolette. The two uses make a symmetry: the middle age had its pagan rebels, and Greek religion had its Christian-seeming mystics. The essay's argument is that neither age was single, and that the "sharp edge of light" of Hellenic culture was cut across a gloom much like the medieval (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities).

## See also

Addolorata; Antinomianism; Chthonian divinities; Mystic.

# Antinomianism

*Revolt against the moral law in the medieval Renaissance · The Renaissance*

*antinomianism*; *antinomian*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Antinomianism, from the Greek for "against the law", is the doctrine that the faithful are freed by grace from the moral law; by extension, any revolt against binding rules.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "One of the strongest characteristics" of the medieval Renaissance "was its antinomianism, its spirit of rebellion and revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the time" (FRE §32). Its forms are many: a love that "became sometimes a strange idolatry, a strange rival religion", the Albigensians, the Franciscans, Joachim of Flora, and Aucassin's choice of hell, "perhaps the most famous expression" of the spirit (FRE §32). In the Winckelmann essay Greek religion too has "its antinomian mysticism" (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The note at FRE §32 gives the derivation and says that Pater "extends it to a disposition of imaginative and emotional revolt".

**A place to read.** FRE §32, the whole paragraph.

## Meaning

The word joins the Greek *anti*, "against", to *nomos*, "law". It came into use in the Reformation, apparently from Martin Luther himself, who gave it to the teaching of his Wittenberg colleague Johann Agricola that the law had no place in the preaching of the Gospel; the "antinomians" were those who held that faith set the Christian free of the moral law.[427] By Pater's time the word served for any rejection of moral rule, and he uses it so, for a temper of mind rather than a theology.

[427] Luther's disputations against the Antinomians at Wittenberg, 1537–1540, directed at Johann Agricola, and his open letter *Wider die Antinomer* (*Against the Antinomians*), 1539; the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed., 1911), "Antinomians", calls it "a term apparently coined by Luther to stigmatize Johannes Agricola".

## Use in the book

The word comes in the most daring paragraph of the first essay. "One of the strongest characteristics of that outbreak of the reason and the imagination, of that assertion of the liberty of the heart, in the middle age, which I have termed a medieval Renaissance, was its antinomianism, its spirit of rebellion and revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the time" (FRE §32; see Liberty of the heart; Medieval Renaissance). Pater names its sources and its object together: the search after pleasure, beauty and the worship of the body carried people "beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal", and their love became "a strange rival religion" (FRE §32; see Worship of the body; Idolatry). Its image is pagan: the return of Venus from her hiding in the Venusberg, and of the old gods going about the earth in disguise (FRE §32; see Venusberg).

Pater then sets the element against a reading of history. Ignored by the writers of the "Age of Faith", it is what makes the Romantic writers' middle age "so suggestive and exciting" (FRE §32; see Age of Faith; Romantic school). It is "found alike in the history of Abelard and the legend of Tannhäuser". It tinges the Albigensian movement, makes the Franciscan order with its "illumination" "justly suspect" from the point of view of religious authority, and influences the thoughts of "those obscure prophetical writers, like Joachim of Flora", dreamers of an age "in which law shall have passed away" (FRE §32; see Albigensian movement; Franciscan order; Dispensation; Spirit of freedom). The last phrase is antinomianism in its first sense, the passing away of law.

Pater finds "perhaps the most famous expression" of the spirit in Aucassin's answer when he is threatened with hell if he makes Nicolette his mistress. "A creature wholly of affection and the senses", he sees on the way to paradise only "a feeble and worn-out company of aged priests", and is ready to go to hell with "the good scholars", the fine horsemen and the courteous ladies with "two or three chevaliers apiece", all gay "in their gold, and silver, and beautiful furs—'the vair and the grey'" (FRE §32; see Chevalier; Vair). Pater calls the claim "sinister" in the same paragraph. In the next he grants that in the tale "the note of defiance, of the opposition of one system to another, is sometimes harsh", and ends with a story "in which the harmony of human interests is still entire" (FRE §33). The essay can be read as recording the rebellion as a fact of the period, without taking its side.

The adjective comes back once. Greek religion "too has its mendicants, its purifications, its antinomian mysticism, its garments offered to the gods, its statues worn with kissing" (WIN §26; see Addolorata), among the "wild or melancholy" notes of the medieval church that Greek polytheism anticipated. The pagan world, too, can be read as having its revolt against its own law.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the noun or the adjective occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** The antinomianism of the medieval Renaissance: love as a rival religion, the return of Venus, the Albigensians, the Franciscans, Joachim of Flora, and Aucassin's choice of hell.

**WIN §26** Greek religion too has its antinomian mysticism.

## In this edition

The note at FRE §32 gives the derivation "From Greek words for 'against' and 'law'", explains that "In theology the term concerns freedom from the binding force of a moral or religious law", and observes that Pater "extends it to a disposition of imaginative and emotional revolt". The notes in the same paragraph identify Joachim of Fiore, "a medieval Calabrian abbot", and his third age of the Spirit, and gloss "the vair and the grey" as furs.

## See also

Addolorata; Age of Faith; Albigensian movement; Antinomian mysticism; Chevalier; Dispensation; Franciscan order; Idolatry; Liberty of the heart; Medieval Renaissance; Romantic school; Spirit of freedom; Vair; Venusberg; Worship of the body.

# Artistic reconciliation

*The truce of Christian and pagan made by artists, not philosophers · The Renaissance*

*artistic reconciliation*; *an imaginative one*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The artistic reconciliation is the agreement between Christianity and the religion of ancient Greece reached in works of art, when painters and sculptors trained in Christian schools took up pagan subjects.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For that age the only possible reconciliation was an imaginative one, and resulted from the efforts of artists, trained in Christian schools, to handle pagan subjects; and of this artistic reconciliation work like Pico's was but the feebler counterpart" (PIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §15 says of the background figures of the Doni Tondo that "Pater's description of them as fauns is an interpretation that serves his account of pagan forms surviving within Christian art".

**A place to read.** PIC §15, with PIC §5.

## Meaning

To reconcile, from the Latin *reconciliare*, is to bring together again those who have been at odds; in Christian language it is the restoring of man to God. Pater applies the word to two religions, and the adjective names the means. The reconciliation is not argued, as a philosopher's would be, nor explained, as a historian's would be; it is made, in paint and marble.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the essay's closing argument, where Pater returns to his opening judgement that the Renaissance of the fifteenth century was, "in many things, great rather by what it designed or aspired to do, than by what it actually achieved" (PIC §15; see Initiatory idea). A later age, Pater says, would "conceive the true method of effecting a scientific reconciliation" (PIC §15; see Scientific reconciliation). The fifteenth century had only one way open: for that age the only possible reconciliation was "an imaginative one", the work of artists trained in Christian schools, and Pico's was "but the feebler counterpart" (PIC §15). The essay had said the same near its start: the allegorical interpretation is "the counterpart, though certainly the feebler counterpart, of that practical truce and reconciliation of the gods of Greece with the Christian religion, which is seen in the art of the time" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation). Three reconciliations can be read as ranked: the scientific, which belongs to a later age; the imaginative, which the artists achieved; and the philosophical, Pico's, "the feebler counterpart" of the artists'.

What the artists did is described next. Whatever the philosophers said, the imagery and story of the Greek religion "were by artists valued and cultivated for their own sake" (PIC §15; see For their own sake), and "Hence a new sort of mythology, with a tone and qualities of its own", a strange flower grown from "the mixture of two traditions, two sentiments, the sacred and the profane" (PIC §15; see Anemone; Sacred and profane). "Classical story was regarded as so much imaginative material to be received and assimilated. It did not come into men's minds to ask curiously of science, concerning the origin of such story, its primary form and import, its meaning for those who projected it. The thing sank into their minds, to issue forth again with all the tangle about it of medieval sentiment and ideas" (PIC §15). The artists' reconciliation can be read as succeeding where Pico failed for the same reason that the historian later succeeds: neither forces the old stories to mean what Moses means. The artist assimilates them; the historian sets them in their age (see Historic sense).

The example is a single picture. "In the Doni Madonna in the Tribune of the Uffizii, Michelangelo actually brings the pagan religion, and with it the unveiled human form, the sleepy-looking fauns of a Dionysiac revel, into the presence of the Madonna, as simpler painters had introduced there other products of the earth, birds or flowers, while he has given to that

Madonna herself much of the uncouth energy of the older and more primitive 'Mighty Mother.'" (PIC §15; see Faun; Mighty Mother; Unveiled human form). The reconciliation is in the composition. The fauns stand behind the Holy Family as birds and flowers stand in simpler pictures, as things of the earth; and the old religion enters the Madonna herself, in the energy of the Mother of the Gods.

The rest of the book shows the same reconciliation in other hands. Botticelli infuses "his profane and sacred persons" with one sentiment (BOT §5; see Profane and sacred). The Michelangelo essay looks back on Pico's way as one no longer open: Michelangelo might once have been for "adjusting the dreams of Plato and Homer with the words of Christ, like Pico of Mirandola. But things had moved onward, and such adjustments were no longer possible" (MIC §16). What remained to Michelangelo, Pater says, was a divine ideal above the creeds (MIC §16; see Divine ideal).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph that first compares Pico's work with the reconciliation in the art of the time.

**PIC §5** The allegorical interpretation is the feebler counterpart of the truce between the gods of Greece and the Christian religion seen in the art of the time.

**PIC §15** For that age the only possible reconciliation was an imaginative one, the work of artists handling pagan subjects; Michelangelo's Doni Madonna is the example.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §15 describes the Doni Tondo as "a round painting of the Holy Family" whose "background nudes have prompted different readings", and says that Pater's calling them fauns "is an interpretation that serves his account of pagan forms surviving within Christian art".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Anemone; Divine ideal; Faun; For their own sake; Historic sense; Initiatory idea; Mighty Mother; Profane and sacred; Profane poetry; Sacred and profane; Scientific reconciliation; Unveiled human form.

# Ascension

*ascension*; *the power of the wing*; *rise up with wings as eagles*

Attested: *ascension*, *the power of the wing* (WIN §26); *rise up with wings as eagles* (WIN §25). Ascension is a going up, from the Latin *ascendere*; in Christian use, the ascent of Christ into heaven. Pater uses the word for what mythology brought to Greek ritual: "To the unprogressive ritual element it

brought these conceptions, itself—ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις, the power of the wing —an element of refinement, of ascension, with the promise of an endless destiny" (WIN §26). The Greek phrase is from Plato's *Phaedrus*, where the natural power of the wing is to carry what is heavy upward to the region of the gods, and the soul's wing is nourished by the divine, the beautiful, wise and good (see ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις);[428] the note at WIN §26 says that Pater "transfers it to the mobility of myth in his account of Greek religion". The paragraph before has given the opposite image. The breath of religious initiators passes over the religions of mankind, and "a few 'rise up with wings as eagles,' but the broad level of religious life is not permanently changed" (WIN §25). The words are Isaiah's, but in the English Bible they "mount up with wings as eagles".[429] Between the two paragraphs the wing changes its meaning. In the first it is the rare flight of the religious genius; in the second it belongs to myth itself, the fluid element that lifts a fixed ritual toward art.

## See also

ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις; Anti-natal state; Chthonian divinities; Ritual; Spiritual.

## Ave

*the Ave*

Attested: *the Ave* (BOT §7). Latin, "Hail": the angel Gabriel's greeting to Mary at the Annunciation, *Ave, gratia plena, Dominus tecum*, "Hail, you who are full of grace; the Lord is with you",[430] and the first word of the prayer called the Hail Mary, which joined that greeting to Elizabeth's blessing of Mary in the same chapter. The edition's note gives it in English as "Hail Mary". Pater names it first among "the words of her exaltation, the Ave, and the Magnificat, and the Gaude Maria", which the Child guides his mother's hand to write (BOT §7; see Magnificat). The order is the order of the Gospel story: the greeting, then Mary's song, then the Church's later praise. The Ave is the word of the Annunciation, the "intolerable honour" itself (BOT §7; see Intolerable honour), and Pater sets it among the "high cold words" that "have no meaning for her". The greeting that opened her honour can be read as part of its burden.

## See also

Gaude Maria; Intolerable honour; Madonna; Magnificat.

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[428] Plato, *Phaedrus* 246d–e.

[429] Isaiah 40:31.

[430] Luke 1:28; Elizabeth's words are at Luke 1:42.

## Baptism

*baptism*; *baptised*; *Baptist*

Attested: *baptism* (FRE §14; PIC §8); *baptised* (FRE §§10, 12); *Baptism* (LEO §§6, 7); *Baptist* (LEO §25). The sacrament of entry into the church, from the Greek *baptizein*, to dip. In Amis and Amile it binds the friends: the two matching cups "were given to them by the Pope, when he baptised them at Rome" (FRE §10; see Inward similitude); Amis, a leper at the gate, says "the cup was given to me by the Bishop of Rome, who baptised me", and Amile knows him (FRE §12); Amile conjures him "by our comradeship, and by the baptism we received together at Rome" (FRE §14; see Comradeship). Pico "was called Giovanni at baptism" (PIC §8). Verrocchio's Baptism of Christ, in which Leonardo "was allowed to finish an angel in the left-hand corner", is the picture where "the pupil had surpassed the master" (LEO §§6–7). The so-called Saint John the Baptist of the Louvre, with its "treacherous smile", is "one of the few naked figures Leonardo painted" (LEO §25).

### See also

Comradeship; Inward similitude.

## Beatific vision

*the beatific vision*

Attested: *beatific vision* (WIN §22). The beatific vision is the sight of God face to face, which in Christian theology is the happiness of the blessed in heaven: *visio beatifica*, the vision that makes blessed. The Dominican theologian Thomas Aquinas (about 1225–1274) taught that the created intellect sees the essence of God by a light of glory added to it,[431] and Pope Benedict XII defined in 1336 that the souls of the just see the divine essence immediately, even before the resurrection.[432] Pater uses the phrase for the upper half of Raphael's Disputation of the Sacrament, in the Stanza della Segnatura of the Vatican: the great personages of Christian history are ranged against a space of tranquil sky, "broken in upon by the beatific vision", with the Sacrament in the midst (WIN §22). The sky opens above the theologians and the vision of the Trinity breaks in; below, on earth, the Host on its altar is the same God made visible. On the next wall the Parnassus shows the other tradition, "the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22; see Classical tradition).

[431] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 12, aa. 1, 5.

[432] Benedict XII, constitution *Benedictus Deus* (29 January 1336).

## See also

Beatified existence; Castalia; Classical tradition.

### Beatified existence

*beatified existence*; *beatific*

Attested: *beatified existence* (BOT §5); *beatific* (WIN §22; see Beatific vision). The state of the blessed in heaven. *Beatus* is blessed, and to beatify is to make blessed; the Church came to use the word for its declaration that a dead person is among the blessed, a step before canonisation. Pater's phrase is in the plural: in the Glorias religious reverie "recorded its impressions of the various forms of beatified existence" (BOT §5; see Gloria), the ranks of saints and angels in a painted heaven, as Dante's *Paradiso* shows the blessed sphere by sphere. The phrase stands in the sentence that offers an innocent account of the suspected Palmieri picture (see Religious reverie), and its innocence is the point: a heaven of the blessed was a familiar subject. The Winckelmann essay gives the adjective once, to Raphael's fresco of the Sacrament, where the great personages of Christian history are ranged against a sky "broken in upon by the beatific vision" (WIN §22; see Beatific vision). Botticelli's figures, displaced and wistful, can be read as the opposite of beatified existence: angels who have not found their place (see Wistfulness of exiles).

## See also

Beatific vision; Gloria; Religious reverie; Wistfulness of exiles.

### Cabala

*The secret tradition of the Hebrews, and the forged manuscripts · The Renaissance*

*Cabala*; *cabalistic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Cabala, now usually spelled Kabbalah, is the mystical tradition of medieval Judaism, which read the letters, numbers and divine names of the Hebrew Scriptures as a hidden account of God and the creation.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico's commentary on Beniveni's "Song of Divine Love" uses "a profusion of imagery borrowed indifferently from the astrologers, the Cabala, and Homer, and Scripture, and Dionysius the Areopagite" (PIC §11). "It is said that in his eagerness for mysterious learning he once paid a great sum for a collection of cabalistic manuscripts,

which turned out to be forgeries; and the story might well stand as a parable of all he ever seemed to gain in the way of actual knowledge" (PIC §16).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §16 says that "The story of forgeries serves as a parable in Pater's paragraph", and that "Pico's substantive use of Kabbalah is documented separately".

**A place to read.** PIC §16.

## Meaning

The Hebrew *qabbalah* means "what is received", and so a tradition handed down. The name came to mean the mystical teaching that grew up among the Jews of Provence and Spain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whose chief book is the *Zohar*, and which claimed to be an oral tradition reaching back to Moses. Pico was the first Christian scholar to study it in earnest, and he believed that it confirmed the Christian faith. His Christian Cabala passed to the German humanist Johannes Reuchlin, whose *De verbo mirifico* (1494) and *De arte cabalistica* (1517) made it a learned tradition of its own.[433] "Cabala" was the usual English spelling in Pater's day.

## Use in the book

The word comes twice, both times as a sign of Pico's learning, and neither time with praise. In PIC §11 it stands in a list. Pico's commentary on Beniveni's poem defines "the stages by which the soul passes from the earthly to the unseen beauty", "with an ambitious array of every sort of learning, and a profusion of imagery borrowed indifferently from the astrologers, the Cabala, and Homer, and Scripture, and Dionysius the Areopagite" (PIC §11; see Imagery; Platonic commentary); the last is the Athenian converted by Saint Paul, to whom the Christian mystical writings were ascribed. The word "indifferently" carries the judgement: the sources are taken without distinction, the Hebrew mystics beside Homer, Scripture beside the astrologers. The list can be read as the allegorist's method made visible (see Allegorical interpretation).

The second use is an anecdote: the "cabalistic manuscripts" for which Pico once paid a great sum "turned out to be forgeries", and "the story might well stand as a parable of all he ever seemed to gain in the way of actual knowledge" (PIC §16). Pater keeps his distance from the story ("It is said") and uses it for what it can stand for. The forged manuscripts are what Pico gained; what remains is the reason he sought them. He passed from system to system "less for the sake of positive knowledge than because he believed there was a spirit of order and beauty in knowledge" (PIC §16; see Order and beauty in knowledge; Positive knowledge), and "while his actual work has passed away, yet his own qualities are still active" (PIC §16). The parable judges the learning and spares the man.

[433] Johannes Reuchlin, *De verbo mirifico* (Basel, 1494); *De arte cabalistica* (Hagenau, 1517).

The Cabala can be read as belonging with the search for a "diviner signification held in reserve" (PIC §4; see In recessu divinius aliquid). It promised the hidden sense of Moses, and the Heptaplus is dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici, "whose interest, the preface tells us, in the secret wisdom of Moses is well known" (PIC §13; see Secret wisdom). The essay can be read as presenting the Cabala as the extreme case of Pico's method: a secret tradition, bought at a great price, that turned out to be worth nothing.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Cabala" or "cabalistic" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §11** Pico's commentary on Beniveni borrows imagery indifferently from the astrologers, the Cabala, Homer, Scripture and Dionysius the Areopagite.

**PIC §16** Pico once paid a great sum for cabalistic manuscripts that proved forgeries, a parable of all he gained in actual knowledge.

## Pater's sources

Pico's own account is different. In the Oration he tells how Esdras, that is Ezra, had the secret teaching of the law, kept until then in memory, written down in seventy volumes for the wise, and he names these the books of the Cabala. "Hos ego libros non mediocri impensa mihi cum comparassem", he writes, "When I had acquired these books at no small cost", and had read them with the greatest care, "I saw in them (God is my witness) not so much the Mosaic religion as the Christian".[434] The Conclusions of 1486, the nine hundred theses he offered to defend in Rome, include two sets of cabalistic theses, one according to the teaching of the Hebrew Cabalists and one according to his own opinion; and among his magical theses is the claim that "no science gives us more certainty of the divinity of Christ than magic and the Cabala", one of the thirteen theses the papal commission examined.[435] What Pico counted as proof of the faith, Pater's parable turns into the type of knowledge that comes to nothing; the books Pico paid for were real Jewish writings, but not the ancient books of Ezra he took them for. The source of Pater's story of forgeries is not given in the book.

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[434] Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio* (1486), on the seventy books of Esdras and the books of the Cabala (sentences 268–277 in the numbering of the Latin Library text); the command to Ezra is in 2 Esdras 14:45–47.

[435] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 1486), the cabalistic conclusions "secundum secretam doctrinam sapientum Hebraeorum Cabalistarum" and "secundum opinionem propriam"; the magical conclusions according to his own opinion, no. 9: "Nulla est scientia que nos magis certificet de divinitate Christi quam magia et cabala".

## In this edition

The note at PIC §16 says that "The story of forgeries serves as a parable in Pater's paragraph", and that "Pico's substantive use of Kabbalah is documented separately, including his reliance on the extensive Latin translations prepared for him by Flavius Mithridates". The note at PIC §1 says that Pico's project takes in many more traditions than the essay's opening suggests, "including Aristotle, Arabic philosophy, and Jewish Kabbalah".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Imagery; In recessu divinius aliquid; Order and beauty in knowledge; Platonic commentary; Positive knowledge; Secret wisdom.

# Canon

*canon*

Attested: *canon* (FRE §3). A clergyman of a cathedral or collegiate church, living by its rule; the Greek *kanōn* is a rod or rule. In the legend of Abelard "the famous and comely clerk ... came to live in the house of a canon of the church of Notre-Dame, where dwelt a girl, Heloïse, believed to be the old priest's orphan niece" (FRE §3; see Clerk). Pater does not name him; in Abelard's own account of his misfortunes, the *Historia calamitatum*, the canon is Fulbert.[436] Pater gives him one act: "the old priest had testified his love for her by giving her an education then unrivalled" (FRE §3). The canon's house by the Seine is the stage of the medieval Renaissance in Pater's telling, the "shadowy house" from whose rooms "we see that spirit going abroad" (FRE §4). The note at FRE §3 says that Abelard's own account of the affair "survives in the Historia calamitatum, usually rendered The Story of My Misfortunes".

## See also

Clerk; Medieval Renaissance.

# Christian asceticism

*The Christian discipline that distrusts the senses, against which the artist's life asserts itself and which Winckelmann escaped · The Renaissance*

*Christian asceticism*; *the Christian ascetic*; *the ascetic interest*

[436] Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chapter 6.

## At a Glance

**The word.** The discipline of the body practised for the sake of the spirit: fasting, watching, chastity, the renunciation of pleasure.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Against the Greek indifference to sense stands Christian asceticism, whose intoxication Winckelmann escaped (WIN §43).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §43 says that Jonathan's words supply Pater "with a figure for the religious prohibition of even a small sensory pleasure".

**A place to read.** WIN §43.

## Meaning

The Greek *askēsis* was the training of the athlete before it was the discipline of the monk (see Ascêsis). The Christian ascetic took the athlete's word for a war on the body: the desert fathers, the monastic rules and the saints of the middle age made renunciation of the senses the road to the spirit. In the nineteenth century the word carried a judgement. Pater does not name them here, but for his generation, after Matthew Arnold's "Hebraism"[437] and the debates over Newman and the Oxford Movement, asceticism named the side of Christianity that set the soul against the flesh, and it was the side that Jules Michelet, in his *Renaissance* (1855), saw the Renaissance as escaping.[438]

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the forty-third paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, which defines Winckelmann's serenity by what it lacked. Greek sensuousness "does not fever the conscience: it is shameless and childlike" (WIN §43). Against it Christian asceticism, "discrediting the slightest touch of sense", has from time to time provoked the artistic life into opposition (WIN §43), and Pater sets down the words of Jonathan from the Book of Samuel, who tasted a little honey and was condemned to die for it (WIN §43; see Sensuousness). The consequence is the artist's dilemma. "It has sometimes seemed hard to pursue that life without something of conscious disavowal of a spiritual world; and this imparts to genuine artistic interests a kind of intoxication. From this intoxication Winckelmann is free: he fingers those pagan marbles with unsinged hands, with no sense of shame or loss" (WIN §43).

The argument is subtle and the essay keeps it so. Asceticism does not destroy the sensuous; it inflames it. By forbidding the slightest touch of sense, it makes every touch a defiance, and the artist who loves the senses in a Christian world loves them with the excitement of a rebel. That excitement, the intoxication of the forbidden, is what the essay can be read as diagnosing in the Renaissance and in Pater's own century. Winckelmann

[437] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), ch. 4, "Hebraism and Hellenism".

[438] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France au seizième siècle: Renaissance* (Paris, 1855), introduction.

escaped it. His hands are "unsinged" because the fire was never lit: he handled the pagan marbles as a pagan would, "with no sense of shame or loss", and that is to deal with the sensuous side of art "in the pagan manner" (WIN §43). The paradox, it can be read, is that the convert to Rome is the essay's pagan.

The ascetic returns twice more, each time as the observer of a change he cannot stop. The supreme abstraction of the Greek gods is already "a premonition of the fleshless, consumptive refinements of the pale, medieval artists", and "the ascetic interest" may be foreseen in them (WIN §45; see Shutting the eyes). Asceticism is thus not only Christianity's; it is latent in the Greek ideal itself, in the impassive and colourless form. And when the relics of the antique were restored, "in the view of the Christian ascetic it was as if an ancient plague-pit had been opened" (WIN §47; see Plague-pit), and all the world "took the contagion of the life of nature and of the senses" (WIN §47; see Contagion). The essay can be read as tracing a single history through these places: an asceticism foreshadowed in Greek art and dominant in the middle age, and a Renaissance continuous with it, since the medieval spirit, by withdrawing interest from art "and yet keeping unbroken the thread of its traditions", had let the mind rest until the ancient forms returned (WIN §47).

The book's other words for the same discipline are milder. The Preface praised the earliest phases of the Renaissance for "the charm of ascêsis, of the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth" (PRE §6; see Ascêsis), a discipline that serves art, and Pater's later writings would make that ascêsis an ideal of style.[439] The Christian asceticism of the Winckelmann essay is the other kind, the discipline that serves the soul against the body, and the essay's judgement of it is not hostility but distance.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ascetic" or "asceticism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §43** Christian asceticism, discrediting the slightest touch of sense, has provoked the artistic life into opposition.

**WIN §45** The suppression of the sensuous, the ascetic interest, may be foreseen in the Greek gods' abstraction.

**WIN §47** To the Christian ascetic the restoration of the antique was as if a plague-pit had been opened.

## See also

Ascêsis; Contagion; Plague-pit; Reliquary; Sensuousness; Shutting the eyes.

[439] Walter Pater, "Style", in *Appreciations* (London, 1889): "Self-restraint, a skilful economy of means, ascêsis, that too has a beauty of its own".

# Chthonian divinities

*The gods of the earth and the underworld, whose sad worship the Dorian Apollo opposed · The Renaissance*
*the sad Chthonian divinities*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Greek gods of the earth and of the dead, worshipped below the ground and at night.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Dorian worship of Apollo is "always opposed to the sad Chthonian divinities" (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§24–26.

## Meaning

*Chthonian* is from the Greek *chthōn*, the earth, and *chthonios*, of the earth, below the earth. The chthonian gods were those of the soil and the underworld: Hades and Persephone, Demeter in her mourning, Hecate, the Furies, the heroes in their tombs. Their worship differed from that of the Olympians: offerings poured into the earth or burned whole, rites at night, sacrifices of dark victims, and the mysteries that promised the initiate a better lot among the dead.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the turn of the twenty-sixth paragraph, which has been showing how much of Greek religion was sad. The country people cherish "the unlovely idols of an earlier time", and "Greek religion too has its mendicants, its purifications, its antinomian mysticism" and "its mournful mysteries" (WIN §26; see Addolorata). "What should we have thought of the vertiginous prophetess at the very centre of Greek religion?" (WIN §26) The vertiginous prophetess can be read as the Pythia at Delphi, the chthonian at the heart of Apollo's own shrine. "The supreme Hellenic culture is a sharp edge of light across this gloom. The fiery, stupefying wine becomes in a happier climate clear and exhilarating" (WIN §26). Against the sad Chthonian divinities stands the Dorian worship of Apollo, "rational, chastened, debonair", the aspiring element by which Greek religion "sublimes itself" (WIN §26; see Sublime).

The sentence makes Greek religion a contest. Below is the earth, with its dead, its mysteries and its frenzy; above is Apollo, the god of light and measure, whose Dorian worship is "rational, chastened, debonair" (see Debonair). Greek religion refines itself upward, and the agent is Apollo. The paragraph's last sentences give the result: "Out of Greek religion, under happy conditions, arises Greek art, to minister to human culture" (WIN

§26), and it was Greek religion's privilege "to be able to transform itself into an artistic ideal" (WIN §26; see Artistic ideal).

The essay can be read as refusing the easy picture of Greece that its own praise of Hellenic light might suggest. The twenty-fourth paragraph had warned against it: Newman's "classical polytheism which was gay and graceful" is "only a partial" view, which fixes the eye "on the sharp, bright edge of high Hellenic culture, but loses sight of the sombre world across which it strikes" (WIN §24). The chthonian is that sombre world, and the light is precious because it crosses it. The forty-fifth paragraph returns to the chthonian from the other side, finding in Greek religion "its mournful mysteries of Adonis, of Hyacinthus, of Demeter", the rites of grief for the youths loved by Aphrodite and Apollo and for the mother bereft of Persephone (see Mournful mysteries), and "the weary shadows of an earlier, more formless, divine world" crowding round the feet of the Olympians (WIN §45; see Dispossession). Winckelmann, Pater says, failed to see this; the essay sees it, and finds in it a preparation for the romantic temper.

## Places to read

The paragraphs of the Winckelmann essay on the sombre and the bright sides of Greek religion, in the order of the book.

**WIN §24** Newman's view of a gay and graceful polytheism is partial; it loses sight of the sombre world across which Hellenic culture strikes.

**WIN §25** The pagan sentiment measures the sadness of the mind when its thoughts wander from what is here and now.

**WIN §26** The Dorian worship of Apollo, always opposed to the sad Chthonian divinities, is the aspiring element of Greek religion.

**WIN §45** Around the Olympians crowd the weary shadows of an earlier, more formless, divine world.

## Elsewhere in Pater

The chthonian gods became one of Pater's subjects. His essays "A Study of Dionysus" and "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone", both of 1876 and collected in *Greek Studies* (1895), take up the earth-gods that the Winckelmann essay sets against Apollo, and treat them with a sympathy the essay only begins.[440]

## See also

Addolorata; Antinomian mysticism; Artistic ideal; Debonair; Dispossession; Heathen sorrow; Mournful mysteries; Sublime.

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[440] Walter Pater, "A Study of Dionysus", *Fortnightly Review* (December 1876), and "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone", *Fortnightly Review* (January–February 1876); both in *Greek Studies* (London, 1895).

*clerk*, *clerks*

Attested: *clerk* (FRE §3; GIO §15); *clerks* (FRE §36). From the Latin *clericus*, a man in holy orders; since the clergy were the learned class, a clerk was also a scholar, as in Chaucer's Clerk of Oxford. Abelard is "the famous and comely clerk, in whom Wisdom herself, self-possessed, pleasant, and discreet, seemed to sit enthroned" (FRE §3; see Canon); the word joins the scholar and the cleric in him. At the end of the first essay the word has its plain churchly sense: after the miracle of the coffins "the bishop ordained many clerks to serve in the church of Saint Oseige, and commanded them that they should guard duly, with great devotion, the bodies of the two companions, Amis and Amile" (FRE §36; see Amity). In the Concert of the Pitti Palace, which Pater takes for Giorgione's and which the gallery now gives to Titian, "a monk, with cowl and tonsure, touches the keys of a harpsichord, while a clerk, placed behind him, grasps the handle of a viol" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord).

## See also

Amity; Canon; Harpsichord.

# Consciousness of ignorance

*The grown man's hope in the face of death, resting on what he knows he does not know · The Renaissance*

*consciousness of ignorance*; *ignorance*, *ignorant*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The awareness that one does not know; knowledge of the limits of one's knowledge.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "What hope he has is based on the consciousness of ignorance—ignorance of man, ignorance of the nature of the mind, its origin and capacities" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

## Meaning

The idea is old in philosophy. In Plato's *Apology* Socrates says that he is wiser than the man who thinks he knows, because he does not think he knows what he does not know,[441] and the "Socratic ignorance" that later writers drew from the passage became the type of a wisdom that begins in

[441] Plato, *Apology* 21d.

doubt. Pater's phrase sets that awareness in a new place: not in the search for definitions but in the question of what happens after death.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is in the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which contrasts two attitudes to death. Michelangelo is here the disciple of the Platonists rather than of Dante (MIC §20; see Discipleship), whose belief in immortality is firm "almost as much so as that of a child" (MIC §20; see Immortality). Then: "But in Michelangelo you have maturity, the mind of the grown man, dealing cautiously and dispassionately with serious things; and what hope he has is based on the consciousness of ignorance—ignorance of man, ignorance of the nature of the mind, its origin and capacities" (MIC §20).

The sentence reverses the usual relation of faith and doubt. Hope is commonly founded on knowledge, on what revelation or reason assures; Michelangelo's is founded on ignorance. The reasoning can be read so: because we do not know the nature of the mind, its origin or capacities, we cannot know that death ends it, and the darkness leaves room for hope. "What hope he has" is guarded: the hope is small, and Pater does not say it is much. The contrast of the child and the grown man is the essay's judgement. Dante's certainty is almost a child's; Michelangelo's uncertainty is maturity, "dealing cautiously and dispassionately with serious things".

The next sentence carries the ignorance to its extreme: he is so ignorant of the spiritual world that he "does not surely know" whether the consecrated Host may not be the body of Christ (MIC §20; see Consecrated Host; New body). The ignorance that grounds his hope also unsettles his doubt. Not knowing, he cannot deny the doctrine of the Church, any more than he can affirm it. The consciousness of ignorance is thus a suspension in both directions, and the sacristy, the same paragraph has said, is "a place neither of consoling nor of terrible thoughts" (MIC §20; see Disembodied spirit).

The other uses of "ignorance" in the book are reproaches. Abelard stands against the official ministers of the Church "with their ignorant worship of system for its own sake" (FRE §6; see Humanist); Pico believed in "a spirit of order and beauty in knowledge, which would come down and unite what men's ignorance had divided" (PIC §16; see Positive knowledge); the pictorial temperament "may possibly be ignorant of true anatomical proportions" (GIO §2). Only in the Michelangelo essay does ignorance become a virtue, and only when it is conscious.

One may take the phrase as joining Michelangelo to the Conclusion. There Pater asks that we be "for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy" (CON §5; see Facile orthodoxy). Michelangelo's consciousness of ignorance is that refusal in the face of death: the grown man will not acquiesce, either in

Dante's firm belief or in its denial. The essay calls him a disciple of the Platonists, and the attitude has a Socratic root.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ignorance" or "ignorant" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §6** The official ministers of the Church have an ignorant worship of system for its own sake.

**PIC §16** Pico believed in a spirit in knowledge that would unite what men's ignorance had divided.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo's hope is based on the consciousness of ignorance; he is so ignorant of the spiritual world that he does not surely know whether the Host may not be the body of Christ.

**GIO §2** The pictorial temperament may possibly be ignorant of true anatomical proportions.

## See also

Consecrated Host; Discipleship; Disembodied spirit; Facile orthodoxy; Humanist; Immortality; New body; Positive knowledge.

# Consecrated Host

*consecrated Host*; *Host*

Attested: *consecrated Host* (MIC §20); *Host* (LEO §27). The bread of the Eucharist, from the Latin *hostia*, a sacrificial victim; consecrated, it is held by Catholic doctrine to become the body of Christ, a teaching the Council of Trent defined as transubstantiation in 1551.[442] Pater uses the phrase to measure Michelangelo's ignorance of the spiritual world: "Michelangelo is so ignorant of the spiritual world, of the new body and its laws, that he does not surely know whether the consecrated Host may not be the body of Christ" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance). The sentence is built on a double negative. It does not say that Michelangelo believed the doctrine, nor that he doubted it, but that he could not be sure it was false; his ignorance leaves the Church's teaching standing as a possibility. The Leonardo essay gives the word its other face: "Strange, after all the mystic developments of the middle age, was the effort to see the Eucharist, not as the pale Host of the altar, but as one taking leave of his friends" (LEO §27). There the Last Supper is the human scene that the pale wafer had hidden. The two sentences can be read together: Leonardo restores the human scene behind the sacrament; Michelangelo will not rule out the sacrament itself.

[442] Council of Trent, session XIII (11 October 1551), *Decree on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist*, ch. 4 and canon 2.

## See also

Consciousness of ignorance; New body.

## Conventional associations

*The meanings that custom gives a sacred subject, beyond which Leonardo's art carries it · The Renaissance*

*conventional associations*; *traditional associations*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The ideas and feelings that a subject brings with it by long custom, as the Last Supper brings the Eucharist.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The given subject "is often merely the pretext for a kind of work which carries one altogether beyond the range of its conventional associations" (LEO §25).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at LEO §25 records the Louvre's present attribution of the Bacchus.

**A place to read.** LEO §25, with LEO §27.

## Meaning

"Association" was a central word of the psychology of Pater's century, which held that ideas become joined by habit, so that one calls up the other. The Scottish essayist Archibald Alison had made it the ground of taste: an object is beautiful, he argued, through the train of associated ideas it awakens in the mind.[443] "Conventional" means fixed by agreement or custom (see Conventionalism). The conventional associations of a subject are thus the ideas it calls up for everyone who shares a custom: the Baptist calls up the wilderness and repentance, the Last Supper the sacrament of the altar.

## Use in the book

Pater draws the phrase from one picture's history. The paragraph has followed the Saint John of the Louvre through its copies, in which the reedlike cross "becomes faint" and at last "disappears altogether", after which the original's likeness to the Bacchus that hangs near it no longer surprises (LEO §25; see Decayed gods). Pater draws the conclusion: "No one ever ruled over the mere subject in hand more entirely than Leonardo, or bent it more dexterously to purely artistic ends. And so it comes to pass that though he handles sacred subjects continually, he is the most profane of painters; the given person or subject, Saint John in the Desert, or the Virgin on the knees of Saint Anne, is often merely the pretext for a kind of work which carries one altogether beyond the range of its conventional

[443] Archibald Alison, *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (1790), Essay I.

associations" (LEO §25; see Sacred and profane). "Pretext" is a strong word, and "merely" stronger: the subject is the occasion, and the work goes elsewhere. Where it goes the paragraph has already said. The Saint John is one of those "symbolical inventions" whose subject is "the starting-point of a train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music" (LEO §25; see Symbolical invention). The associations of custom give way to a train of sentiment that belongs to the painter alone.

The phrase returns, changed, two paragraphs later, at the Last Supper: "Here was another effort to lift a given subject out of the range of its traditional associations." The effort, Pater says, was strange after "all the mystic developments of the middle age": to see the Eucharist "as one taking leave of his friends" (LEO §27; see Consecrated Host). "Traditional" weighs more than "conventional": the Eucharist carries centuries of doctrine and devotion, "the mystic developments of the middle age". And the direction differs. The Saint John is carried "beyond" his associations into a sentiment that drifts toward the pagan; the Last Supper is lifted "out of" its associations into a human scene, a farewell among friends. Pater compares the Last Supper painted at Florence "five years afterwards" by the young Raphael, "with sweet and solemn effect" but "still with all the mystical unreality of the school of Perugino" (LEO §27); that picture, then given to Raphael, is now usually given to Pietro Perugino (about 1450–1523), Raphael's master, and his workshop.[444]

The two passages can be read together as the essay's account of a profane art made from sacred matter. In each the subject is kept and its customary meaning set aside, and in each the result is what Pater values: a work ruled entirely by "purely artistic ends". The Giorgione essay gives the principle its general form, in which all art strives that the mere matter of a picture "should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling" (GIO §5; see End in itself). The Leonardo essay shows it at work on the most heavily freighted matter there is, and the word "profane" names the cost without condemning it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "conventional associations" or "traditional associations" occurs, in the order of the book; "associations" alone (WIN §§22, 37) is not listed.

**LEO §25** Though Leonardo handles sacred subjects continually, the subject is often a pretext for work that goes beyond its conventional associations.

**LEO §27** The Last Supper lifts a given subject out of its traditional associations, and sees the Eucharist as one taking leave of his friends.

[444] The Last Supper in the former convent of Sant'Onofrio (the Cenacolo di Fuligno), Florence, now catalogued as the work of Perugino and his workshop.

## See also

Consecrated Host; Conventionalism; Decayed gods; End in itself; Profane poetry; Sacred and profane; Symbolical invention.

# Conventional orthodoxy

*Dante's received theology, which Botticelli would not accept · The Renaissance*

*conventional orthodoxy*; *conventional*, *conventionalism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A conventional orthodoxy is right belief held by custom and agreement rather than by personal conviction.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli "is far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §6 says that Pater "turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically".

**A place to read.** BOT §5, with CON §5.

## Meaning

*Conventio* is a coming together, an assembly or an agreement; the conventional is what is settled by agreement, and by Pater's day the word also meant what is merely customary, unoriginal. Orthodoxy is right opinion (see Orthodoxy). The phrase sets the two together so that each qualifies the other: the opinion is right by the agreement of others, not by the holder's own sight.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the fifth paragraph of the Botticelli essay, which turns from likeness to difference. Botticelli resembles Dante in his visionariness (BOT §4; see Visionary painter), "But he is far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5), which, referring all human action to the formula of purgatory, heaven and hell, leaves "an insoluble element of prose in the depths of Dante's poetry" (BOT §5; see Insoluble element of prose). "Conventional" is a sharp word for the author of the *Divine Comedy*. Pater does not deny Dante's genius; he says that its conventional orthodoxy leaves a residue of prose in the poetry (see Insoluble element of prose).

The difference is made concrete in the next paragraph. "So just what Dante scorns as unworthy alike of heaven and hell, Botticelli accepts" (BOT §6; see Middle world). The conventional orthodoxy has places for the saved and the damned and contempt for those who are neither; Botticelli's sympathy goes to those very people (see Sympathy). His heterodoxy, in

Pater's telling, is not a rival creed. It is the Palmieri fantasy that he "may well" have let pass "across him" (BOT §5; see Alexandrian philosophy), a sentiment rather than a doctrine.

The word "conventional" recurs through the book, and almost always as a limit. Vasari's second edition changed his image of Leonardo "into something fainter and more conventional" (LEO §2); a sacred subject is often Leonardo's pretext "for a kind of work which carries one altogether beyond the range of its conventional associations" (LEO §25); the old criticism of Michelangelo's sonnets was "conventional criticism" (MIC §10); the medieval treatment of the Creation of Man "became almost conventional, handed on from artist to artist" (MIC §18). The Conclusion makes the principle general: "The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves, or of what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us" (CON §5).

The phrase can be read as the Conclusion's principle applied to Dante. A belief held by convention is one "we have not identified with ourselves", and it leaves its residue of prose. Pater asks of a poet what he asks of a reader: not that he believe less, but that what he believes be his own. The neighbouring warning against "a facile orthodoxy" (CON §5; see Orthodoxy) makes the same point from the other side. Only in sculpture does Pater accept the conventional without complaint, where the Tuscan sculptors' "system of conventionalism as skilful and subtle as that of the Greeks" (ROB §11; see Conventionalism) and the Greek colour "more or less conventional" (WIN §34) are the discipline of a medium, not the surrender of a mind.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "conventional" or "conventionalism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §5** Botticelli is far from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan sculptors join repose to expression by a system of conventionalism as subtle as the Greeks'.

**MIC §10** The older, conventional criticism assumed that the sonnets were addressed to Vittoria Colonna.

**MIC §18** The medieval treatment of the Creation of Man became almost conventional, handed on from artist to artist.

**LEO §2** Vasari's second edition changed his image of Leonardo into something fainter and more conventional.

**LEO §25** A sacred subject is often merely Leonardo's pretext for work that carries one beyond the range of its conventional associations.

**WIN §34** The colour of Greek sculpture has always been more or less conventional.

**CON §5** What is only conventional has no real claim upon us.

**C73 §6** In 1873, what is only conventional has no real claim upon us; the same sentence speaks of "some abstract morality" where the later text has "some abstract theory".

## In this edition

The edition has no note on the phrase. The note at BOT §6, on "make great refusals", calls it "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III", and says that "Pater turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically".

## See also

Alexandrian philosophy; Conventionalism; Insoluble element of prose; Middle world; Orthodoxy; Sympathy; Universal formula; Visionary painter.

# Cope

*copes*

Attested: *copes* (LEO §7). A cope is the long semicircular cloak that a priest wears in processions and at solemn offices other than the Mass, fastened across the breast by a clasp; the word comes from the Medieval Latin *cappa*, a cape. Pater uses it once, of Verrocchio at his bench, "chasing brooches for the copes of Santa Maria Novella" (LEO §7; see Chasing). The brooches are the great clasps of the copes, and Santa Maria Novella is the Dominican church of Florence; Vasari, who mentions Verrocchio's buttons for copes, places them in Santa Maria del Fiore, the cathedral.[445] The word places the goldsmith's work inside the liturgy: Verrocchio made things "for sacred or household use" (LEO §5; see Ambry), and the cope's clasp is the sacred half of that phrase. The sentence moves from the craftsman's "cheerful exterior" to the ambition beneath it, and the copes and tomb-screens are the exterior.

## See also

Ambry; Chasing.

[445] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Andrea Verrocchio.

# Correspondence

*The hidden likenesses binding earth, heaven and the angels · The Renaissance*

*correspondences*; *corresponds*, *corresponded*, *corresponding*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A correspondence is a relation of answering likeness between things on different levels of the world, so that the lower stands for the higher and can be read as its sign.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Pico's writings "Everywhere there is an unbroken system of correspondences" (PIC §13). Leonardo brooded over "the correspondences which exist between the different orders of living things, through which, to eyes opened, they interpret each other" (LEO §9).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §13 says that the different levels of meaning in the Heptaplus "allow him to read that account alongside philosophical accounts of the world".

**A place to read.** PIC §13.

## Meaning

The medieval Latin *correspondere* is to answer together. A correspondence is an agreement between two things, each answering to the other; the plural, for a whole order of such agreements between the visible and invisible worlds, is the language of the mystics and the Platonists. The idea is old: whatever is below is like what is above. The word had a later career. The Swedish visionary Emanuel Swedenborg made correspondence the key to his teaching, holding that every natural thing answers to a spiritual one;[446] and Charles Baudelaire's sonnet "Correspondances" in *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857) turned the idea toward the senses, where "Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent", "perfumes, colours and sounds answer one another".[447] Baudelaire's correspondences between the senses can be read as close to Pater's between the arts in the Giorgione essay.

## Use in the book

The word names the frame of Pico's thought. In the Heptaplus, "In explaining the harmony between Plato and Moses, Pico lays hold on every sort of figure and analogy", and "Everywhere there is an unbroken system of correspondences" (PIC §13). Each object on earth answers to a reality in the starry heavens, and that again to a law of the angelic life beyond the stars (PIC §13; see Analogue). Fire is the example: there is fire among the elements, the sun is the fire of heaven, and beyond the heavens is "the fire of

[446] Emanuel Swedenborg, *De caelo et ejus mirabilibus et de inferno* (*Heaven and Hell*, London, 1758), §§87–115.

[447] Charles Baudelaire, "Correspondances", *Les Fleurs du mal* (Paris, 1857), line 8.

the seraphic intelligence" (PIC §13; see Elementary fire). The system leaves nothing outside it. "In this way, every natural object, every combination of natural forces, every accident in the lives of men, is filled with higher meanings" (PIC §13; see Accidental combination). The correspondences are the ground on which the allegorical method stands: if every thing below means something above, the interpreter's work is only to find the meaning (see Allegorical interpretation).

The Leonardo essay gives the old idea to an artist without irony. Leonardo, in "the manner of the older students", brooded "over the correspondences which exist between the different orders of living things, through which, to eyes opened, they interpret each other" (LEO §9; see Hidden virtues). Here the correspondences "exist", and they are found by looking, not by argument; the eyes that see them are "opened". The essay can be read as keeping the correspondences as a painter's way of seeing while dropping them as a cosmology.

The book's own correspondences run between art and the mind. Aesthetic beauty has differences of kind "corresponding to the differences in kind of the gifts of sense themselves" (GIO §1). The arts are ranged in a series answering to the mind's developments (WIN §32; see Development), and at the end "Sculpture corresponds to the unperplexed, emphatic outlines of Hellenic humanism; painting to the mystic depth and intricacy of the middle age; music and poetry have their fortune in the modern world" (WIN §52; see Hellenic humanism). Pico's correspondences are vertical, between earth and heaven; Pater's are historical, between the forms of art and the stages of the mind. The word outlives the cosmology that first gave it meaning.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "correspondences" or the verb occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Everywhere in Pico there is an unbroken system of correspondences between earth, the heavens and the angelic world.

**LEO §9** Leonardo brooded over the correspondences between the different orders of living things, through which they interpret each other.

**GIO §1** There are differences of kind in aesthetic beauty corresponding to the differences of kind in the gifts of sense.

**WIN §32** The arts may be ranged in a series corresponding to a series of developments in the human mind.

**WIN §52** The development of the forms of art has corresponded to the development of man's thoughts concerning humanity; sculpture corresponds to Hellenic humanism.

## Pater's sources

The scheme Pater summarises is set out in the second proem of the Heptaplus, with its angelic, celestial and sublunary worlds (see Little world); the fire passage Pater translates comes from the same proem.[448]

## In this edition

The note at PIC §13 says that the Heptaplus "appeared in 1489", that its organization "follows the creation account in Genesis through seven expositions", and that "The different levels of meaning allow him to read that account alongside philosophical accounts of the world".

## See also

Accidental combination; Allegorical interpretation; Analogue; Development; Elementary fire; Hellenic humanism; Hidden virtues; Little world.

# Cowl

*cowl*

Attested: *cowl* (GIO §15). The cowl, from the Latin *cucullus*, a hood, is the hooded habit of a monk, and with the tonsure the sign of his order. Pater uses the word in his description of the one of the famous pictures that the critics left to Giorgione, the Concert in the Pitti Palace, "in which a monk, with cowl and tonsure, touches the keys of a harpsichord", while a clerk holds a viol and a third, "with cap and plume, seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord). The three figures are a monk, a clerk and a young man of fashion, and the cowl and the plume seem to set them at the two ends of the world of the picture, the cloister and the court. Music joins them. The monk at the keyboard is no figure of devotion: he is a musician in a private room, and the picture belongs to Giorgione's genre (GIO §12; see Genre; Devotion).

## See also

Clerk; Devotion; Genre; Harpsichord.

# Daughters of Herodias

*Pater's name for the women of Leonardo's drawings, fantastic, and not of the Christian family · The Renaissance*

*Daughters of Herodias*; *Daughter of Herodias*

[448] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), second proem.

## At a Glance

**The word.** The daughter of Herodias, who danced before Herod and asked for the head of John the Baptist; in the plural, Pater's name for a family of faces.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Daughters of Herodias, with their fantastic head-dresses knotted and folded so strangely to leave the dainty oval of the face disengaged, they are not of the Christian family, or of Raphael's" (LEO §23).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §23 says that "The Gospels leave her unnamed. Salome is the name supplied by Josephus, and Pater generalizes the biblical figure into a family resemblance among Leonardo's faces."

**A place to read.** LEO §23, with LEO §25.

## Meaning

The Gospels tell the story twice (Mark 6:17–29; Matthew 14:3–11). Herodias had left her husband for his brother Herod Antipas, and John the Baptist rebuked the marriage. At Herod's birthday feast her daughter danced, and Herod swore to give her whatever she asked; at her mother's prompting she asked for the head of John on a dish. The Jewish historian Josephus, writing in the first century, names the daughter Salome.[449] Medieval and Renaissance painters showed her with the head, and in the nineteenth century she became a figure of fatal beauty.

## Use in the book

The name stands in the twenty-third paragraph of the Leonardo essay, after Pater has set two drawings side by side, a red-chalk head "of doubtful sex" and the same face, it seems, in childhood (LEO §23; see Doubtful sex; Bulla). From these he proposes a method: "We might take the thread of suggestion which these two drawings offer, when thus set side by side, and, following it through the drawings at Florence, Venice, and Milan, construct a sort of series, illustrating better than anything else Leonardo's type of womanly beauty" (LEO §23; see Type). The name follows at once, without a verb to introduce it: "Daughters of Herodias".

Pater does not say why he chose it, but two reasons can be read in the sentence that contains it. The first is the look of the faces, the "fantastic head-dresses knotted and folded so strangely to leave the dainty oval of the face disengaged": an elaborate, worldly dress about a face set apart. The second is their lineage: "they are not of the Christian family, or of Raphael's". Raphael's Madonnas are the Christian family; Leonardo's women belong to another house. The plural turns one woman into a family, and the mother's name, rather than the daughter's, makes the family hers. Herodias is the one who wanted the prophet's death; the daughters inherit her nature without her deed. On this reading the name gives the

[449] Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* XVIII.136.

series what the next sentences describe: a beauty with something dangerous and unexplained in it, faces that are "the clairvoyants" of nature's subtler forces (LEO §23; see Clairvoyance; Chain of secret influences).

The name has a literal ground two paragraphs later. Among the pictures through which Leonardo's genius is seen are those in which "the lost originals have been re-echoed and varied upon again and again by Luini and others", "as in the subjects of the Daughter of Herodias and the Head of John the Baptist" (LEO §25). Bernardino Luini (about 1480–1532), the Milanese painter who worked in Leonardo's manner, painted Salome with the Baptist's head several times. The family Pater names was a subject of Leonardo's school, and its members, on this reading, have walked out of that subject into the drawings.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Herodias" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §23** The series of Leonardo's women are Daughters of Herodias, not of the Christian family, or of Raphael's.

**LEO §25** The Daughter of Herodias and the Head of John the Baptist were re-echoed again and again by Luini and others.

## Later readings

Pater's phrase came early in a long line. Heine had already set Herodias in the wild hunt, carrying the Baptist's head and kissing it.[450] After Pater, the French painter Gustave Moreau showed his Salome dancing before Herod at the Salon of 1876, Flaubert published "Hérodias" in his *Trois contes* (1877), Huysmans made Moreau's pictures the subject of a chapter of *À rebours* (1884), and Wilde wrote his *Salomé* in French in 1891.[451] In all of them the daughter of Herodias is what Pater's family of faces suggests: beauty joined to death.

## See also

Bulla; Chain of secret influences; Clairvoyance; Doubtful sex; Fascination of corruption; Type.

# Death in its distinction

*Death seen not as horror but as dignity, the Florentine tradition that Michelangelo carried to its height · The Renaissance death in its distinction*; *death in its high distinction*

[450] Heinrich Heine, *Atta Troll* (1843; book edition 1847), Caput XIX.

[451] Gustave Moreau, *Salomé dansant devant Hérode*, Salon of 1876; Gustave Flaubert, "Hérodias", in *Trois contes* (1877); Joris-Karl Huysmans, *À rebours* (1884), chapter 5; Oscar Wilde, *Salomé* (written 1891, published 1893).

## At a Glance

**The word.** Distinction is the quality of being set apart, and so noble or eminent; death in its distinction is death seen as a dignity rather than a degradation.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Florentine masters "came thus to see death in its distinction" (MIC §19).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note on the cardinal's epitaph at MIC §19 renders *insignis formâ fui et mirabili modestiâ* "I was distinguished in appearance and of remarkable modesty".

**A place to read.** MIC §§15, 19.

## Meaning

"Distinction" is from the Latin *distinguere*, to set apart, and in English it came to mean both difference and eminence: a man of distinction is one set above others. Death, the common lot, seems the opposite of distinction: it levels all ranks, as the Danse Macabre showed (see Danse Macabre). Pater's phrase gives it the other sense, a dignity that sets the dead apart from the living and from their own past selves.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs twice, first in the fifteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, at the end of the account of his likeness to Dante. Michelangelo introduces "Love and Death, who dispute concerning him" (MIC §15; see Amor). "For, like Dante and all the nobler souls of Italy, he is much occupied with thoughts of the grave, and his true mistress is death,—death at first as the worst of all sorrows and disgraces, with a clod of the field for its brain; afterwards, death in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs, the angry stains of life and action escaping fast" (MIC §15; see Detachment). The sentence tells a change of feeling. At first death is disgrace, the body become earth, "a clod of the field for its brain"; afterwards it is "high distinction", the release from need and from "the angry stains of life and action".

The nineteenth paragraph gives the phrase its history. All the great Florentines, it has been said, were preoccupied with death (MIC §19; see Outre-tombe), and Pater finds the seriousness of the great Florentines "partly due" to "this inherited sentiment, this practical decision that to be preoccupied with the thought of death was in itself dignifying, and a note of high quality" (MIC §19). The sentiment was "reinforced in them by the actual sorrows of their times": Simonetta borne to the grave with uncovered face, the young Cardinal of Portugal in his tomb at San Miniato, whose epitaph "dares to say" that he was "distinguished in appearance and of remarkable modesty" (MIC §19; see Sepulchral portrait). Such a preoccupation might have become "merely morbid or grotesque", as it did in the north (MIC §19; see Danse Macabre). From that result the Florentine

masters were saved by their culture, "and still more by their tender pity for the thing itself" (MIC §19; see Pity).

The paragraph then reaches the phrase. "They must often have leaned over the lifeless body, when all was at length quiet and smoothed out" (MIC §19), and they saw that after death "only the abstract lines remain, in a great indifference" (MIC §19; see Abstract line). "They came thus to see death in its distinction." The distinction is the face's new dignity, the slighter dispositions gone and the lines "more simple and dignified". It is learned by looking, with pity, at the dead.

The two passages can be read as one movement, told once of a man and once of a tradition. Michelangelo's feeling about death passes from disgrace to distinction; the Florentines, by culture and pity, had made the same passage before him. He is "the inheritor" of that tradition and gives it "the final expression" in the sacristy of San Lorenzo (MIC §19; see Outre-tombe). The next sentence of the paragraph adds the limit: following death "perhaps one stage further", the Florentines "paused just in time, and abstained, with a sentiment of profound pity" (MIC §19; see New body). Death in its distinction is the last thing they let themselves see.

It is tempting to see in the phrase Pater's answer to the morbid. The northern art of death dwelt on corruption; the Florentine art dwelt on the moment before it, when the dead face is most noble. The Conclusion, written in the same years, speaks of the "awful brevity" of experience (CON §5) and of the form that "grows perfect in hand or face" for a moment only (CON §4). The face that death distinguishes is the last of those forms.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which death is seen in its distinction, in the order of the book.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo's true mistress is death, first as disgrace, afterwards in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs.

**MIC §19** The Florentine masters, saved from the morbid by culture and pity, must often have leaned over the lifeless body, and came to see death in its distinction.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §19 renders the cardinal's epitaph, *insignis formâ fui et mirabili modestiâ*, "I was distinguished in appearance and of remarkable modesty", and says that "Pater uses the epitaph of the Portuguese cardinal at San Miniato al Monte to illustrate how a monument could remember physical beauty alongside a virtue".

## See also

Abstract line; Amor; Danse Macabre; Detachment; Disembodied spirit; New body; Outre-tombe; Pity; Sepulchral portrait.

## Debonair

*debonair*

Attested: *debonair* (FRE §31; WIN §26). Debonair is gracious, courteous, light-hearted, from the Old French *de bon aire*, "of good lineage", of a good nest, as a falcon of good breed. Pater uses it twice, at the two ends of his book. In the first essay Aucassin, whom Pater makes the image of the Provençal love-god, is "slim, tall, debonair, dansellon, as the singers call him" (FRE §31; see Dansellon), *dansellon* being, in the note's English, a "young nobleman". In the Winckelmann essay it is Apollo, whose Dorian worship is "rational, chastened, debonair, with his unbroken daylight" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities). In the first case it is a courtly adjective for a young lover, set beside the singers' own word for him; in the second Pater gives it to the god of reason and measure, and it softens the list in which it stands. Rational and chastened describe a discipline; debonair adds grace and good humour. The pairing of the two uses can be read as one of the book's quiet connections: the love-god of Provence and the Apollo of the Dorians share a word, and the medieval Renaissance of the first essay and the Greek light of the last are made to touch.

## See also

Chthonian divinities; Dansellon; Pensive pleasure.

## Decayed gods

*Heine's pagan gods who took service in the new religion, recalled by Leonardo's Saint John and Bacchus · The Renaissance*

*decayed gods*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Gods fallen from their power, living on in reduced circumstances, as a family may be "decayed".

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Bacchus "set Théophile Gautier thinking of Heine's notion of decayed gods, who, to maintain themselves, after the fall of paganism, took employment in the new religion" (LEO §25).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §25 says that the Louvre now assigns the Bacchus to Leonardo's workshop, and that the picture was once a Saint John in the Wilderness.

**A place to read.** LEO §25.

## Meaning

"Decayed" in Pater's phrase has the sense it has in "a decayed gentleman": come down in the world, reduced to living by what work can be found. Heine's essay *The Gods in Exile* told how the Olympian gods, after the triumph of Christianity, lived on in disguise among the Christians and took up humble trades to earn their bread, and Bacchus became the Superior of a Franciscan monastery in the Tyrol.[452] The Pico essay quotes his account: Apollo became a shepherd in Lower Austria, others hired themselves out as wood-cutters in Germany, "forced to drink beer instead of nectar" (PIC §2; see Ambrosia).

## Use in the book

Pater reaches the phrase at the end of an argument about one picture (LEO §25). The so-called Saint John the Baptist of the Louvre is "one of the few naked figures Leonardo painted—whose delicate brown flesh and woman's hair no one would go out into the wilderness to seek, and whose treacherous smile would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture or circumstance" (LEO §25). The clause about the wilderness can be read as turning the words of the Gospel, in which Jesus asks the crowds what they went out into the wilderness to see: a reed swaying in the wind? a man dressed in fine clothes? a prophet (Matthew 11:7–9). On this reading no one would go out to see this Saint John, because he has the softness of the finely dressed man, not the prophet's.

The paragraph then follows the figure through its copies: "the long, reedlike cross in the hand, which suggests Saint John the Baptist, becomes faint in a copy at the Ambrosian Library, and disappears altogether in another version, in the Palazzo Rosso at Genoa. Returning from the latter to the original, we are no longer surprised by Saint John's strange likeness to the Bacchus which hangs near it, and which set Théophile Gautier thinking of Heine's notion of decayed gods, who, to maintain themselves, after the fall of paganism, took employment in the new religion" (LEO §25). Take away the attribute, and the saint is a pagan youth.

The phrase can be read as carrying Heine's tale a step further. Heine's gods hide among the Christians; in Leonardo the god hides in the Christian pictures themselves, wearing the saints' attributes as a disguise, so that the god who "took employment in the new religion" becomes the model for its saints. The edition's note records the Bacchus's "earlier identity as Saint John in the Wilderness"; it was painted over as a Bacchus late in the seventeenth century,[453] so that the exchange Pater imagines in one direction had happened to the picture in the other.

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[452] Heinrich Heine, *Die Götter im Exil* (1853).

[453] Louvre, INV 780, *Saint Jean-Baptiste au désert, dit Bacchus*, described as a Saint John at Fontainebleau in 1683 and as a Bacchus at Meudon in 1693.

The passage leads to Pater's account of Leonardo's method, the "symbolical inventions" in which the subject is only "the starting-point of a train of sentiment" (LEO §25; see Symbolical invention), and to the paradox that "he is the most profane of painters" (LEO §25; see Conventional associations; Sacred and profane). On one reading the decayed god is the essay's image for that profanity, and the Pico essay's for the Renaissance. Pico sought to reconcile the old religion and the new by learning (see Artistic reconciliation); in Leonardo's painting the old gods have already slipped into the new religion, in the "practical truce and reconciliation" that the Pico essay finds in the art of the time (PIC §5).

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §25** Leonardo's Saint John resembles the Bacchus near it, which set Gautier thinking of Heine's decayed gods who took employment in the new religion.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater returned to the idea in his imaginary portraits. In "Denys l'Auxerrois" (1886) a Dionysus seems to return to a medieval French town, and in "Apollo in Picardy" (1893) Apollo appears as a strange young hired shepherd at the grange of a medieval abbey, where its prior has been sent.[454]

## In this edition

The note at LEO §25 reads: "The Louvre now assigns the painting known as Bacchus to the workshop of Leonardo. Its earlier identity as Saint John in the Wilderness helps explain Pater's interest in how an alteration of attributes can shift a sacred subject toward a pagan one."

## See also

Ambrosia; Artistic reconciliation; Conventional associations; Sacred and profane; Symbolical invention; Unfathomable smile.

# Devotion

*devotion*

Attested: *devotion* (FRE §36; BOT §7; MIC §16; GIO §12; WIN §21). Devotion, from the Latin *devovere*, to vow, is religious worship and the feeling that goes with it, and then any ardent attachment. Pater's most pointed use defines Giorgione's pictures by what they are not for: he is "the inventor of genre, of those easily movable pictures which serve neither for

[454] Walter Pater, "Denys l'Auxerrois", *Macmillan's Magazine*, October 1886, collected in *Imaginary Portraits* (1887); "Apollo in Picardy", *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, November 1893, collected in *Miscellaneous Studies* (1895).

uses of devotion, nor of allegorical or historic teaching" (GIO §12; see Genre). Painting before him served the altar, the allegory and the chronicle; his little pictures serve private pleasure. The other uses mark the word's range. The clerks of the tale of Amis and Amile are commanded to "guard duly, with great devotion, the bodies of the two companions" (FRE §36); Botticelli's child Christ has "that sweet look of devotion which men have never been able altogether to love" (BOT §7; see Abject); the society of Michelangelo's old age was "theatrical even in its devotion" (MIC §16; see Theatricality); and Winckelmann's sudden death seemed a reward from the gods "for his devotion to them" (WIN §21). The last use carries the word from the Church to the pagan gods, and the Giorgione essay's can be read as the step between: a painting released from devotion to become an object of private devotion of another kind.

## See also

Abject; Altar-piece; Cowl; Genre; Theatricality.

# Devout materialism

*The medieval faith that sanctified what hand and eye present, Dante's way against Michelangelo's · The Renaissance*
*devout materialism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Materialism is the attachment to matter, or the belief that matter is all; devout materialism is a piety that honours matter as the vehicle of the sacred.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For Dante, the amiable and devout materialism of the middle age sanctifies all that is presented by hand and eye" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §14.

## Meaning

"Materialism" was by Pater's time a word of the scientists and the polemicists: the doctrine that nothing exists but matter and its motions. Pater sets the word beside "devout", which ought to be its opposite, and makes a paradox. The middle age was not materialist in the philosophers' sense; but its religion, with its relics, its sacraments, its belief in the resurrection of the flesh, made matter holy. Devout materialism is that piety toward things.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the first clause of a sentence in the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: "For Dante, the amiable and devout materialism of the middle age sanctifies all that is presented by hand and eye" (MIC §14). Michelangelo, the sentence goes on, presses forward from the outward beauty "to apprehend the unseen beauty" (MIC §14; see Forma universale; Unseen beauty).

The verb carries the meaning. The devout materialism "sanctifies" what hand and eye present: it does not lead beyond the seen thing but makes it sacred where it is. That is the faith of the paragraph's earlier sentence, in which Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body, by which Beatrice even in heaven "loses for him no tinge of flesh-colour" (MIC §14; see Resurrection of the body; Bodily form), is set against the Platonic haste to escape the body. "Amiable" makes it lovable: the epithet is warm, and it shows where Pater's sympathy goes even as he describes the Platonist he admires.

The phrase names a quality of Dante's poetry above all: his story is "a piece of figured work" (MIC §14; see Figured style), while Michelangelo's poems, by contrast, have almost no incidents. The materialism that sanctifies gives a poet things to write about; the Platonism that presses forward leaves him with the elements.

The phrase can be read as sitting uneasily with "the medievalism of Michelangelo" (MIC §18; see Medievalism). In his art Michelangelo is medieval, receiving his conceptions from the tradition; in his thought he has left the middle age's devout materialism for the Platonists' ascent.

It is tempting, too, to hear Pater's own position stated in another's terms. The Preface asks for beauty in "the most concrete terms possible" (PRE §1; see Concrete terms); the Conclusion asks that we hold to impressions and sensations. Pater's aestheticism is a materialism of the senses, and in calling Dante's faith amiable and devout he seems to recognise a kinship: a mind that honours what hand and eye present.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §14** For Dante the amiable and devout materialism of the middle age sanctifies all that is presented by hand and eye.

## See also

Bodily form; Concrete terms; Figured style; Forma universale; Medievalism; Resurrection of the body; Unseen beauty.

# Dionysiac

*Dionysiac*

Attested: *Dionysiac* (PIC §15). Belonging to Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, ecstasy and the theatre, whose followers, satyrs and maenads, went in wild procession. In the Doni Madonna Michelangelo brings in "the sleepy-looking fauns of a Dionysiac revel" behind the Holy Family (PIC §15; see Faun; Artistic reconciliation). The revel can be read as spent: the fauns are sleepy, and the god's procession has come to rest in a Christian picture. The essay has another name taken from the god's. Pico's commentary on Beniveni borrows imagery from "Dionysius the Areopagite" (PIC §11; see Cabala), whom the edition's note at PIC §11 identifies as the writer "now commonly called Pseudo-Dionysius". The Christian mystic bears a name derived from the pagan god's, and the two can be read as standing at the two ends of the reconciliation the essay describes. Pater later wrote of the god himself in "A Study of Dionysus" (1876).[455]

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Cabala; Faun.

## Dioscuri

*Dioscuri*

Attested: *Dioscuri* (FRE §10). The Greek *Dioskouroi*, "sons of Zeus": Castor and Polydeuces, the Latin Pollux, twin brothers of Helen. In Homer they lie under the earth yet live, on alternate days, by the gift of Zeus; Pindar tells how Polydeuces, immortal, chose to share his immortality with his mortal brother.[456] They were set among the stars as the Twins. Pater makes them the origin of the double, whose "curious interest" in the story of Amis and Amile "begins among the stars with the Dioscuri" (FRE §10; see Doppelgänger). The note at FRE §10 calls them "the mythological twins associated with the constellation Gemini". Twins who share one life between them can be read as an apt type for two friends of whom one gives his children for the other.

## See also

Classical motive; Doppelgänger; Inward similitude.

## Disembodied spirit

*The soul after death, whose conditions the figures of the Medici chapel try to imagine · The Renaissance*

*disembodied spirit*

[455] Walter Pater, "A Study of Dionysus", *Fortnightly Review* (December 1876); reprinted in *Greek Studies* (London, 1895).

[456] Homer, *Odyssey* 11.298–304; Pindar, *Nemean* 10.55–90.

## At a Glance

**The word.** A spirit without a body: the soul after its separation from the flesh.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Medici figures express all the vague fancies that arise "whenever the thoughts try to fix themselves with sincerity on the conditions and surroundings of the disembodied spirit" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §20 says that "Night and Day accompany Giuliano, Duke of Nemours. Dawn and Dusk accompany Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino".

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

## Meaning

"Disembodied" is a word of the eighteenth century, from "disembody", itself formed from "embody": a disembodied spirit is a soul without its body, the state of the dead in Christian and Platonic thought between death and any resurrection. The phrase belongs to theology and to the literature of ghosts alike, and it carries the question of what such a being could perceive or feel.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, in its account of the sacristy of San Lorenzo. "The tombs in the sacristy of San Lorenzo are memorials, not of any of the nobler and greater Medici, but of Giuliano, and Lorenzo the younger, noticeable chiefly for their somewhat early death. It is mere human nature therefore which has prompted the sentiment here" (MIC §20; see Sepulchral portrait). The figures on the tombs, the paragraph goes on, are more than their names: "The titles assigned traditionally to the four symbolical figures, Night and Day, The Twilight and The Dawn, are far too definite for them; for these figures come much nearer to the mind and spirit of their author, and are a more direct expression of his thoughts, than any merely symbolical conceptions could possibly have been. They concentrate and express, less by way of definite conceptions than by the touches, the promptings of a piece of music, all those vague fancies, misgivings, presentiments, which shift and mix and are defined and fade again, whenever the thoughts try to fix themselves with sincerity on the conditions and surroundings of the disembodied spirit" (MIC §20; see Symbolical).

The comparison with music is the key. The figures do not state a doctrine, as an allegory would; they suggest, "by the touches, the promptings of a piece of music", a range of feelings that cannot be fixed. The feelings are themselves unfixed: they "shift and mix and are defined and fade again". "With sincerity" is the condition, and it can be read as setting the definite formulas of epitaph and sermon against sincere thoughts, which

are vague, because no one knows the conditions of the disembodied spirit (see Consciousness of ignorance).

The paragraph draws the consequence for the visitor, who would come to the sacristy "for seriousness, for solemnity, for dignity of impression, perhaps, but not for consolation" (MIC §20; see Wistful speculation). The chapel can be read as a monument to uncertainty. The Giorgione essay holds that all art aspires towards "the condition of music" (GIO §5; see Condition of music); the Medici figures can be read as an instance, sculpture that has become music by giving up definite statement.

The phrase is the counterpart of "disembodied beauty" in the Pico essay, where a change passes over Pico as if the chill of a disembodied beauty were upon him (PIC §11; see Disembodied beauty). Both name a state beyond the body that the book looks toward and does not enter. Pico's disembodied beauty is the end of the Platonic ascent; Michelangelo's disembodied spirit is the soul after death. In both, the absence of a body makes the thing vague, cold or wistful.

The phrase may be taken as the centre of the essay's last movement. Michelangelo, "the disciple not so much of Dante as of the Platonists" (MIC §20; see Discipleship), cannot believe with Dante's firmness in the soul's survival; he can only imagine, with sincerity, what its conditions might be. The Medici chapel is the work in which that imagining takes form, and the vagueness of the thoughts it expresses is the measure of its honesty.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §20** The Medici figures express the vague fancies that arise whenever the thoughts try to fix themselves with sincerity on the conditions and surroundings of the disembodied spirit.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §20 says: "The four reclining figures flank the two captains in Michelangelo's New Sacristy at San Lorenzo. Night and Day accompany Giuliano, Duke of Nemours. Dawn and Dusk accompany Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino."

## See also

Condition of music; Consciousness of ignorance; Discipleship; Disembodied beauty; Sepulchral portrait; Symbolical; Symbolism; Wistful speculation.

# Dispensation

*dispensation*

Attested: *dispensation* (FRE §32). In theology, an ordered stage in God's dealings with humankind, as the dispensation of the Law under Moses and of the Gospel under Christ; the Latin *dispensatio* is management. The antinomian spirit "influences the thoughts of those obscure prophetical writers, like Joachim of Flora, strange dreamers in a world of flowery rhetoric of that third and final dispensation of a 'spirit of freedom,' in which law shall have passed away" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism; Spirit of freedom). Joachim of Fiore, the Calabrian abbot (about 1135–1202), divided history into three ages, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The note at FRE §32 explains that the third age "follows ages associated with the Father and the Son" (see Spirit of freedom).

## See also

Antinomianism; Franciscan order; Spirit of freedom.

## Dissemblingly

*dissemblingly*

Attested: *dissemblingly* (PIC §13). In disguise, under a false appearance; to dissemble, from the Latin *dissimulare*, is to hide what one is. Pater gives the argument of the Heptaplus' preface: "If Moses seems in his writings simple and even popular, rather than either a philosopher or a theologian, that is because it was an institution with the ancient philosophers, either not to speak of divine things at all, or to speak of them dissemblingly: hence their doctrines were called mysteries" (PIC §13; see Mystery). An "institution" is an established custom. Pythagoras, the sixth-century BC philosopher of Samos and Croton, taught by them, became a "master of silence" who "wrote almost nothing" (PIC §13; see Master of silence). The argument is the ground of the allegorical method: if the wise spoke dissemblingly, their plain words hide a diviner sense, and the interpreter must find it (see In recessu divinius aliquid; Allegorical interpretation).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; In recessu divinius aliquid; Master of silence; Mystery.

## Divine ideal

*The faith above creeds, formed over the ages by nobler souls, on which Michelangelo fell back · The Renaissance*

*divine ideal*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An ideal of the divine: a conception of God or of the holy, formed in the mind rather than defined by a church.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For himself, he had long since fallen back on that divine ideal, which above the wear and tear of creeds has been forming itself for ages as the possession of nobler souls" (MIC §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §16.

## Meaning

The phrase can be read against the religious language of Pater's century, when many who could no longer accept the creeds of the churches spoke of a faith above them, as Tennyson did in *In Memoriam*: "There lives more faith in honest doubt, / Believe me, than in half the creeds".[457] Such a faith is an ideal of goodness and holiness that the creeds expressed imperfectly and that survived their decay. "Ideal" makes the divine something conceived and aspired to; "forming itself" makes it grow over time, as a tradition grows.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sixteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, after the account of the "frozen orthodoxy" of the Church in his old age (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy). The reconciliations of an earlier day were no longer possible. "For himself, he had long since fallen back on that divine ideal, which above the wear and tear of creeds has been forming itself for ages as the possession of nobler souls. And now he began to feel the soothing influence which since that time the Roman Church has often exerted over spirits too independent to be its subjects, yet brought within the neighbourhood of its action; consoled and tranquillised, as a traveller might be, resting for one evening in a strange city, by its stately aspect and the sentiment of its many fortunes, just because with those fortunes he has nothing to do" (MIC §16).

"Fallen back on" makes the divine ideal a reserve, a position held when the front line is lost. "Long since" makes it no discovery of old age. "Above the wear and tear of creeds" sets it out of reach of the disputes that wear creeds down; "forming itself for ages" gives it a history longer than any church's; "the possession of nobler souls" makes it the property not of an institution but of a kind of person. The sentence describes a faith that is personal, inherited and unformulated.

The second sentence turns to the Church, and the turn is subtle. The man who holds the divine ideal is not hostile to the Church; he feels its "soothing influence", as spirits "too independent to be its subjects" often have. The image of the traveller makes the relation exact. He rests in a

[457] Alfred Tennyson, *In Memoriam A. H. H.* (1850), XCVI.

strange city for one evening and is consoled by its grandeur "just because with those fortunes he has nothing to do": the consolation depends on his detachment. Michelangelo, in the frozen orthodoxy, finds the Church beautiful as a stranger does.

The phrase joins, on this reading, the essay's account of Michelangelo's faith. In his poems he presses on from the outward beauty to the universal form (MIC §14; see Forma universale); in his last works his hope rests on "the consciousness of ignorance" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance). The divine ideal is the faith that these presuppose, an aspiration without a creed. Michelangelo, coming after Pico and Savonarola, holds to what lies above their quarrels (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy).

It shows, too, Pater's sympathy with a stance common among his contemporaries. The Winckelmann essay marks the limit of such sympathy: the Schöne Seele, the "beautiful soul", "that ideal of gentle pietism, in Wilhelm Meister", was to Goethe "a phase of life that a man might feel all round, and leave behind him" (WIN §51; see Pietism; Schöne Seele). Michelangelo's divine ideal is not left behind; it is what remains when the creeds have hardened.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §16** Michelangelo had long since fallen back on that divine ideal which above the wear and tear of creeds has been forming itself for ages.

## See also

Consciousness of ignorance; Forma universale; Frozen orthodoxy; Pietism; Schöne Seele.

# Elementary fire

*elementary fire*; *elementary*

Attested: *elementary fire* (PIC §13); *elementary* in five further paragraphs (MIC §5; LEO §16; GIO §13; CON §2; C73 §2). The fire of the four elements, earth, water, air and fire, of which the world below the moon was made. In Pico's system of correspondences it is the lowest of three fires. "There is the element of fire in the material world; the sun is the fire of heaven; and in the super-celestial world there is the fire of the seraphic intelligence. 'But behold how they differ! The elementary fire burns, the heavenly fire vivifies, the super-celestial fire loves.'" (PIC §13; see Correspondence; Seraphic intelligence; Super-celestial; Vivify). Pater translates the Heptaplus: *Sed vide quid differant. Elementaris urit, caelestis*

*vivificat, supercaelestis amat*.[458] The three verbs climb from destruction through life to love. The Conclusion uses the adjective in the modern sense: the processes of the body are those "which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces", and "the action of these forces extends beyond us" (CON §2). The elements are no longer the lowest rung of a ladder to the seraphim, but the forces of physics.

## See also

Correspondence; Seraphic intelligence; Super-celestial; Vivify.

## Ends of the world

*the ends of the world*

Attested: *the ends of the world* (LEO §31; WIN §36). Pater uses the phrase in two senses. In the Leonardo essay it is Saint Paul's, in quotation marks: La Gioconda's "is the head upon which all 'the ends of the world are come,' and the eyelids are a little weary" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). The words are those of the King James Version at 1 Corinthians 10:11, where Paul says that the stories of Israel were written for the warning of those "upon whom the ends of the world are come": the Greek speaks of the ends of the ages, and Paul means that the history of the world has reached its last time in his own generation. The note at LEO §31 says that "Pater borrows the wording of 1 Corinthians 10:11 in the King James Bible" and that "The biblical phrase brings the accumulated history of the past into the present". Pater moves the phrase from the Church to a woman's face: in her all the ages have arrived, and her weariness can be read as theirs (see Perpetual life). In the Winckelmann essay the same words are geographical. Browning's characters "seem to come to him by strange accidents from the ends of the world" (WIN §36): from the remotest places. One may see in the two uses the far end of time and the far end of space, and both bring what is remote into one present figure.

## See also

Animalism; Beauty wrought from within; Perpetual life.

## Enfants du chœur

*enfants du chœur*

Attested: *enfants du chœur* (BOT §7). French, "children of the choir": choirboys or altar boys, as the edition's note gives it, which adds that "The comparison shifts from the painting to children serving in a village church". The phrase ends the long paragraph on the Madonnas. Her true children

[458] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), second proem.

are the poor among whom the honour came to her, "with that look of wistful inquiry on their irregular faces which you see in startled animals—gipsy children, such as those who, in Apennine villages, still hold out their long brown arms to beg of you, but on Sundays become enfants du chœur, with their thick black hair nicely combed, and fair white linen on their sunburnt throats" (BOT §7; see Intolerable honour). The sentence moves from the picture to a traveller's memory, and from weekday to Sunday: the same children beg and serve at the altar. Pater's image joins the low and the sacred without irony, the white linen on sunburnt throats. The Madonna's "rude home" (BOT §7) can be read as such a village, and her look as theirs (see Wistfulness of exiles).

## See also

Abject; Intolerable honour; Madonna; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Entombment

*The laying of Christ in the tomb, the subject of Michelangelo's predilection · The Renaissance*
*entombment*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The laying of a body in a tomb; in Christian art, the burial of Christ after the Crucifixion.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Pietà, pity, the pity of the Virgin Mother over the dead body of Christ, expanded into the pity of all mothers over all dead sons, the entombment, with its cruel 'hard stones':—this is the subject of his predilection" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

## Meaning

The Gospels tell that Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus from the cross, wrapped it in linen and laid it in a tomb cut in the rock, and a large stone was rolled across its entrance.[459] Christian art made of the story a series of scenes: the Deposition, the taking down from the cross; the Lamentation or Pietà, the mother holding or mourning the dead son; the Entombment, the carrying of the body to the tomb and its laying there. The scenes blend into one another, and the word "entombment" can cover the whole sequence of grief.

[459] Matthew 27:57–61; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:38–42.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the second sentence of the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, after the sentence that makes Michelangelo the achievement, "first of all, of pity" (MIC §20; see Pity): "Pietà, pity, the pity of the Virgin Mother over the dead body of Christ, expanded into the pity of all mothers over all dead sons, the entombment, with its cruel 'hard stones':—this is the subject of his predilection" (MIC §20; see Pietà; Pity).

The sentence moves outward. It begins with the Italian name, Pietà, translates it, and then widens it: the pity of one mother for one son becomes "the pity of all mothers over all dead sons". The entombment follows as the next stage of the same grief, and the "hard stones" of the tomb make it physical. "Predilection" is a strong word: of all the subjects Christian art offered, this is the one Michelangelo returned to. The next sentence makes the return a matter of record: he has left the subject "in many forms" (MIC §20). The marble Pietàs that span his life are the clearest witnesses (see Pietà).

Pater gives one example: "There is a drawing of his at Oxford, in which the dead body has sunk to the earth between the mother's feet, with the arms extended over her knees" (MIC §20). And he gives the feeling of all of them, an "almost heathen sorrow" (MIC §20; see Heathen sorrow). The entombment, in Michelangelo, can be read as no prelude to the Resurrection but an end.

An unfinished painting of the Entombment, attributed to Michelangelo and showing the body of Christ carried upright toward the tomb, was bought by the National Gallery in London in 1868, three years before Pater's essay first appeared.[460] Pater does not name it; his list of forms, "sketches, half-finished designs, finished and unfinished groups of sculpture" (MIC §20), names no painting.

Seen this way, the word joins the two traditions the essay finds in Michelangelo. The tradition of the Creation centres in the Sistine Chapel; the tradition of death, in the sacristy of San Lorenzo (MIC §19; see Creation of life; Outre-tombe). The entombment is the subject in which the second is most concentrated; yet the essay's remark that "at least one-half of his work was designed for the adornment of tombs" (MIC §4) comes in a sentence that makes "this creation of life" the motive of all his work, the tombs included.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**MIC §20** Pietà, the pity of all mothers over all dead sons, and the entombment, with its hard stones, is the subject of Michelangelo's predilection.

[460] National Gallery, London, NG790, *The Entombment*, about 1500–01, bought 1868.

## See also

Creation of life; Death in its distinction; Heathen sorrow; Outre-tombe; Pietà; Pity.

### Eternal justice

*eternal justice*

Attested: *eternal justice* (FRE §5). The justice of God, by which souls are judged for eternity. Pater puts the phrase in quotation marks. Abelard is not named in the *Divine Comedy*, which "may appear a singular omission to the reader of Dante", since Dante "can hardly have failed to hear" of him in Paris: "We can only suppose that he had indeed considered the story and the man, and abstained from passing judgment as to his place in the scheme of 'eternal justice'" (FRE §5). The phrase names the order of Dante's poem, where every soul has its place in hell, purgatory or heaven; the inscription over the gate of hell declares that Justice moved its maker.[461] The silence Pater imagines is a suspended verdict, like the "uncertain twilight" in which Abelard's relation to the beliefs of his age has remained (FRE §6; see Absolution).

## See also

Absolution; Medieval Renaissance.

### Etherealise

*To make stone airy: the struggle of all noble sculpture against heaviness and death · The Renaissance*

*etherealise*, *etherealising*, *etherealisation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To make ethereal: light, airy, unearthly, as if made of the upper air.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Each great system of sculpture resists the tendency to hardness, "etherealising, spiritualising, relieving, its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §3 says that "Pater connects the shallow carving of a funerary image with a felt waning of the body it represents".

**A place to read.** ROB §6, with ROB §§3, 10.

[461] Dante, *Inferno* 3.4.

## Meaning

The Greek *aithēr* was the bright upper air, above the misty *aēr* that men breathe, the region of the stars and the gods; Aristotle made it a fifth simple body beside earth, water, air and fire, the substance of the heavens, and accepted the old derivation of its name from its "always running" (*aei thein*).[462] "Ethereal" in English meant heavenly, then delicate and light as air, and "etherealise", a nineteenth-century verb, is to make a thing so: to lift it toward the substance of the heavens. The word carries a religious charge that "lighten" lacks.

## Use in the book

The verb stands in the second sentence of the sixth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, which states the struggle of all sculpture: "Against this tendency to the hard presentment of mere form trying vainly to compete with the reality of nature itself, all noble sculpture constantly struggles; each great system of sculpture resisting, it in its own way, etherealising, spiritualising, relieving, its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6; see Hard realism; Spiritualise; Relieve).

The sentence sets three verbs against three nouns, and they can be read as answering each other in reverse: relieving the stiffness, spiritualising the heaviness, etherealising the death. Whatever the pairing, "death" is the last and strongest word. A statue is a body without life, and its tendency, left to itself, is to look like a corpse; the sculptor's task is to give it the lightness of something that breathes. The language can be read as religious: Paul's risen body is a "spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44), and the essay transfers to the work of art what the Christian hope promises the body after death.

The noun appears earlier, in the third paragraph, where the transfer is literal. The Tuscan sculptors gave their monumental effigies something of the depression of surface of low relief, "getting into them by this means a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death" (ROB §3; see Depression of surface). Here the etherealisation is death's work on the body: the shallow carving makes the dead body seem already passing into air. In the tenth paragraph the verb names Michelangelo's method: incompleteness is "his way of etherealising pure form" (ROB §10; see Equivalent of colour). The adjective comes once, in Pico's catalogue of man as a little world, a world in which one may discern "a body mingled of earthy elements, and ethereal breath" (PIC §9; see Ethereal breath).

The Michelangelo essay gives the idea its most moving form without the word. Michelangelo's thought of the new body after death is "a passing light, a mere intangible, external effect", "a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind" (MIC §20; see Breath). That is the etherealised body, and the essay's long sentence makes it as frail as it is light.

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[462] Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.3, 270b20–24.

The verb can be read as Pater's measure of noble sculpture. A statue succeeds when it seems lighter than its stone, and the means do not matter, generality, incompleteness or low relief; what matters is that the work escape the condition of the corpse. The language of the resurrection is used of art because art, on this account, performs a small resurrection in every successful figure.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "etherealise" or its family occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §9** Man is a little world: a body mingled of earthy elements, and ethereal breath, and more.

**ROB §3** Low relief gives the effigies a pathetic suggestion of the wasting and etherealisation of death.

**ROB §6** Each great system of sculpture resists by etherealising, spiritualising, relieving its stiffness, its heaviness, and death.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness is Michelangelo's way of etherealising pure form.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §3 says that "'Pathetic' means moving or expressive of pathos. Pater connects the shallow carving of a funerary image with a felt waning of the body it represents."

## See also

Breath; Depression of surface; Equivalent of colour; Ethereal breath; Hard realism; Monumental effigy; Relieve; Spiritualise.

# Faun

*fauns*; *faun*

Attested: *fauns* (PIC §15); *faun* (MIC §14). A rustic god of the woods, half man and half goat; the Roman Faunus, identified with the Greek Pan, and his companions. Both fauns in the book are Michelangelo's. In the Doni Madonna he brings into the Virgin's presence "the unveiled human form, the sleepy-looking fauns of a Dionysiac revel" (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation; Dionysiac); the edition's note says that the background nudes "have prompted different readings" and that "Pater's description of them as fauns is an interpretation". The other is a faun's head carved in his boyhood, to which he "gave the look of age ... by chipping a tooth from its jaw with a single stroke of the hammer" (MIC §14). The story is told by Michelangelo's biographers Ascanio Condivi (1553) and Giorgio Vasari (1568): Lorenzo de' Medici, seeing the boy's copy of an old faun, teased

him that old men never have all their teeth, and the boy at once struck one out.[463] The faun is the pagan creature that Michelangelo knew from youth, and Pater's reading finds it again behind the Holy Family.

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Dionysiac.

## Franciscan order

*Franciscan order*

Attested: *Franciscan order* (FRE §32). The order of friars founded by Francis of Assisi in the early thirteenth century, vowed to poverty and preaching. Pater finds a touch of the antinomian spirit in it: "A touch of it makes the Franciscan order, with its poetry, its mysticism, its 'illumination,' from the point of view of religious authority, justly suspect" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism; Illumination). "Justly" grants authority its point, and "from the point of view" keeps the judgment theirs. The poetry can be read as Francis's own, as in the Canticle of the Sun; the French writers of the essay's first paragraph say that he took his "notions of chivalry and romantic love" from a French source (FRE §1; see Chivalry). The suspicion was real: the Spiritual Franciscans, who took up Joachim's prophecy of an age of the Spirit, were condemned by Pope John XXII in 1317–18.[464]

## See also

Antinomianism; Chivalry; Dispensation; Illumination.

## Gaude Maria

*the Gaude Maria*

Attested: *the Gaude Maria* (BOT §7). Latin, "Rejoice, Mary", as the edition's note gives it: the opening words of several Marian chants, the best known the antiphon *Gaude, Maria virgo, cunctas haereses sola interemisti in universo mundo*, "Rejoice, Virgin Mary, you alone have destroyed all heresies in the whole world". It closes Pater's list of "the words of her exaltation, the Ave, and the Magnificat, and the Gaude Maria" (BOT §7; see Magnificat), and with it the list passes from Scripture to the Church's own praise. The antiphon can be read as an irony Pater leaves unstated. The Virgin it praises as the destroyer of heresies is, in his reading, one of those "neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies" (BOT §7; see Middle world),

[463] Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* (Rome, 1553); Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (Florence, 1568), Life of Michelangelo.

[464] John XXII, the bulls *Quorumdam exigit* (7 October 1317), *Sancta Romana* (30 December 1317) and *Gloriosam Ecclesiam* (23 January 1318).

painted by a man to whom Pater gives a picture once suspected of heresy (BOT §5; see Incarnation). The "high cold words have no meaning for her" (BOT §7), and the Gaude Maria, the most triumphant of them, has the least.

## See also

Ave; Incarnation; Magnificat; Middle world.

## Gloria

*Glorias*

Attested: *Glorias* (BOT §5). Latin, "glory": the angels' song of the Nativity,[465] whose liturgical Latin, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, opens the hymn of the Mass, and, as the edition's note says, "a painted vision of heavenly glory or of the blessed". Pater uses the second sense for the familiar compositions to which Botticelli's censured painting may have belonged: "Glorias, as they were called, like that in which Giotto painted the portrait of Dante" (BOT §5; see Religious reverie). The example is the fresco of Paradise in the chapel of the Bargello at Florence (in Vasari's day the Palace of the Podestà), where Dante stands among the blessed; Vasari reported that the portrait there was Giotto's.[466] The Gloria is Pater's innocent hypothesis for the Palmieri picture: a heaven of the saved, of a common type, which the suspicious read as the "wayward dream" of Palmieri. The note adds that "Pater allows that a familiar devotional composition could have acquired the more unusual meaning associated with Palmieri later".

## See also

Beatified existence; Incarnation; Religious reverie.

## Godship

*the tranquil godship in him*

Attested: *godship* (WIN §34). Godship is the state or nature of a god, as lordship is the state of a lord. Pater uses the word once, at the climax of his account of sculpture's self-limitation. Sculpture "unveils man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics" (WIN §34; see Unveiled human form). "That white light, purged from the angry, bloodlike stains of action and passion, reveals, not what is accidental in man, but the tranquil godship in him, as opposed to the restless accidents of life" (WIN §34). The godship is in man, not above him: what the statue shows is the divine element in

[465] Luke 2:14.

[466] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, "Life of Giotto" (1550; 2nd edn 1568).

human nature, visible once the accidents are purged away. The sentence joins two of the essay's recurring images, the "white light" of sculpture, which returns in the adorante's "white light taking no colour from any one-sided experience" (WIN §40; see Adorante), and the purging of the accidental (WIN §37; see Accident). It can be read as Pater's version of an old claim, that the gods of Greece were men made perfect; the essay states it from the other side, as in the gymnasium where the worshipper made himself like his gods and his beauty "passed back into them" (WIN §31; see Fleet and fair). The men of Pericles' age, in Hegel's words, stand before us "as an immortal presentment of the gods" (WIN §41; see Plastic character).

## See also

Accident; Accidental combination; Adorante; Fleet and fair; Plastic art; Plastic character; Unveiled human form.

## Griffin

*griffin*

Attested: *griffin* (LEO §22). The griffin, from the Greek *gryps*, is the fabulous beast with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. Herodotus heard that griffins guarded gold in the far north,[467] and Christian writers made it an emblem of Christ's two natures; in Dante a griffin draws the chariot of the Church.[468] Pater's griffin is Leonardo's own. Among the drawings he describes is "a small Madonna and Child, peeping sideways in half-reassured terror, as a mighty griffin with batlike wings, one of Leonardo's finest inventions, descends suddenly from the air to snatch up a great wild beast wandering near them" (LEO §22; see Abstract grace; Invention). The batlike wings can be read as Leonardo's change to the old beast, and the bat recurs in the essay at the Medusa's cheek (LEO §12; see Fascination of corruption). The drawing sets the terror of a monster beside the Madonna and Child, and Pater praises it as an invention, not a monster. It may be taken as a small instance of the "interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror" that never left Leonardo (LEO §11; see Interfusion of beauty and terror).

## See also

Abstract grace; Fascination of corruption; Interfusion of beauty and terror; Invention.

[467] Herodotus III.116, IV.13, IV.27.

[468] Dante, *Purgatorio* XXIX.106–114.

## Hallow

*hallowing*

Attested: *hallowing* (MIC §20). To make holy, from the Old English *hālgian*, the verb of "hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9). Pater uses the participle once, in the long sentence that closes the Michelangelo essay's account of the Medici tombs. Michelangelo is the poet of a whole range of sentiment about death: "dumb inquiry over the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life, the change, the revolt from that change, then the correcting, hallowing, consoling rush of pity" (MIC §20; see Formlessness; Pity). The three participles can be read as describing what pity does after the revolt against death: it corrects the revolt, it makes the dead thing holy, it consoles the one who grieves. "Hallowing" is the middle term and the strongest. It names the change that the Florentine masters made when they leaned over the dead and saw "death in its distinction" (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction): pity turns the corpse from an object of horror into something sacred. The same paragraph has said, a few sentences before, that no one would come to the sacristy "for consolation" (MIC §20); the rush of pity is a consolation of another kind, felt rather than offered.

### See also

Death in its distinction; Formlessness; Pity.

## Heathen sorrow

*Grief without the hope of resurrection: the feeling of Michelangelo's Pietàs · The Renaissance*

*heathen sorrow*; *heathen*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The sorrow of a heathen: grief for the dead that has no faith in their rising.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo has left the subject of pity in many forms, "but always as a hopeless, rayless, almost heathen sorrow—no divine sorrow, but mere pity and awe at the stiff limbs and colourless lips" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

### Meaning

"Heathen", the Old English *hǽthen*, perhaps first the dweller on the heath (the origin is disputed), came to mean one who is neither Christian nor Jew. In Christian language heathen sorrow is grief without hope. Saint

Paul writes to the Thessalonians that they should not grieve for the dead as those grieve who have no hope, because Christ's rising promises theirs;[469] Christian mourning is meant to be sorrow lit by that hope. Heathen sorrow is the grief that the Christian should not feel.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the third sentence of the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, after the naming of his favourite subject, the Pietà and the entombment (see Entombment). "He has left it in many forms, sketches, half-finished designs, finished and unfinished groups of sculpture; but always as a hopeless, rayless, almost heathen sorrow—no divine sorrow, but mere pity and awe at the stiff limbs and colourless lips" (MIC §20).

The adjectives deepen one another. "Hopeless" names Paul's heathen, who grieve without hope; "rayless" takes away the light of the halo and of the dawn of Easter; "almost heathen" adds the hedge, and the hedge matters: Michelangelo's sorrow is not pagan, but it comes close. The dash introduces the definition by contrast: "no divine sorrow", no grief touched by the divine, "but mere pity and awe". The objects of that pity are physical: "the stiff limbs and colourless lips". The grief looks at the body, not beyond it.

The judgement is the essay's account of Michelangelo's faith in another form. Dante's belief in immortality is firm, "almost as much so as that of a child"; Michelangelo's hope rests on "the consciousness of ignorance" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance). An artist who does not surely know what lies beyond death cannot carve the Pietà as a promise. He carves it as a grief, and the grief is the more universal for that: "the pity of all mothers over all dead sons" (MIC §20). The heathen sorrow is the sorrow of human nature, and it is "mere human nature", the same paragraph says, that has prompted the sentiment of the Medici tombs.

The phrase fits the book's larger pattern, in which the Renaissance recovers the pagan world. The Pico essay traces the survival of the pagan gods into the Christian age (PIC §§1–2), and Michelangelo brings "the pagan religion" into the presence of the Madonna in the Doni tondo (PIC §15). Heathen sorrow is the pagan feeling surviving at the centre of Christian art, in its most sacred subject. The Winckelmann essay goes further, finding sorrow in the pagan religion itself: "This pagan sentiment measures the sadness with which the human mind is filled, whenever its thoughts wander far from what is here, and now" (WIN §25), and scarcely a "wild or melancholy note" of the medieval church was not anticipated by Greek polytheism (WIN §26; see Ineffable melancholy). The Pietàs, on Pater's reading, keep that older sadness at the centre of Christian art.

The phrase may be counted among the book's strongest claims, and one of its most personal. To call the Pietà almost heathen is to deny

[469] 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14.

Michelangelo's religious art its usual reading, as an image of redemptive suffering. Pater does not argue the point; he describes the bodies, "the stiff limbs and colourless lips", and lets the description carry it.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo has left the subject of pity always as a hopeless, rayless, almost heathen sorrow.

## See also

Consciousness of ignorance; Entombment; Ineffable melancholy; Pietà; Pity.

### Houseless spirit

*houseless and complaining spirit*

Attested: *the houseless and complaining spirit* (MIC §14). A spirit without a house, the house being the body, as in the old image of the body as the soul's dwelling. Pater uses the phrase for the impression Michelangelo's poems give. Michelangelo is always pressing forward from the outward beauty to the universal form (MIC §14; see Forma universale), and "this gives the impression in him of something flitting and unfixed, of the houseless and complaining spirit, almost clairvoyant through the frail and yielding flesh" (MIC §14; see Clairvoyant). The spirit is houseless because the Platonic lover has not settled in the body; it complains, as an exile complains; it flits, unable to rest. The body, "frail and yielding", is still there, but the spirit sees through it rather than living in it. The image looks back to the Platonic "haste to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether" earlier in the paragraph (MIC §14; see Bodily form), and forward to the "disembodied spirit" of the Medici tombs (MIC §20; see Disembodied spirit), where the house is gone.

## See also

Bodily form; Clairvoyant; Disembodied spirit; Forma universale.

### Iconoclastic zealot

*iconoclastic zealots*

Attested: *iconoclastic zealots* (PIC §2). Breakers of images, driven by fanatical zeal; "iconoclast" is from the Greek for image-breaker, and the word was first used of the eighth- and ninth-century Byzantines who destroyed holy images; "zealot" is from the Greek *zēlōtēs*, one full of zeal, the name taken by the Jewish party zealous for the Law. In Heine's story the

gods had to flee again "when those iconoclastic zealots, the black brood of monks, broke down all the temples, and pursued the gods with fire and curses" (PIC §2; see Ambrosia; Monkish miracle). Heine sets their flight in the third century, "at the time of the definite triumph of Christianity". Heine's phrase can be read as turning the language of later church history against the monks: the destroyers of pagan statues are called by the name of Christian image-breakers. In their earlier flight, from the Titans, the gods had hidden "under all sorts of disguises"; now, "Just in the same way", they fled again, and lived on as wood-cutters and shepherds (PIC §2).

## See also

Ambrosia; Monkish miracle.

## Idolatry

*idolatry*

Attested: *idolatry* (FRE §32). The worship of images or false gods, from the Greek *eidōlon*, image, and *latreia*, service. When the search after pleasure and beauty carried people "beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal" (FRE §32; see Worship of the body; Antinomianism), "their love became sometimes a strange idolatry, a strange rival religion" (FRE §32). The beloved can be read as becoming an idol, and love a cult with its own god, "the Provençal love-god" of the previous paragraph (FRE §31; see Love-god). The next sentence names the god behind the idol, "that ancient Venus" hidden in the Venusberg (FRE §32; see Venusberg). "Strange" twice over marks the worship as foreign to its age, and the word "rival" puts it on a level with the church's own.

## See also

Antinomianism; Kingdom of sentiment; Love-god; Venusberg; Worship of the body.

## Illumination

*illumination*; *illuminator*; *unilluminated*

Attested: *illumination* (FRE §32); *illuminator* (BOT §3); *unilluminated* (LEO §17). Lighting up, and in religion the inward light of mystical insight. Pater puts the word in quotation marks among the marks of the Franciscan order, "its poetry, its mysticism, its 'illumination,'" that made it, to religious authority, "justly suspect" (FRE §32; see Franciscan order). The marks can be read as holding it at a distance, as a claim to private light that authority could not check. The other two uses are literal. In a few rare copies of the Florentine Dante of 1481 the spaces "left at the

beginning of every canto for the hand of the illuminator" were filled, as far as the nineteenth canto of the Inferno, with engraved plates (BOT §3; see Illuminator), and Leonardo "explained the obscure light of the unilluminated part of the moon" (LEO §17).

## See also

Franciscan order; Illuminator; Miniature-painting.

# Imaginative system

*Greek religion as a work of the imagination with a rightful power · The Renaissance*

*imaginative system*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An imaginative system is a body of myths, images and beliefs held together by the imagination; here, the religion and mythology of Greece.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's industry in the Birth of Venus measures "the legitimate influence over the human mind of the imaginative system of which this is perhaps the central subject" (BOT §8).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus, although it shows the goddess being carried to shore after her birth".

**A place to read.** BOT §8.

## Meaning

The Greek *systēma* is a whole made of parts that stand together. A system of philosophy has premises and conclusions; an imaginative system has gods, stories, places and rites, and its coherence is that of a world imagined rather than of an argument. The phrase treats Greek religion as the comparative scholars of Pater's century had begun to treat it, as a product of the human mind to be understood (see Natural product), and adds a judgement the scholars did not always make: that its products were achievements.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes at the end of the sentence on realisation, where Botticelli's labour on the picture is "the exact measure of the legitimate influence over the human mind of the imaginative system of which this is perhaps the central subject" (BOT §8; see Realisation). Three judgements are packed into it.

The first is "legitimate". The Pico essay had recalled an earlier age that saw the Greek gods as "malignant spirits", centres of "the religion of

darkness" (PIC §1; see Religion of darkness); here their influence on the mind is rightful. The word does not say the system is true. It says that its claim on the imagination is just, as a great poem's claim is just, and that Botticelli's labour proves it.

The second is "central subject", with its hedge, "perhaps". The birth of Aphrodite from the sea is old in Greek poetry: Hesiod tells how the goddess grew from the foam about the severed parts of Uranus and came ashore at Cyprus.[470] To call it, "perhaps", the central subject of the whole system is Pater's own judgement; it can be read as saying that the birth of beauty and of love most concerned the minds that turned back to Greece.

The third is the measure itself. The influence of a system is measured not by what its believers asserted but by what it could make a later painter do: the care spent on the shell, the wind, the falling roses and the sorrowful face (see Goddess of pleasure). Botticelli laboured over Venus as if the myth had a right to his labour, and that is the influence the phrase names.

The phrase can be read as Pater's answer to the Pico essay's question of how Christianity and the old religion could be reconciled (see Reconciliation). Pico's way was argument, and the scholar's is history (see Scientific reconciliation). Botticelli's way, and Pater's, is to treat the old religion as an imaginative system whose claim is the claim of beauty, and to admit it on those terms. She is beautiful because its influence is legitimate; her sadness is read under Goddess of pleasure.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §8** Botticelli's industry of realisation measures the legitimate influence of the imaginative system of which Venus is perhaps the central subject.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §8 says that the painting "is now known as The Birth of Venus, although it shows the goddess being carried to shore after her birth".

## See also

First impression; Goddess of pleasure; Natural product; Realisation; Reconciliation; Religion of darkness; Scientific reconciliation.

# Immortality

*immortality*; *immortal*

[470] Hesiod, *Theogony* 188–200.

Attested: *immortality* (MIC §20; LEO §13; BEL §§14, 20); *immortal* (LEO §13; WIN §41). Deathlessness, from the Latin *immortalitas* (adjective *immortalis*); of the soul, its survival after death; of a work or a name, its lasting fame. The book uses both senses. The religious one is in the Michelangelo essay, where Dante's and Michelangelo's attitudes are opposed: "Dante's belief in immortality is formal, precise, and firm, almost as much so as that of a child, who thinks the dead will hear if you cry loud enough" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance). The other places use the word of art and fame. Leonardo tried to discover the secret, "not of an elixir to make man's natural life immortal, but of giving immortality to the subtlest and most delicate effects of painting" (LEO §13; see Alchemy). Pater gives Ronsard the judgment that to be natural "is not enough for one who in poetry desires to produce work worthy of immortality" (BEL §14; see Orthography), words that are the title of a chapter of Du Bellay's treatise, and a sonnet of Du Bellay's *L'Olive* ends with the beloved's name taking the immortality of the gods (BEL §20). In the passage of Hegel that the Winckelmann essay quotes, the great men of the age of Pericles "stand before us as an immortal presentment of the gods" (WIN §41; see Presentment). The uses can be read as one contrast: the immortality of the soul, which in the Michelangelo essay is doubtful, and the immortality of art, which in the rest of the book is the one the Renaissance sought.

## See also

Alchemy; Consciousness of ignorance; Orthography; Presentment.

# Incarnation

*The neutral angels made flesh, and a dream made into a picture · The Renaissance*

*incarnation*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Incarnation is embodiment in flesh; in Christian doctrine, the taking of human flesh by the Son of God.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Palmieri's poem "represented the human race as an incarnation of those angels who, in the revolt of Lucifer, were neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §5 says that "The National Gallery attributes this painting, The Assumption of the Virgin, to Francesco Botticini".

**A place to read.** BOT §5.

## Meaning

*Incarnatio* is from *caro*, *carnis*, flesh. The Christian creeds use it for the mystery stated in the Gospel of John, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us".[471] Pater's sentence takes the doctrine's word and reverses its direction: not God made man, but man as angels made flesh. The neutral angels are older than Dante in legend, but Pater's wording echoes his: Dante places them in the vestibule of hell with the souls who lived without infamy or praise, a wretched choir of angels who were neither rebels nor faithful to God, but were for themselves.[472]

## Use in the book

The word occurs once, in the story on which the Botticelli essay turns. "One picture of his, with the portrait of the donor, Matteo Palmieri, below, had the credit or discredit of attracting some shadow of ecclesiastical censure. This Matteo Palmieri, (two dim figures move under that name in contemporary history,) was the reputed author of a poem, still unedited, La Città Divina," which made men the incarnation quoted above (BOT §5; see Alexandrian philosophy).

Pater surrounds the story with qualifications. The picture had "the credit or discredit" of censure; there are "two dim figures" of the name; the poem is "reputed" and "still unedited". Then the decisive sentence: the picture "was suspected of embodying in a picture the wayward dream of Palmieri, and the chapel where it hung was closed" (BOT §5; see Religious reverie). "Embodying" repeats "incarnation" in English. The story has two incarnations in it: the angels made flesh in the poem, and the poem made paint in the picture. The Church's suspicion fell on the second, and Pater's interest falls on both, since a painter who gives a body to a dream does to it what the poem does to the neutral angels.

The edition's note changes the story's ground: the picture is now given to Francesco Botticini, and "the changed attribution is consequential for his argument". The poem, now known as the *Città di vita*, was printed only in the twentieth century.[473] Pater had already loosened his argument from its facts: "True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment" of the figures (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles). The incarnation of the neutral angels is offered as a myth that fits an impression, and the impression can be read as surviving the change of attribution.

The word can be read as the essay's figure for Botticelli's people. They are spirits in bodies that do not quite fit them, "with a sense of displacement or loss about them" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles). The Christian Incarnation is the joining of the divine to flesh in perfect union; Palmieri's is

[471] John 1:14 (King James Version).

[472] Dante, *Inferno* III.34–39.

[473] Matteo Palmieri, *Libro del poema chiamato Città di vita*, ed. Margaret Rooke, 2 vols (Northampton, Mass., 1927–28).

a joining that remains a displacement. Botticelli paints the second kind, and the Madonnas, holding the child of the first, wear the look of the second (BOT §7; see Intolerable honour).

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**BOT §5** Palmieri's poem represented the human race as an incarnation of the angels who took neither side in Lucifer's revolt.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §5 says that "The National Gallery attributes this painting, The Assumption of the Virgin, to Francesco Botticini. Matteo Palmieri and his wife appear as kneeling donors. Pater uses the story of this painting to interpret Botticelli's other figures, so the changed attribution is consequential for his argument." The next note says that the title means "The Divine City".

## See also

Alexandrian philosophy; Intolerable honour; Middle world; Religious reverie; Terza rima; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Indwelling soul

*The soul that lives in a work as in a body: the fascination of fifteenth-century Italian art · The Renaissance*

*indwelling soul*; *indwelling*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A soul that dwells within, as the soul in the body or the spirit in a temple.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The sculptors share with Botticelli and Brunelleschi "that profound expressiveness, that intimate impress of an indwelling soul, which is the peculiar fascination of the art of Italy in that century" (ROB §1).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §1 says that Pater places the restraint of Brunelleschi's churches beside Botticelli's painting and the sculpture of Luca's generation "to suggest a quality shared across the arts".

**A place to read.** ROB §1.

## Meaning

To indwell is to dwell within, and "indwelling" was a word of English divinity before it was a word of criticism. The New Testament speaks of the Spirit of God that lives in believers, and Paul reminds the Corinthians that

they are a temple of God, in whom God's Spirit has its dwelling (1 Corinthians 3:16). Pater's phrase widens it: the soul in a work of art is like the soul in a body and like the god in a temple.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second sentence of the della Robbia essay: "Their sculpture shares with the paintings of Botticelli and the churches of Brunelleschi that profound expressiveness, that intimate impress of an indwelling soul, which is the peculiar fascination of the art of Italy in that century" (ROB §1; see Expressiveness).

The sentence joins three arts in one quality, and the third is architecture. A painting or a statue may show a face; a church shows none, and yet Brunelleschi's churches share "that intimate impress of an indwelling soul". The phrase must then mean something more than the expression of a figure. The work as a whole is inhabited: its proportions, its restraint, its light carry a presence, as a body carries a soul. The religious sense of the word is apt to the churches, which are built as dwellings for God, and Pater's sentence lets the sacred meaning and the aesthetic one sit side by side. The essay returns to the "impress" in its last paragraph (ROB §13; see Intimité). The indwelling soul of the first paragraph becomes, by the end, the soul of the maker.

The other use is in the Giorgione essay, where the white road of an etching by Legros "is informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression", which the etcher "maintains as the very essence of the thing" (GIO §6; see Indwelling solemnity). "Informed" belongs to the same family of ideas as "indwelling": in the old language of Aristotle and the schoolmen the soul is the form of the body,[474] and to inform is to give the inner shape. The solemnity indwells the etching as the soul the body.

The phrase can be read as the book's most religious description of art, offered without religious belief. Pater does not say that God dwells in Brunelleschi's churches; he says that a soul does, and that this is their "fascination". The Christian language survives as the language of the aesthetic, and the reader is left to decide whose soul it is, the maker's, the age's, or something more.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "indwelling" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §1** The art of Italy in the fifteenth century bears the intimate impress of an indwelling soul.

**GIO §6** Legros's etching is informed by an indwelling solemnity of expression.

[474] Aristotle, *On the Soul* II.1, 412a19–21.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §1 says that "Filippo Brunelleschi designed Florentine churches including San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito. Pater places their restraint alongside Botticelli's painting and the sculpture of Luca's generation to suggest a quality shared across the arts."

## See also

Essence; Expression; Expressiveness; Indwelling solemnity; Intimité; Mood; Spiritualise.

# Intolerable honour

*The Annunciation read as a burden too great to bear · The Renaissance the intolerable honour*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An intolerable honour is an honour too great to be borne: here, the call to be the mother of God.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's Madonna belongs with the poor, "among whom, in her rude home, the intolerable honour came to her" (BOT §7).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §7 gives the Ave, the Magnificat and the Gaude Maria in English, "Hail Mary, My soul magnifies the Lord, and Rejoice, Mary", and says that "Pater gathers the expressions of exaltation around the figure whose bearing he reads as reluctant".

**A place to read.** BOT §7.

## Meaning

"Intolerable" is from *tolerare*, to bear, and English uses it for what should not be borne: pain, insolence, delay. Joined to "honour" it makes an oxymoron, a gift that cannot be endured. The honour is the Annunciation. In Luke's Gospel the angel greets Mary as highly favoured, and she is greatly troubled at the greeting before she consents.[475] Pater's adjective takes the trouble and leaves the consent unspoken.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands near the end of the long paragraph on the Madonnas, after a scene of failed exaltation. The Child guides his mother's hand to write the words of her own praise (see Magnificat), "But the pen almost drops from her hand, and the high cold words have no meaning for her, and her true children are those others, among whom, in her rude home, the intolerable honour came to her" (BOT §7; see Enfants du chœur).

[475] Luke 1:28–38.

The honour can be read as intolerable because it separates. The words of exaltation are "high" and "cold", the vocabulary of the altar, and they "have no meaning for her". Her own child is already elsewhere: "Her trouble is in the very caress of the mysterious child, whose gaze is always far from her, and who has already that sweet look of devotion which men have never been able altogether to love, and which still makes the born saint an object almost of suspicion to his earthly brethren" (BOT §7). The son she holds belongs to heaven; the children who are "her true children" are the poor of her "rude home". The honour came to her among them, and it takes her from them.

The face can be read as a refusal not yet made. She is one of the neutrals, and "her choice is on her face" (BOT §7; see Middle world). The Gospel's Mary says yes; Botticelli's, in Pater's reading, has not said it in her face. The sentence on the born saint, whom "men have never been able altogether to love", turns the reading outward: the mother's reluctance is ours, the ordinary human distrust of the person given wholly to God.

The phrase can be read as the boldest reading of a sacred subject in the book. Pater does not mock the Annunciation; he takes it seriously enough to find it terrible. It is the honour of being chosen by a power greater than any human life can contain, and Botticelli's Madonna, like his Venus, bears a power "over the lives of men" with sadness (BOT §8; see Goddess of pleasure). The two figures, sacred and profane, wear one look, and the look is the burden of the honour.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**BOT §7** The high cold words of exaltation have no meaning for the Madonna, whose true children are those among whom the intolerable honour came to her.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §7 gives the three Latin titles in English, "Hail Mary, My soul magnifies the Lord, and Rejoice, Mary", and says that "In the Uffizi's tondo Mary writes the opening of the Magnificat in the book supported by the angels. Pater gathers the expressions of exaltation around the figure whose bearing he reads as reluctant."

## See also

Abject; Enfants du chœur; Goddess of pleasure; Madonna; Magnificat; Middle world.

# Intoxication

*a kind of intoxication*; *this intoxication*

Attested: *intoxication* (WIN §43, twice). To intoxicate is first to poison, from the Latin *toxicum*, poison, and the Greek *toxikon*, the poison smeared on arrows; then to make drunk; then to excite beyond self-control. Pater uses the word for the state of the artist under Christian asceticism. Because the ascetic discredits "the slightest touch of sense", the artistic life has seemed hard to pursue without a conscious disavowal of the spiritual world, and this "imparts to genuine artistic interests a kind of intoxication" (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism). The intoxication can be read as the pleasure of the forbidden: the senses, enjoyed against a creed, become heady. "From this intoxication Winckelmann is free" (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism): he deals with the sensuous side of art "in the pagan manner" (WIN §43), and his serenity is the absence of "any sense of want, or corruption, or shame" (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit). The word can be read beside the essay's other wine. Greek religion, too, had its "fiery, stupefying wine", which in a happier climate "becomes ... clear and exhilarating" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities). The essay's ideal is exhilaration without intoxication, a pleasure of the senses that needs no transgression to give it force.

## See also

Christian asceticism; Chthonian divinities; Heiterkeit.

## Kingdom of light

*kingdom of light*

Attested: *kingdom of light* (PIC §1). The realm of Christ and his saints, in the language of the New Testament, which speaks of "the allotted share of the saints in the light" and of rescue "from the jurisdiction of darkness" into the kingdom of the Son.[476] An "earlier and simpler generation" had seen the gods of Greece as centres of the religion of darkness, "struggling, not always in vain, against the kingdom of light" (PIC §1; see Religion of darkness). The early church took the gods for demons, as the Latin Psalter says that "all the gods of the nations are demons".[477] The first sentences of the essay set out the opposition the rest will soften: "Little by little", the charm of pagan story reasserted itself, and the old gods became the subject of art (PIC §1; see Pagan story). Light and darkness give way to the strange flower of a mixed mythology (PIC §15; see Anemone).

## See also

Anemone; Pagan story; Religion of darkness.

[476] Colossians 1:12–13.

[477] Psalm 95:5 in the Vulgate (96:5 in the Hebrew numbering): "omnes dii gentium daemonia".

## Le grand tout

*le grand tout*; *the great whole*

Attested: *le grand tout*, *the great whole* (BEL §22). "The great whole", the note at BEL §22 renders it, adding that "The phrase extends the thought of ruin from any particular object to the whole into which things disappear." Pater uses it of Du Bellay among the ruins of Rome: "With a strange touch of far-off mysticism, he thinks that the great whole—le grand tout—into which all other things pass and lose themselves, ought itself sometimes to perish and pass away. Nothing less can relieve his weariness" (BEL §22; see Mysticism; Relieve). The thought is Du Bellay's own, from the ninth sonnet of the *Antiquités de Rome* (1558), which complains to the cruel stars and the gods that they made the world to last so long and the palaces of Rome of so much frailer stuff, and ends: "I say no more the common sentence, that every thing beneath the moon is corruptible and subject to die; but I say (and let it not displease whoever strives to teach the contrary) that this great All must one day perish."[478] The common sentence is the old doctrine that only the world below the moon decays, while the heavens are incorruptible (see Quintessence of life); Du Bellay denies the exception. Pater's "ought" and "sometimes" render the sonnet's *doit quelquefois*, and his "far-off mysticism" names the strangeness of a consolation drawn from the end of everything. The great whole, in the image, is where things "lose themselves", and its own perishing would be the last loss, and the only rest.

### See also

La grandeur du rien; Mysticism; Quintessence of life; Relieve; Sentiment of ruins.

## Likeness to God

*a likeness to God*; *likeness*

Attested: *a likeness to God* (PIC §9), Pater's English for *Dei similitudo*; *likeness* in four further paragraphs (LEO §§14, 24, 25; GIO §17). The resemblance to God in which, according to Genesis, man was made; in the Vulgate God says, "Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram", making man after his own image and likeness.[479] Some of the Fathers distinguished the two words: the image was kept after the Fall, the

[478] Joachim du Bellay, *Le Premier Livre des Antiquitez de Rome* (Paris, 1558), sonnet 9, ll. 9–14: *Je ne di plus la sentence commune, / Que toute chose au-dessous de la Lune / Est corrompable, et sujette à mourir: / Mais bien je di (et n'en vueille desplaire / A qui s'efforce enseigner le contraire) / Que ce grand Tout doit quelquefois périr*.

[479] Genesis 1:26.

likeness lost and to be restored.[480] In the little world of man the likeness to God is the highest term, above "the intelligence of angels" (PIC §9; see Little world; Angelic mind). Elsewhere in the book a likeness is a portrait or a resemblance, and one of them turns the phrase round. Leonardo's Saint John has a "strange likeness to the Bacchus which hangs near it" (LEO §25): the saint resembles a pagan god.

## See also

Angelic mind; Little world.

# Logos

*The creative Word, holding the world like a shield · The Renaissance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Logos is the divine Word or Reason through which, in Christian teaching, God made the world: the Word of the opening of the Gospel of John.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico's world "is like a painted toy, like that map or system of the world, held, as a great target or shield, in the hands of the creative Logos, by whom the Father made all things, in one of the earlier frescoes of the Campo Santo at Pisa" (PIC §10).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §10 says that "The Greek word logos can mean word, account, or reason", that "In Christian usage the creative Word recalls the opening of John's Gospel", and that Pater points to "the disc held by the Creator in a Camposanto fresco at Pisa".

**A place to read.** PIC §10.

## Meaning

The Greek *logos* is word, speech, account and reason at once. For the philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus, about 500 BC, the logos was the rational order common to all things; for the Stoics it was the reason that pervades and governs the world; for Philo of Alexandria it was the instrument through which God made it. The Gospel of John opens with it, *en archē ēn ho logos*, "in the beginning was the Logos", and says of the Logos that "all things came about through him".[481] Pater's "by whom the Father made all things" is the language of the creeds, in which the Son is the one "through whom all things were made".[482]

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[480] Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* V.6.1, V.16.2.

[481] John 1:1, 1:3.

[482] The Nicene Creed (381), "δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο", in Latin "per quem omnia facta sunt"; in the English of the Book of Common Prayer, "By whom all things were made"; compare Hebrews 1:2.

## Use in the book

The word comes once, and it comes in a picture. Pater is describing Pico's world, "a limited place, bounded by actual crystal walls, and a material firmament", held like a shield by the creative Logos in a fresco at Pisa (PIC §10; see Firmament). A target is a small round shield. The world is small enough to be held in the hands of its maker, and the image makes the point of the sentence: Pico's universe is finite, made and held.

The theology is given its due and no more. "The creative Logos, by whom the Father made all things" is exact Christian doctrine, but Pater uses it to place a fresco, not to state a belief. What interests him is the painted thing: the cosmos as a shield with its painted rings. The next sentence sets against it "our own conception of nature, with its unlimited space" (PIC §10; see Infinite spaces). The Logos holding the world is the last image of the closed universe before the silence of infinite space that terrified Blaise Pascal. The passage can be read as Pater's measure of the distance between Pico's age and his own: the old world was a work of art, held by an artist; the new one has no edge and no one holding it.

The fresco is "one of the earlier" in the Campo Santo, and the Campo Santo returns in PIC §15, where the earth brought from Jerusalem grew the anemone (see Anemone). The burial ground of Pisa can be read as giving the essay its two images of the meeting of two worlds: the painted cosmos and the strange flower.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the word occurs.

**PIC §10** Pico's world is like a painted toy, like the system of the world held as a shield in the hands of the creative Logos in a fresco of the Campo Santo at Pisa.

## Pater's sources

The fresco is the Theological Cosmography painted by Piero di Puccio of Orvieto on the north wall of the Camposanto about 1390, earlier than the Old Testament scenes Benozzo Gozzoli painted on the same wall from 1468. A great figure holds before him the concentric circles of the universe, with the earth at the centre, the elements, the planets and the heavens; Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas appear in the lower corners. The fresco was badly damaged in 1944, during the Second World War.[483]

## In this edition

The note at PIC §10 says that "The Greek word logos can mean word, account, or reason", that "In Christian usage the creative Word recalls the

[483] Fondazione Federico Zeri, photo archive catalogue, Piero (Pietro) di Puccio, *Cosmografia teologica*, Camposanto, Pisa, north wall, 1389–1391; Jean K. Cadogan, "Benozzo Gozzoli, Filippo de' Medici and the Old Testament Murals in the Camposanto in Pisa (1468–1484)", *Predella* 39–40 (2016, published 2018), 217–229.

opening of John's Gospel", and that "Pater visualizes the bounded universe by pointing to the disc held by the Creator in a Camposanto fresco at Pisa". The next note explains that the Italian *camposanto* "means 'holy field' and denotes a cemetery".

## See also

Anemone; Firmament; Infinite spaces.

# Lordship of the soul

*The Greek recognition of man's distinction from the rest of nature, which gives divinity to the human body rather than taking it away · The Renaissance*

*the "lordship of the soul"; that lordship*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The soul's rule: its authority over the body and its distinction from the life of animals and plants.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Greek thought "the 'lordship of the soul' is recognised" (WIN §28).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §28.

## Meaning

Lordship is the state and authority of a lord. The soul's lordship is its rule over what is below it, the body and the rest of nature. The idea is old: in Plato's *Phaedo*, when soul and body are joined, nature appoints the body to be slave and subject, and the soul to govern and be its lord.[484] Pater does not cite Plato, and he puts the phrase in quotation marks without naming a source. His use differs from Plato's in one decisive respect: the lordship he describes does not despise what it rules.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the twenty-eighth paragraph, which explains why the Greek mind could make an art in which the thought is wholly present in the form. The explanation is a contrast between East and Greece. "In oriental thought there is a vague conception of life everywhere, but no true appreciation of itself by the mind, no knowledge of the distinction of man's nature: in its consciousness of itself, humanity is still confused with the fantastic, indeterminate life of the animal and vegetable world. In Greek thought, on the other hand, the 'lordship of the soul' is recognised; that lordship gives authority and divinity to human eyes and hands and feet; inanimate nature is thrown into the background" (WIN §28).

[484] Plato, *Phaedo* 79e–80a.

The sentence turns the usual meaning of the phrase. The soul's lordship might be expected to put the body down; here it raises it. Because the soul is recognised as master, the members it rules, eyes, hands and feet, share its authority and become divine. The human body is distinguished from the animal and the vegetable by the soul that rules it, and so becomes the proper subject of art, while "inanimate nature is thrown into the background" (WIN §28). The many-headed gods of the East, "at best overcharged symbols", belong to the confusion the Greek mind has left behind (WIN §27; see Finite image).

The paragraph then sets the limit. The Greek mind has not yet "learned to boast its independence of the flesh" (WIN §28; see Finite image); the lordship is not yet a secession. That is the stage at which Greek art stands, between the confusion of the East and the inwardness of the middle age, when the soul, grown proud, will treat the body as its enemy (WIN §28; see Idealise). The lordship of the soul is thus the Greek moment exactly: the soul rules the body and is visible in it.

The phrase can be read as the philosophical basis of the essay's account of sculpture. Sculpture "records the first naïve, unperplexed recognition of man by himself" (WIN §34; see Individuality), and the men of the age of Pericles have the "plastic character" of statues (WIN §41; see Plastic character). Both follow from the lordship of the soul: once the soul is recognised as the ruler of a body, the body becomes worth carving, and a life can be shaped like a statue. The essay's whole Greece, on this reading, rests on a single act of self-recognition, and the phrase in quotation marks names it.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with WIN §34, where sculpture records man's first recognition of himself, in the order of the book.

**WIN §28** In Greek thought the lordship of the soul is recognised, and gives authority and divinity to human eyes and hands and feet.

**WIN §34** Sculpture records the first naïve, unperplexed recognition of man by himself.

## See also

Finite image; Hellenic humanism; Idealise; Individuality; Plastic character.

# Magnificat

*the Magnificat*

Attested: *the Magnificat* (BOT §7). Mary's song in Luke's Gospel, named from its first word in Latin, *Magnificat anima mea Dominum*, "My soul makes the Lord great".[485] Pater's sentence describes the Uffizi tondo now called the *Madonna of the Magnificat*, in which, the edition's note says, "Mary writes the opening of the Magnificat in the book supported by the angels": "Once, indeed, he guides her hand to transcribe in a book the words of her exaltation, the Ave, and the Magnificat, and the Gaude Maria, and the young angels, glad to rouse her for a moment from her dejection, are eager to hold the inkhorn and to support the book" (BOT §7). The words fail her: "the high cold words have no meaning for her" (BOT §7; see Intolerable honour). The choice of song can be read as an irony Pater does not point out. The Magnificat praises God for looking on his handmaid in her lowliness and for lifting up the humble,[486] and Pater's Madonna, who belongs with the poor of her "rude home", finds no meaning in the hymn of the lowly exalted.

## See also

Ave; Gaude Maria; Intolerable honour; Madonna; Passionate exaltation.

## Martyrology

*martyrology*

Attested: *martyrology* (FRE §33). A calendar of the church's martyrs and saints, giving for each day the names of those commemorated, with a short notice of their deaths. Amis and Amile were kept in it as martyrs, having died in battle for Charlemagne. "It was not till the end of the seventeenth century that their names were finally excluded from the martyrology" (FRE §33), and their story ends with a monkish miracle (FRE §33; see Monkish miracle). The fact can be read as Pater's evidence for the harmony he claims for the story (see Traditional friendship). The note at FRE §33 renders the French title of their life, "The Life of the Holy Martyrs Amis and Amile".

## See also

Comradeship; Monkish miracle; Traditional friendship.

## Master of silence

*master of silence*

Attested: *master of silence* (PIC §13), in Pater's quotation marks. The phrase is said of Pythagoras, whose school bound its members to secrecy

[485] Luke 1:46–55.

[486] Luke 1:48, 52.

and, by later report, imposed on new disciples a silence of five years.[487] Pater gives the phrase in his account of the Heptaplus, whose preface explains that the ancient philosophers chose either silence about divine things or speech "dissemblingly" (PIC §13; see Dissemblingly). "Taught by them, Pythagoras became so great a 'master of silence,' and wrote almost nothing, thus hiding the words of God in his heart, and speaking wisdom only among the perfect" (PIC §13; see The perfect). The sentence clothes Pythagoras in the Psalms and in Paul: "hiding the words of God in his heart" recalls the psalmist who hid God's word in his heart,[488] and the wisdom spoken "only among the perfect" is Paul's (see The perfect). In Pico's dedication to Lorenzo the two phrases belong to the same argument but are said of the writers of Scripture;[489] Pater's sentence gathers them onto Pythagoras. The pagan sage is made a biblical one, which is Pico's method in little (see Allegorical interpretation). The silence can be read as the ground of the mystery: what Pythagoras did not write, the interpreter may supply (see Mystery).

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Dissemblingly; Mystery; The perfect.

# Middle world

*The place of those who take no side, which Dante scorns and Botticelli accepts · The Renaissance*

*that middle world*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The middle world is the region between heaven and hell, the place of those who in life took no side.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "So just what Dante scorns as unworthy alike of heaven and hell, Botticelli accepts, that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals" (BOT §6).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §6 says that Pater "turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically".

**A place to read.** BOT §6, with BOT §§5, 7.

## Meaning

Pater's phrase has no single source. In Dante the neutrals are kept in the vestibule of hell, outside both heaven and the pit, because they lived

[487] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 8.10; Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Life* 72.

[488] Psalm 119:11.

[489] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), dedication to Lorenzo de' Medici.

without infamy and without praise; Virgil tells Dante that the world lets no fame of them remain, and will not spend a word on them.[490] Older English had called the world of men itself "middle-earth", the realm between heaven above and hell beneath. Pater's "middle world" can be read as joining the two: Dante's despised region becomes the ordinary world where most men live.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the sixth paragraph, and the paragraph turns a sentence of judgement into a principle of art. Dante scorns these people; "Botticelli accepts" them (BOT §6). They take no side and "make great refusals" (BOT §6; see Great refusals), and the paragraph goes on to make their world the place where art "does its most sincere and surest work" (BOT §6; see Moral ambition). His interest is in men and women "in their mixed and uncertain condition, always attractive, clothed sometimes by passion with a character of loveliness and energy, but saddened perpetually by the shadow upon them of the great things from which they shrink" (BOT §6).

The middle world has its population in the essay. The angels who were "neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies" became, in the Palmieri story, the human race (BOT §5; see Incarnation). The Madonna is "one of those who are neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies; and her choice is on her face" (BOT §7; see Intolerable honour). Venus, Judith and Truth wear the same look (BOT §9). The phrase gathers all of Botticelli's figures into one country.

Pater's acceptance does not set Dante's verdict wholly aside. The figures are saddened by the shadow of what they refuse (BOT §6): the great things remain great, and the refusal is felt as a loss. What Pater rejects is the contempt (see Sympathy). Botticelli's "morality is all sympathy", and it conveys into his work "somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity" (BOT §6; see Complexion of humanity).

The phrase can be read with an irony Pater does not state. Dante's neutrals are forgotten: the world lets no fame of them remain. Botticelli, the painter of the middle world, suffered their fate, "little known in the last century" (BOT §1; see Secondary painter), and the essay is the act of remembrance that Dante refused them. The book's own country is a middle world as well: the Renaissance as Pater studies it is a region free of "rigidly defined opposites" (FRE §33; see Sympathy), and its critic, like its painter, takes no side in the great conflicts in order to feel with all of them.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

[490] Dante, *Inferno* III.34–51.

**BOT §6** Botticelli accepts the middle world, unworthy in Dante's eyes of heaven and hell, in which men take no side in great conflicts.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §6, on "make great refusals", reads: "An echo of the anonymous figure associated with the 'great refusal' in Inferno III. Pater turns a category that Dante judges severely into a place from which a painter can observe human uncertainty sympathetically."

## See also

Complexion of humanity; Great refusals; Incarnation; Intolerable honour; Moral ambition; Secondary painter; Sympathy.

### Mighty Mother

*Mighty Mother*

Attested: *Mighty Mother* (PIC §15), in Pater's quotation marks. The Great Mother of the gods, *Magna Mater*, the Phrygian goddess Cybele, whose worship the Romans brought from Asia Minor in 204 BC;[491] she was identified with Rhea, mother of Zeus, and pictured crowned with towers and drawn by lions. In the Doni Madonna Michelangelo brings the fauns of a Dionysiac revel into the presence of the Virgin, "while he has given to that Madonna herself much of the uncouth energy of the older and more primitive 'Mighty Mother.'" (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation). The Virgin of the Doni Tondo, twisting powerfully to take the Child, is not the gentle Madonna of the earlier painters; Pater reads in her the force of an older mother-goddess. "Older and more primitive" can be read as placing her before the Greek gods, and "uncouth", rough and unpolished, names that age's force. The reconciliation of pagan and Christian is here not in the background but in the central figure: the Mother of God has something of the Mother of the Gods.

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Faun.

### Monastic reverie

*monastic reverie*

Attested: *monastic reverie* (WIN §9). "Monastic", from the Greek *monastikos*, from *monazein*, to live alone, belongs to monks and their cloisters; reverie is a waking dream, a drift of thought without direction.

[491] Livy, *History of Rome* 29.10–14.

Pater uses the phrase in the ninth paragraph, where the discovery of Greek sculpture at Dresden frees the imagination: the life of the senses and the understanding seems suddenly near, and the freed imagination exclaims how mistaken have been "our efforts to reach it by mystic passion, and monastic reverie" (WIN §9; see Mystic). The pair names the two medieval roads to a fuller life, the passion of the mystic and the dream of the cloister, and both are judged by what they did to the body: they "deflowered the flesh", and emancipated us little (WIN §9; see Mystic). Reverie elsewhere in the book has its place in religious art: a Gloria may record the impressions of "religious reverie" (BOT §5), and in Venetian painting religious reverie may play its part between the decorative beginning and end (GIO §12; see Religious reverie; Reverie). The adjective makes the difference. Monastic reverie is reverie used as a discipline against the senses, and the essay's later image of medieval religious art, "faces fixed immovably into blank types of placid reverie" (WIN §38; see Grotesque), shows its result in paint.

## See also

Grotesque; Mystic; Mystic passion; Religious reverie; Reverie.

## Monkish miracle

*monkish miracle*

Attested: *monkish miracle* (FRE §33). A miracle of the kind told in monks' chronicles and saints' lives. The story of Amis and Amile, written down, it seems, by a monk (FRE §33; see Traditional friendship), "ends with this monkish miracle of earthly comradeship, more than faithful unto death" (FRE §33; see Comradeship). The miracle is the coffins: the friends are buried in two churches, and next morning Amile's body is found beside his comrade's (FRE §35; see Amity). "Monkish" and "earthly" sit together in the phrase, and Pater can be read as reconciling them. Elsewhere the book's monks are less kind: in Heine's story of the exiled gods it is "the black brood of monks" who broke down the temples (PIC §2; see Iconoclastic zealot).

## See also

Amity; Comradeship; Iconoclastic zealot; Martyrology; Traditional friendship.

## Mournful mysteries

*its mournful mysteries*

Attested: *mournful mysteries* (WIN §§26, 45). The mysteries, from the Greek *mystēria*, were secret rites into which the worshipper was initiated,

and the word is related to *myein*, to close the lips or eyes. Pater's "mournful mysteries" are the rites of grief in Greek religion. In the twenty-sixth paragraph they close the list of Christian-seeming things in Greek worship, "its worship of sorrow, its addolorata, its mournful mysteries" (WIN §26; see Addolorata). The forty-fifth paragraph names them: "For Greek religion has not merely its mournful mysteries of Adonis, of Hyacinthus, of Demeter, but it is conscious also of the fall of earlier divine dynasties" (WIN §45). Adonis, the youth loved by Aphrodite and killed by a boar, was mourned each year by women in the Adonia; Hyacinthus, the boy loved by Apollo and killed by the god's discus, was mourned at the festival of the Hyacinthia at Amyclae near Sparta; Demeter's grief for her daughter Persephone, carried off to the underworld, was the matter of the Eleusinian mysteries. Each is the lament of a god for a lost beloved. Pater uses them as evidence that the Greek ideal held, within its own limits, "a sort of preparation for the romantic temper" (WIN §45; see Hellenic ideal), and he returned to the third of them in "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone" (1876), on the grief of the earth-mother (see Chthonian divinities).

## See also

Addolorata; Chthonian divinities; Dispossession; Hellenic ideal.

# Mystery

*mysteries*; *mystery*; *mysterious*

Attested: *mysteries* (FRE §3; PIC §13; WIN §§26, 45); *mystery* (LEO §§2, 13, 21, 30); *mysterious* (FRE §24; PIC §16; BOT §7; MIC §8; GIO §8). The Greek *mystērion* was a secret rite, revealed only to initiates; in Christian use it came to mean a sacrament, and a truth beyond reason. The Pico essay uses the old sense: the ancient philosophers either kept silent about divine things or spoke of them "dissemblingly: hence their doctrines were called mysteries" (PIC §13; see Dissemblingly), and Pico paid "a great sum" for manuscripts "in his eagerness for mysterious learning" (PIC §16; see Cabala). The Winckelmann essay finds the same in Greece, with "its mournful mysteries" (WIN §26), the "mournful mysteries of Adonis, of Hyacinthus, of Demeter" (WIN §45). The Leonardo essay gives the word a new sense. In the phrase "a refined and graceful mystery", and its returns at the moment of *bien-être* and in La Gioconda, mystery is a quality of effect (LEO §§2, 21, 30; see Refined and graceful mystery). Mystery in Leonardo is no longer a secret doctrine but a quality of the work, felt and not explained.

## See also

Cabala; Dissemblingly; Mystic; Refined and graceful mystery; Symbolism.

*The seer with closed eyes, and the age that loved him · The Renaissance*
*mystic, mystical*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A mystic is one who seeks the divine by inward vision, beyond what reason and the senses can reach; "mystical" is said of such vision, and of the hidden sense of sacred things.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Florence "had always had an affinity for the mystic and dreamy philosophy of Plato" (PIC §6); Ficino is "the mystic Ficino" (PIC §7); and at the end of the book painting answers "to the mystic depth and intricacy of the middle age" (WIN §52).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §7 links Ficino's Plotinus to Pater's "portrait of Ficino as drawn toward an inward and contemplative form of Platonism", and the Glossary describes Neoplatonism as the tradition on which "Renaissance thinkers including Marsilio Ficino drew".

**A place to read.** PIC §§6–7.

## Meaning

The Greek *mystikos* is "belonging to the mysteries", the secret rites of Eleusis and other cults, whose initiate was a *mystēs*; the root verb *myein* means to close, the lips or the eyes. Christian Greek used "mystical" for the hidden sense of Scripture and the sacraments, and the treatise on *Mystical Theology* ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite gave the word its later meaning, a knowledge of God reached by leaving knowledge behind. "Mysticism" is a later abstract, of the eighteenth century in English.

## Use in the book

In the Pico essay the word marks a family. Florence, "as M. Renan has pointed out, had always had an affinity for the mystic and dreamy philosophy of Plato, while the colder and more practical philosophy of Aristotle had flourished in Padua, and other cities of the north" (PIC §6); the French historian Ernest Renan, in *Averroès et l'averroïsme* (1852), had set the scholastic Aristotelians of Padua against the cities of Tuscany.[492] Ficino's finished translation opens "the door of the mystical temple" (PIC §6; see Mystical temple). Then comes the derivation of the word, from shutting the lips or, as the Platonists prefer, shutting the eyes, and Pater turns it at once on a person, "the mystic Ficino", whose eyes may have come to be "thus half-closed" (PIC §7; see Shutting the eyes). Ficino resolves to translate Plotinus, in whom "the mystical element in the Platonic

[492] Ernest Renan, *Averroès et l'averroïsme* (Paris, 1852), part II, chapter 3; in the Avertissement of later editions he wrote that the great scientific movement came not from "la docte Padoue", learned Padua, but from "la poétique et légère Florence", poetic and light-footed Florence.

philosophy" reached its limit (PIC §7; see Vision and ecstasy). Beniveni is "the mystical poet" (PIC §12), and Pico "differs from other mystical writers of his time" by reading his authors at first hand (PIC §14; see Higher culture). The mystic in this essay is a Platonist, and a Florentine.

The Winckelmann essay sets the mystic against the Greek. "In this lies the main distinction between Greek art and the mystical art of the Christian middle age, which is always struggling to express thoughts beyond itself" (WIN §27). Greek thought "has not yet plunged into the depths of religious mysticism" (WIN §28), and the essay imagines Winckelmann's relief at finding the life of the senses near at hand: "How mistaken and round-about have been our efforts to reach it by mystic passion, and monastic reverie" (WIN §9). In the closing scheme of the arts the middle age has its "mystic depth and intricacy" (WIN §52; see Correspondence).

Between these two uses the book can be read as holding the mystic at a respectful distance. It is drawn to him, to Ficino with his lamp before the bust of Plato and his half-closed eyes, but it prefers what the mystic becomes in an artist. In Leonardo, in the moment of *bien-être*, "a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery" (LEO §21; see Mysticism). The mystical becomes, in the Preface, Wordsworth's "strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things" (PRE §5; see Life in natural things): a sense, not a doctrine.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "mystic" or "mystical" occurs, in the order of the book; "mysticism" is given under Mysticism.

**PRE §5** Wordsworth's incommunicable faculty is a strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things.

**PIC §6** Florence had an affinity for the mystic philosophy of Plato; the door of the mystical temple lay open to all who could construe Latin.

**PIC §7** The word mystic is derived from shutting the lips or the eyes; the mystic Ficino; Plotinus worked out the mystical element of Platonism to the limit of vision and ecstasy.

**PIC §12** Pico gave his property to the mystical poet Beniveni for works of charity.

**PIC §14** Pico differs from other mystical writers of his time by knowing his authorities at first hand.

**ROB §10** In the Venus of Melos classical sculpture seems to have advanced one step into the mystical Christian age.

**LEO §27** After all the mystic developments of the middle age, Leonardo sees the Last Supper as a leave-taking.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann's relief: how round-about have been our efforts to reach the life of the senses by mystic passion.

**WIN §27** The mystical art of the Christian middle age is always struggling to express thoughts beyond itself.

**WIN §52** Painting corresponds to the mystic depth and intricacy of the middle age.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §7 says that "Pater links this work", Ficino's Plotinus, "to his portrait of Ficino as drawn toward an inward and contemplative form of Platonism". The Glossary defines Neoplatonism as "A family of late ancient and later philosophies shaped by interpretations of Plato", on which "Renaissance thinkers including Marsilio Ficino drew". The Outline names "mystical interpretation" among the things that give Pico's desire "a historical shape".

## See also

Correspondence; Higher culture; Life in natural things; Mystery; Mystical temple; Mysticism; Shutting the eyes; Vision and ecstasy.

# Mystic passion

*mystic passion*

Attested: *mystic passion* (WIN §9). A mystic passion is a love directed to the hidden and the divine, the ardour of the contemplative who seeks union with God beyond the senses. Pater uses the phrase once, in the moment at Dresden when Greek sculpture opens to Winckelmann a life "of the senses and the understanding" that seems to have been near all the while (WIN §9; see Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst). The efforts to reach it "by mystic passion, and monastic reverie" now seem "mistaken and round-about" (WIN §9; see Mystic). The charge is not that mystic passion aims at the wrong thing but that it takes the long way round: it sought the "more liberal mode of life" by leaving the body, when the body was the way. Elsewhere the book honours what it here rejects. Florence, as Renan pointed out, had "an affinity for the mystic and dreamy philosophy of Plato" (PIC §6; see Mystic), and the Michelangelo essay traces the ideal love of the Platonists (see Ideal intensity of love). The Winckelmann essay sets that tradition aside for a moment, in the voice of the Renaissance imagination suddenly freed, and the phrase can be read as belonging to that voice rather than as Pater's last word; the essay will itself end by finding that the Greek ways, by bodily form or a single talent, can no longer serve modern life (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen).

## See also

Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst; Ideal intensity of love; Im Ganzen; Monastic reverie; Mystic.

## Mystical temple

*the mystical temple*

Attested: *the mystical temple* (PIC §6). The figure of Plato's philosophy as a sanctuary, entered by initiation. Ficino's translation was complete: "And now the work was completed, the door of the mystical temple lay open to all who could construe Latin, and the scholar rested from his labour" (PIC §6; see Construe). The temple can be read as having its priest and its altar: in Ficino's study "a lamp burned continually before the bust of Plato, as other men burned lamps before their favourite saints" (PIC §6; see Platonic academy). The image can be read as joining the two derivations of "mystic" that Pater gives in the next paragraph, the shut lips of what cannot be uttered and the shut eyes of inward sight (PIC §7; see Mystic; Shutting the eyes). It can also be read as gently ironic. A mystery is by definition closed to the many, and the translation has opened it to anyone with a schoolboy's Latin; the temple stands open, and the scholar who opened it rests "from his labour", as God rested on the seventh day.

### See also

Construe; Mystic; Platonic academy; Shutting the eyes.

## Mysticism

*The spiritual longing of the middle age, cloudy in itself, which Leonardo refined into mystery and La Gioconda's face keeps · The Renaissance*

*mysticism*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The seeking of union with the divine by contemplation and love beyond reason; loosely, any vague religious feeling.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "A cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery, and painting pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul" (LEO §21).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §21, with LEO §31.

### Meaning

The word is built on "mystic", from the Greek *mystikos*, belonging to the mysteries, and *myein*, to close the eyes or lips (see Mystic). "Mysticism" is a late formation. In the eighteenth century it was a term of reproach for religious enthusiasm; in the nineteenth it became the name of a tradition, the contemplative writers from Dionysius the Areopagite to the medieval visionaries, studied with sympathy. Pater uses the word in both tones, and the difference between them is part of his meaning.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is in the Leonardo essay, at the moment of *bien-être*, well-being, when "the idea is stricken into colour and imagery: a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery, and painting pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul" (LEO §21; see Bien-être; Refined and graceful mystery). The sentence sets two words from one root against each other. Mysticism is "cloudy": it belongs to ideas, and it cannot be seen. Mystery is "subdued and graceful": it belongs to the picture, and it can. The refinement turns the one into the other, as the alchemy of the same sentence turns ideas into images (see Alchemy). Painting that has made the change "pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul": the soul's need, which mysticism expresses, is met in a form the eye can take.

Ten paragraphs later mysticism is one of the ages moulded into La Gioconda's face: "the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves" (LEO §31; see Animalism; Spiritual). The tone is warmer. The middle age's mysticism has "spiritual ambition" and "imaginative loves", and it stands third in the list, between Rome and the return of the Pagan world. The essay can be read as giving the word its full history in two sentences: the cloudy thing that must be refined, and the force that, refined, helped to make the modern face.

The other uses place mysticism in the book's map of ages. In the middle age it is a source of freedom, and the antinomian spirit "makes the Franciscan order, with its poetry, its mysticism, its 'illumination,' from the point of view of religious authority, justly suspect" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). The Venetian school was "Unassisted, and therefore unperplexed, by naturalism, religious mysticism, philosophical theories" (GIO §12): its absence is the Venetians' good fortune. Greek religion had its own "antinomian mysticism" (WIN §26; see Antinomian mysticism), but Greek thought "has not yet plunged into the depths of religious mysticism" (WIN §28). Among the ruins of Rome Du Bellay thinks, "With a strange touch of far-off mysticism", that the great whole into which all other things pass ought itself sometimes to perish (BEL §22).

Taken together, the uses can be read as Pater's judgement on the word. For thought and religion mysticism is a real power, and its liberties are among the medieval Renaissance's gifts. For art it is a danger, a source of perplexity, unless it is refined into mystery. The two words of the twenty-first paragraph mark the line between religion and art that the whole book walks.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "mysticism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §32** A touch of the antinomian spirit makes the Franciscan order, with its poetry and its mysticism, justly suspect to religious authority.

**LEO §21** In the moment of bien-être a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery.

**LEO §31** The mysticism of the middle age, with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, has moulded La Gioconda's face.

**GIO §12** The Venetian school was unperplexed by naturalism, religious mysticism and philosophical theories.

**BEL §22** With a touch of far-off mysticism Du Bellay thinks the great whole ought sometimes to perish.

**WIN §26** Greek religion too has its antinomian mysticism.

**WIN §28** Greek thought has not yet plunged into the depths of religious mysticism.

## See also

Alchemy; Animalism; Antinomian mysticism; Antinomianism; Bien-être; Mystic; Refined and graceful mystery; Spiritual.

# Myth

*The fluid, imaginative element of Greek religion, as against its fixed ritual: in the Winckelmann essay, the source from which Greek art arose · The Renaissance*

*the myth*; *mythology*; *mythological*; *mythologists*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A traditional story of gods and heroes; mythology is the body of such stories, or the study of them.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In Greek religion the observance is fixed, and the myth is "the fluid, unfixed element" (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §26 says that Pater transfers Plato's image of the wing "to the mobility of myth in his account of Greek religion".

**A place to read.** WIN §26, the first five sentences.

## Meaning

The Greek *mythos* was first simply "word" or "speech", then a tale, and in time a tale of gods and heroes as opposed to a reasoned account, *logos*. Mythology, the telling or the body of such tales, became in Pater's century a science, and its practitioners argued over where myths came from: from misunderstood language about the sun and the sky, as Max Müller held, or,

as Andrew Lang answered, from the survivals of savage custom and belief.[493] Pater's account in the Winckelmann essay has its own answer. Myth, for him, is not the root of religion but a separate growth grafted on to it, and its nature is to be free.

## Use in the book

The twenty-sixth paragraph gives Pater's theory of Greek religion in a few sentences. The paragraph before has described the ritual that grows out of the pagan sentiment, fixed, inexplicable and permanent (WIN §25; see Pagan sentiment). "More definite religious conceptions come from other sources, and fix themselves upon this ritual in various ways, changing it, and giving it new meanings. In Greece they were derived from mythology, itself not due to a religious source at all, but developing in the course of time into a body of religious conceptions, entirely human in form and character" (WIN §26). Mythology brought to the ritual "the power of the wing", an element of refinement and ascension (WIN §26; see Ascension). "While the ritual remains unchanged, the æsthetic element, only accidentally connected with it, expands with the freedom and mobility of the things of the intellect. Always, the fixed element is the religious observance; the fluid, unfixed element is the myth, the religious conception" (WIN §26).

The theory makes three claims. Myth did not begin as religion; it became religious by attaching itself to rites that were older than it. Its gods were "entirely human in form and character", and so already the matter of an art of the human form. And its nature is to move: the ritual stays, the myth grows with the intellect. Greek art, on this account, can be read as the child of the myth rather than of the rite, and that is why Greek religion could "transform itself into an artistic ideal" (WIN §26; see Artistic ideal; Chthonian divinities). The mystical art of the Christian middle age, by contrast, "is always struggling to express thoughts beyond itself" (WIN §27; see Finite image).

The word's other uses in the book trace mythology through the Renaissance and beyond. The fifteenth century was too familiar with the language of the earlier gods "to regard mythology as a mere story" (PIC §1; see Unction); Pico read the later Greek mythologists for "secondary meanings" (PIC §13; see Correspondence); and the Italian Renaissance made "a new sort of mythology, with a tone and qualities of its own" (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation). For the Pleiad, the old mythology that the Italians had found "weighty and severe" became "a mere toy" (BEL §16; see Raillery). In Raphael's Parnassus the muses of Greek mythology surround Apollo (WIN §22; see Castalia). And at the very end of the essay myth is gone: necessity is no longer "a sort of mythological personage without us"

[493] Friedrich Max Müller, "Comparative Mythology", in *Oxford Essays* (London, 1856); Andrew Lang, *Custom and Myth* (London, 1884).

(WIN §53; see Necessity). The modern mind has lost the personified powers it could fight.

The word can be read as marking the book's whole history of the imagination. Myth is free, human and mobile in Greece; serious and allegorical in the Florentine Platonists; a toy in France; and in the modern world replaced by law. Pater's sympathy is plainly with the first, and his account of Greek religion, dated 1867, is the seed of the essays on Demeter and Dionysus that he published in 1876 (see Chthonian divinities).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "myth", "mythology", "mythological" or "mythologists" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §1** The fifteenth century was too familiar with such language to regard mythology as a mere story.

**PIC §13** Pico reads the secondary meanings of obscure stories in the later Greek mythologists.

**PIC §15** The Italian Renaissance made a new sort of mythology, with a tone and qualities of its own.

**BEL §16** The old Greek and Roman mythology becomes with the Pleiad a mere toy.

**WIN §22** In the Parnassus Apollo sits surrounded by the muses of Greek mythology.

**WIN §26** Greek religious conceptions were derived from mythology; the fixed element is the observance, the fluid element the myth.

**WIN §53** For us necessity is no longer a mythological personage without us.

## See also

Artistic ideal; Artistic reconciliation; Ascension; Castalia; Chthonian divinities; Correspondence; Finite image; Necessity; Pagan sentiment; Raillery; Renaissance; Unction.

# Natural piety

*Wordsworth's phrase, turned from a single life to the ages · The Renaissance*

*natural piety*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Natural piety is reverence that comes by nature rather than by doctrine: the bond of feeling that holds a life, or an age, to what went before it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Pico, "reconciled indeed to the new religion, but still with a tenderness for the earlier life", was "desirous literally to 'bind the ages each to each by natural piety'" (PIC §13).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §13 traces the phrase to Wordsworth's lyric, and says that "Pater makes the wish apply to the different ages and faiths Pico wants to join".

**A place to read.** PIC §13.

## Meaning

The Latin *pietas* was dutiful reverence: toward the gods, toward parents, toward one's country; Virgil's *pius* Aeneas carries his father out of burning Troy. "Natural" piety is such reverence when it springs from nature and not from a creed. The phrase is Wordsworth's. His short lyric ends: "The Child is father of the Man; / And I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety."[494] The poet wishes that the child's wonder at the rainbow may live on in the man, so that a life is held together by feeling.

## Use in the book

Pater applies the line to Pico, recast ("bind the ages" for "my days to be / Bound") and with one adverb added. The sentence is the hinge of the essay. "It is because the life of Pico, thus lying down to rest in the Dominican habit, yet amid thoughts of the older gods, himself like one of those comely divinities, reconciled indeed to the new religion, but still with a tenderness for the earlier life, and desirous literally to 'bind the ages each to each by natural piety'—it is because this life is so perfect a parallel to the attempt made in his writings to reconcile Christianity with the ideas of paganism, that Pico, in spite of the scholastic character of those writings, is really interesting" (PIC §13; see Analogue; Dominican habit). Wordsworth's "days" become "ages". Pater can be read as making Pico's wish one for history: that the age of the Greek gods and the age of Christ should be bound together, in his life by reverence as in his writings by argument.

"Literally" can be read in two ways, and the sentence may mean both. Pico wished the thing Wordsworth's words say, taken at their letter: the ages, not merely the days, bound each to each. And he wished it literally, in earnest, where the poet spoke of a hope. The tenderness is the point. Pico is "reconciled" to the new religion, but his piety toward the old is natural, a feeling he did not reason his way into and could not reason his way out of (see Reconciliation).

The phrase can also be read as naming Pater's own method. The historic sense throws itself back by an imaginative act into a world unlike its own (PIC §4; see Historic sense), and the humanist believes that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality (PIC §16; see Humanism). Both are forms of piety toward the past without a

[494] William Wordsworth, "My heart leaps up when I behold", lines 7–9.

doctrine to require it. The family returns twice more: in the *Pietà*, "the pity of the Virgin Mother over the dead body of Christ" (MIC §20), and in "that ideal of gentle pietism" in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, which "to the large vision of Goethe" seemed a phase of life to be felt all round and passed (WIN §51; see Pietism). Pietism, the devotional movement, is a piety of the heart within a creed; natural piety needs no creed at all.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**PIC §13** Pico, reconciled to the new religion but tender toward the earlier life, wished to bind the ages each to each by natural piety.

## Pater's sources

Wordsworth's lyric was written in 1802 and first printed in *Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807); from 1815 its last three lines stood as the epigraph of the ode "Intimations of Immortality".[495]

## In this edition

The note at PIC §13 says that the phrase is "Adapted from Wordsworth's 'My Heart Leaps Up,' where the speaker hopes his own days will be bound together by natural piety", and that "Pater makes the wish apply to the different ages and faiths Pico wants to join".

## See also

Analogue; Dominican habit; Historic sense; Humanism; Pietism; Reconciliation.

# New body

*The body hoped for after death, which the Florentines dared not follow and which Michelangelo imagines as a passing light · The Renaissance*

*new body*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The body of the resurrection: the form the dead are to take when they rise.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The new body—a passing light, a mere intangible, external effect, over those too rigid, or too formless faces; a dream that lingers a moment, retreating in the dawn" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §§19–20.

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[495] William Wordsworth, *Poems, in Two Volumes* (London, 1807); *Poems* (London, 1815), where the lines head the "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood".

## Meaning

Saint Paul, answering those who ask with what body the dead will come, tells the Corinthians that the dead are raised not with the body that was buried but with another, as a plant is not the seed that was sown: sown, in the King James wording, "a natural body", raised "a spiritual body".[496] Christian doctrine kept the resurrection of the flesh in the creeds and left its manner a mystery. Pater's "new body" is Paul's other body, seen by minds that no longer hold the doctrine firmly.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs three times, and the three places trace a widening uncertainty. The first is at the end of the nineteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, where the Florentine masters, having seen "death in its distinction" (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction), go one step further: "Then following it perhaps one stage further, dwelling for a moment on the point where all this transitory dignity must break up, and discerning with no clearness a new body, they paused just in time, and abstained, with a sentiment of profound pity" (MIC §19; see Pity). The Florentines glimpse the new body "with no clearness", and stop. Their restraint is part of their dignity: they will not follow the dead past the point where the face is still a face.

The second is in the twentieth paragraph, in the sentence on Michelangelo's ignorance: he is ignorant "of the new body and its laws" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance; Consecrated Host). Here the new body has "laws", the conditions of its being, and Michelangelo does not know them.

The third closes the essay's account of his sentiment. After the dumb inquiry over the relapse into formlessness, after the revolt and the rush of pity (MIC §20; see Formlessness; Hallow), comes, "at last, far off, thin and vague, yet not more vague than the most definite thoughts men have had through three centuries on a matter that has been so near their hearts, the new body—a passing light, a mere intangible, external effect, over those too rigid, or too formless faces; a dream that lingers a moment, retreating in the dawn, incomplete, aimless, helpless; a thing with faint hearing, faint memory, faint power of touch; a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind" (MIC §20; see Breath; Incompleteness).

The sentence is one of the book's great passages, and its method is subtraction. The new body is a light, then an "effect", then a dream, then "a thing" with faint senses, then a breath, a flame, a feather: each image lighter than the last, until nothing is left but the wind. "Retreating in the dawn" can be read as placing it at the hour of the Medici figures, among them the Dawn (see Disembodied spirit), and makes it something that vanishes when looked for. The concessive clause is a defence: the vagueness is "not more

[496] 1 Corinthians 15:35–44.

vague than the most definite thoughts men have had through three centuries" on the matter. Michelangelo's uncertainty is not a failure of faith but honesty: no one has known more.

Read in sequence, the three passages make one movement. The Florentines glimpse the new body and turn away in pity; Michelangelo, on Pater's account, does not know its laws; and his art, at last, gives it the only form an honest mind can give, a passing light. The phrase is the end point of the essay's thought about death, and the place where Pater's own uncertainty speaks most clearly through his subject.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "new body" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §19** Discerning with no clearness a new body, the Florentines paused just in time, and abstained, with profound pity.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo is ignorant of the new body and its laws; in his work it is a passing light, a dream retreating in the dawn, a feather in the wind.

## See also

Breath; Consciousness of ignorance; Consecrated Host; Death in its distinction; Disembodied spirit; Formlessness; Hallow; Incompleteness; Pity.

# Offices of the dead

*offices of the dead*; *offices*

Attested: *offices of the dead* (FRE §36); *offices* (FRE §9; LEO §36). The Office of the Dead is the church's set of prayers and psalms for the souls of the departed, sung at vespers, matins and lauds. After the miracle of the coffins, "the king and queen remained in that place for a space of thirty days, and performed the offices of the dead who were slain, and honoured the said churches with great gifts" (FRE §36). The plural returns at Leonardo's death, where Pater speaks of the thirty masses of his will and judges that "on no theory of religion could these hurried offices be of much consequence" (LEO §36). The word has a secular sense too: the friendship of Palamon and Arcite made their prison "sweet hitherto with its daily offices" (FRE §9; see Bleynte).

## See also

Bleynte; Clerk; Sacred Office.

## Omen

*omens*

Attested: *omens* (PIC §§8, 13; MIC §7). A sign of what is to come, read in a chance event. Pico's life is told as full of them. His mother, "with a faith in omens characteristic of her time," believed that at his birth a circular flame had appeared on the wall of her chamber and suddenly vanished (PIC §8). Omens and prophecies "accompany Pico himself all through life" (PIC §13; see Accidental combination), and the prophecy of the time of lilies comes true in a pun (PIC §12; see Time of lilies). Pater calls the faith in omens "characteristic of her time", and the Michelangelo essay finds it in the next generation: Michelangelo "believed in dreams and omens", and left Florence when a friend's dream seemed to portend its troubles (MIC §7). The omen can be read as the system of correspondences read in a single life (see Correspondence): if every object answers to a higher reality, every chance is a message.

### See also

Accidental combination; Correspondence; Oracle; Time of lilies.

## Oracle

*oracles*; *oracle*

Attested: *oracles* (PIC §§5, 13); *oracle* (PIC §16). The answer of a god given at a sacred place, and the place itself: Delphi on the slopes of Parnassus, Dodona in its oak grove. The word comes three times in the Pico essay, each time at a turn of the argument. The allegorical method shows "the faith of that age in all oracles, its desire to hear all voices" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation); in Pico's world "There are oracles in every tree and mountain-top" (PIC §13; see Accidental combination); and humanism, in Pater's definition, keeps faith with all that living men and women have cared for, every "oracle beside which they have hushed their voices" (PIC §16; see Humanism). The progress can be read as the essay's own: the oracle believed, the oracle everywhere, the oracle remembered. "Oracles in every tree and mountain-top" can be read as recalling the oracles of the Greeks, the god speaking through the oak at Dodona and from the mountain at Delphi, as if Pico's world had made every tree Dodona.[497] In the last use it is the worshippers who are silent, beside the oracle; the humanist keeps faith with what they heard.

### See also

Accidental combination; Allegorical interpretation; Humanism; Omen.

[497] Homer, *Odyssey* 14.327–328, on the oak of Zeus at Dodona.

## Orthodoxy

*orthodoxy*

Attested: *orthodoxy* (PIC §8; BOT §5; MIC §16; WIN §§22, 23; CON §5; C73 §6). Right opinion, from the Greek *orthos*, straight, and *doxa*, belief; the doctrine a church holds true, and by extension any settled standard. In the Pico essay it is the Church's: the pontifical court suspected "the orthodoxy of some of these propositions" (PIC §8; see Pontifical court; Paradox). Pico had protested in advance that he put forward nothing as certain or probable except so far as the Roman Church, and its head Innocent VIII, should judge it true or probable.[498] The book widens the word. Botticelli is "far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante" (BOT §5); the Church of the Catholic revival fixed itself "in a frozen orthodoxy" (MIC §16; see Frozen orthodoxy); the Greek ideal becomes "the orthodoxy of taste" (WIN §22), "this standard of artistic orthodoxy" (WIN §23). The Conclusion refuses any orthodoxy that is facile: we must be "never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5; see Positive knowledge; Impression). Orthodoxy in the book can be read as what arrests the mind, whether in theology, taste or philosophy.

### See also

Frozen orthodoxy; Impression; Paradox; Pontifical court; Positive knowledge.

## Outre-tombe

*"Beyond the grave": the burden of the great Florentines' thoughts, from Dante to Savonarola · The Renaissance*

*Outre-tombe*

### At a Glance

**The word.** French, "beyond the grave": the life, or the realm, that lies on the far side of death.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "*Outre-tombe! Outre-tombe!*—is the burden of their thoughts, from Dante to Savonarola" (MIC §19).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §19 renders the cry "Beyond the grave! Beyond the grave!", and says that "The repeated cry gives a voice to the preoccupation with death that Pater attributes to Florentine art".

**A place to read.** MIC §19.

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[498] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 1486), heading of the second part: "nihil assertive vel probabiliter pono, nisi quatenus id verum vel probabile iudicat sacrosancta Romana ecclesia".

## Meaning

*Outre-tombe* joins the French *outre*, beyond, and *tombe*, tomb. The compound is a literary word rather than a common one, and its best-known use was the title of the *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* of the French writer François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), memoirs written to be published after his death and issued in 1848–50, as if spoken from beyond the grave.[499] Pater's cry can be heard as an echo of that title, though he does not name it.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is the opening of the nineteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which turns from the tradition of the Creation to another inheritance: "But there was another tradition of those earlier, more serious Florentines, of which Michelangelo is the inheritor, to which he gives the final expression, and which centres in the sacristy of San Lorenzo, as the tradition of the Creation centres in the Sistine Chapel. It has been said that all the great Florentines were preoccupied with death. *Outre-tombe! Outre-tombe!*—is the burden of their thoughts, from Dante to Savonarola. Even the gay and licentious Boccaccio gives a keener edge to his stories by putting them in the mouths of a party of people who had taken refuge in a country-house from the danger of death by plague" (MIC §19).

"Burden" is the old word for a refrain, the line a song keeps returning to, and the cry is set as one: repeated, exclamatory, in a foreign tongue. The range it covers is wide. Dante's poem is a journey beyond the grave; Savonarola preached the last things to Florence; and even Boccaccio, "gay and licentious", set the *Decameron* in the shadow of the plague of 1348, so that his tales are told by people fleeing death. "It has been said" is Pater's hedge: the claim that all the great Florentines were preoccupied with death is a received view, and he adopts it.

The paragraph goes on to what the preoccupation gave the Florentines, a seriousness "partly due" to it, reinforced by the sorrows of their own streets (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction; Sepulchral portrait), and to what saved them from the morbid art of the north, "the nobility of their Italian culture, and still more by their tender pity for the thing itself" (MIC §19; see Danse Macabre; Pity).

The cry serves, in effect, as the title of the essay's last movement. From this point the Michelangelo essay is about death: the Florentine tradition, the Pietà, the Medici chapel, the new body. Michelangelo "gives the final expression" to a tradition whose burden is beyond the grave, and the French phrase, with its echo of a modern book of memoirs from the tomb, ties that Florentine refrain to the nineteenth century's own preoccupation with what lies past death.

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[499] François-René de Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* (1848–50).

## Places to read

The phrase occurs twice, in one paragraph.

**MIC §19** Outre-tombe! Outre-tombe!—beyond the grave—is the burden of the great Florentines' thoughts, from Dante to Savonarola.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §19 says: "English: Beyond the grave! Beyond the grave! French. The repeated cry gives a voice to the preoccupation with death that Pater attributes to Florentine art."

## See also

Danse Macabre; Death in its distinction; Pity; Sepulchral portrait.

# Outward type

*The face and form of Christ that Leonardo fixed for the centuries, though in his own picture it is the faintest of ghosts · The Renaissance*
*outward type*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The visible pattern by which a figure is known: its accepted face and form.

**In *The Renaissance*.** For Vasari's first edition, Pater says, "the painter who has fixed the outward type of Christ for succeeding centuries" was a bold speculator (LEO §2; see Bold speculator).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §2 says that Vasari's first edition "associated Leonardo's speculative disposition with religious heterodoxy".

**A place to read.** LEO §2, with LEO §27.

## Meaning

A "type" is a pattern or model, from the Greek *typos*, the mark of a blow, a stamp (see Type). The "type of Christ" in art is the accepted likeness, the long hair and beard and the grave face that Byzantine and medieval painters had settled and that every viewer recognised. "Outward" marks it as the visible form, the face and figure, as against the inward nature the type is meant to show.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in Pater's report of Vasari's first edition, where "the painter who has fixed the outward type of Christ for succeeding centuries" is a bold speculator who sets philosophy above Christianity (LEO §2; see Bold speculator). The clause carries an irony: the man suspected of unbelief gave Christianity the face of its Lord. It also makes a large claim, that the

Christ of the Last Supper became the pattern for later painters, and the essay states it without arguing it; the picture's fame, carried across Europe by copies and prints even as the original perished, can be read as its support.

The essay comes back to that Christ in the paragraphs on the Last Supper, and finds him nearly gone. The drawing of the central head at the Brera, which Pater takes for Leonardo's own study and the gallery now gives to a Lombard artist,[500] has "a union of tenderness and severity in the face-lines" that recalls the monumental work of Mino da Fiesole (LEO §26). On the wall itself the head of Jesus "does but consummate the sentiment of the whole company" (LEO §27; see Mellowing decay), and is "the most spectral of them all" (LEO §27; see Spectral). The type fixed for centuries survives in copies; in its original it is the faintest of ghosts. On this reading the essay sets the outward type against the thing itself: what the world took from the picture is the outward form, and what the picture holds is a sentiment that has almost faded off the wall.

"Outward" has a weight in the essay beyond this phrase. Leonardo is the painter of the inward made visible. The Saint John's smile "would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture or circumstance" (LEO §25), and La Gioconda's is "a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within), moulded by "All the thoughts and experience of the world", in "that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form" (LEO §31). The outward type of Christ can be read as the one place where the painter of the inward gave the world an outward pattern, and even there the Last Supper's Christ is less a type than a presence, "one taking leave of his friends" (LEO §27; see Conventional associations).

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §2** The painter who fixed the outward type of Christ for the succeeding centuries was, in Vasari's first edition, a bold speculator.

## See also

Beauty wrought from within; Bold speculator; Conventional associations; Mellowing decay; Spectral; Type.

[500] Pinacoteca di Brera, *Testa di Cristo*, charcoal (Reg. Cron. 862), catalogued as by a Lombard artist, 1500–1510.

# Pagan sentiment

*The sadness of earthly creatures before death and the powers of nature, which Pater finds beneath every religion and which ritual soothes · The Renaissance*

*a universal pagan sentiment*; *this pagan sentiment*; *paganism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The feeling of the old religions of nature, held by the people of the countryside long after the higher faiths arrived.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The broad foundation of all religions "is a universal pagan sentiment, a paganism which existed before the Greek religion" (WIN §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§24–25.

## Meaning

The Latin *paganus* meant a villager, a man of the *pagus* or country district. Christian writers of the late empire used it for those who kept the old gods, and why they did so is disputed: perhaps because the countryside was converted last, perhaps because *paganus* also meant a civilian, as against the soldiers of Christ. Pater's phrase keeps the rustic sense. His pagan sentiment is the religion of the country people, older than any theology, and its home is the earth.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the end of the twenty-fourth paragraph, where Pater corrects the view of Greek religion as merely "gay and graceful" (WIN §24; see Polytheism). Religions differ with time and place. "Still, the broad foundation, in mere human nature, of all religions as they exist for the greatest number, is a universal pagan sentiment, a paganism which existed before the Greek religion, and has lingered far onward into the Christian world, ineradicable, like some persistent vegetable growth, because its seed is an element of the very soil out of which it springs" (WIN §24). The image is exact: the sentiment is a weed, not a flower, and it grows wherever men grow, Greek or Christian.

The twenty-fifth paragraph describes it. It measures the sadness of the mind when its thoughts wander from what is here and now (WIN §25; see Heathen sorrow). "It is beset by notions of irresistible natural powers, for the most part ranged against man, but the secret also of his fortune, making the earth golden and the grape fiery for him. He makes gods in his own image, gods smiling and flower-crowned, or bleeding by some sad fatality, to console him by their wounds, never closed from generation to generation" (WIN §25). The thought of death comes to him with a rush of home-

sickness, and he would stay at home on the earth for ever if he could (WIN §25; see Home-sickness). "As it loses its colour and the senses fail, he clings ever closer to it; but since the mouldering of bones and flesh must go on to the end, he is careful for charms and talismans, which may chance to have some friendly power in them, when the inevitable shipwreck comes. Such sentiment is a part of the eternal basis of all religions, modified indeed by changes of time and place, but indestructible, because its root is so deep in the earth of man's nature" (WIN §25).

The passage is the essay's most moving, and it is not about Greece at all. Its subject is anyone who loves the earth and must leave it, and its gods, made "in his own image", console him "by their wounds". The sentiment produces ritual. It attaches itself to the usages of patriarchal life, the kindling of fire and the gathering of harvest, and in them are "the beginnings of a ritual" which outlives the usages that gave it birth (WIN §25; see Ritual). And Pater's last word on it is compassionate: such worship is the anodyne added "to the law which makes life sombre for the vast majority of mankind" (WIN §25; see Anodyne).

The phrase can be read as Pater's explanation of why the Greek ideal was rare. The pagan sentiment is the common ground; the supreme Hellenic culture is "a sharp edge of light across this gloom" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities), and religious progress "is confined to a few" (WIN §25; see Spiritual). The essay's praise of Hellenic culture is thus not a praise of the ancient world at large. It is a praise of a few who rose above a sadness that the many never left, and the sympathy of the twenty-fifth paragraph is for the many.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pagan sentiment" or "paganism" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Pico's attempt to reconcile Christianity with the ideas of paganism.

**LEO §25** In Heine's notion the decayed gods, after the fall of paganism, took employment in the new religion.

**WIN §24** The broad foundation of all religions is a universal pagan sentiment, a paganism older than the Greek religion.

**WIN §25** This pagan sentiment measures the sadness of the mind, clings to the earth, and gives rise to ritual.

## See also

Anodyne; Chthonian divinities; Heathen sorrow; Home-sickness; Myth; Polytheism; Ritual; Spiritual.

## Pagan story

*pagan story*

Attested: *pagan story* (PIC §1). The myths of the Greek and Roman gods, as tales. Pater tells their survival in one sentence. After the age that saw the old gods as demons (see Religion of darkness), "Little by little, as the natural charm of pagan story reasserted itself over minds emerging out of barbarism, the religious significance which had once belonged to it was lost sight of, and it came to be regarded as the subject of a purely artistic or poetical treatment" (PIC §1). The charm is "natural" (see Natural right): the stories win back their place by their own beauty, without argument. Losing their religious meaning, they become material for art, and so the way is open for the artists' reconciliation (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation). The next sentences reverse the movement: some minds were "deeply enough impressed by its beauty and power to ask themselves whether the religion of Greece was indeed a rival of the religion of Christ" (PIC §1). Pagan story, emptied of religion, becomes religion again in those who take it seriously, and Pico was one of them.

### See also

Artistic reconciliation; Natural right; Religion of darkness.

## Passage of the soul

*The Platonic dream of the soul passing from one form of life to another, in haste to be rid of the body · The Renaissance*

*passage of the soul*

### At a Glance

**The word.** The soul's passage through successive lives: the doctrine of transmigration or metempsychosis.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The Platonic dream of the passage of the soul through one form of life after another, with its passionate haste to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §14.

### Meaning

The belief that the soul passes from body to body, human or animal, is older than Plato: the Greeks gave it to Pythagoras, and the Sicilian philosopher Empedocles, in the fifth century BC, claimed to have been "a youth and a maiden, a shrub, a bird, and a mute fish springing from the sea". Plato took it up in his myths. In the *Phaedo* souls that loved the body return in bodies like their lives, gluttons as asses, the unjust as wolves; in the

*Phaedrus* a soul falls into a body and must pass ten thousand years before it regains its wings, unless it has loved wisdom; in the *Republic* the souls of the dead choose their next lives.[501] The aim of the philosophic life, on this view, is to escape the wheel of rebirth altogether.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence of the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay that sets Dante against Plato. Against "Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body" Pater sets "the Platonic dream of the passage of the soul through one form of life after another, with its passionate haste to escape from the burden of bodily form altogether", and calls the two, "for all effects of art or poetry, principles diametrically opposite" (MIC §14; see Bodily form; Resurrection of the body).

"Dream" places the doctrine. Dante's is a "belief", held as part of a creed; Plato's is a "dream", a vision or myth. "Passionate haste" gives the dream its feeling: the soul is in a hurry, and what it hurries from is the body, a "burden". The two doctrines are "diametrically opposite" for art because one keeps the body forever and the other longs to lose it. The poet who believes in the resurrection fills heaven with flesh and colour; the poet who dreams of the soul's passage has nothing to show but the soul's flight.

Michelangelo's verse, Pater says next, follows the Platonic tradition (MIC §14), and the essay draws the consequences: frost and fire are almost the only images of his poems (see Refining fire), he presses on from the outward beauty to the universal form (see Forma universale), and he accounts for love at first sight by a former life (MIC §14; see Previous state of existence). The passage of the soul is the larger doctrine of which that previous state is a part: the soul that loves now has lived before, and will move on.

The doctrine has a third form in the Winckelmann essay, where Winckelmann seems one who had lived "in some phase of pre-existence" (WIN §19; see Anti-natal state); there it is a figure for genius, here for the soul's flight from the body.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §14** The Platonic dream of the passage of the soul through one form of life after another hastens to escape the burden of bodily form.

## See also

Anti-natal state; Bodily form; Forma universale; Previous state of existence; Refining fire; Resurrection of the body.

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[501] Empedocles, fragment B117 (Diels-Kranz); Plato, *Phaedo* 81d–82b; *Phaedrus* 248e–249a; *Republic* X, 617d–620d.

*The colour of some of Michelangelo's poems, as of a wanderer returning home · The Renaissance*

*penitence*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sorrow for sin, with the will to amend: the state of the penitent.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Of Michelangelo's poems, "some of them have the colour of penitence, as from a wanderer returning home" (MIC §8).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §8.

## Meaning

The Latin *paenitentia*, regret, gave the Church both "penitence", the inward sorrow, and "penance", the outward act that expresses it. In Catholic teaching penance is a sacrament, with contrition, confession and satisfaction as its parts. The word carries the sense of a turning: the penitent turns from what he did, and back toward what he left.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the sentence of the eighth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay that follows the discovery of carnal delight beneath the sonnets' calm (MIC §8; see Carnal; Platonic calm): "There, and still more in the madrigals, he often falls into the language of less tranquil affections; while some of them have the colour of penitence, as from a wanderer returning home" (MIC §8; see Madrigal).

The sentence sets two tones side by side. He "falls into" the language of passion, a fall that the Platonic calm cannot always prevent; and some have "the colour of penitence". "Colour" makes the penitence a tinge, a shade of feeling over the poem, not a doctrine. "As from a wanderer returning home" gives it an image, and the image can be read as the parable of the prodigal son, who squandered his share abroad and came back to his father (Luke 15:11–32). The penitent poems, on this reading, are the poems of a man who has wandered in the passions the earlier poems confess, and turns back.

Michelangelo's late poems bear Pater out. The sonnet he sent to Vasari in 1554, "Giunto è già 'l corso della vita mia" ("The course of my life has now come"), looks back on a life given to art as to an idol, and turns at its close to "that divine love which opened its arms on the cross to take us"; neither painting nor carving, it says, can any longer quiet the soul.[502] Pater

[502] Michelangelo, sonnet "Giunto è già 'l corso della vita mia" (1554; Girardi 285).

does not quote it, and his sentence speaks only of "some" poems; but the colour he names can be read as the colour of that sonnet.

The word fits the essay's account of the movement of Michelangelo's life. The strength turned to bitterness (see Discordant note); his loves "sometimes, it may be, would by no means become music" (MIC §8; see Dolce amaro); then came the "charmed and temperate space" of the friendship with Vittoria Colonna (MIC §13; see Ideal sentiment) and the religious seriousness of his old age, among "the first members of the Oratory" (MIC §16; see New catholicism). The penitent poems belong to the end of that movement. Yet the essay does not make him a convert: his hope rests on "the consciousness of ignorance" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance), and he is a stranger to the Church of his last years (see Frozen orthodoxy). The penitence is a colour, not a creed.

Few words in the essay are chosen with more care. A less tactful critic would have called the late Michelangelo devout, or tormented by guilt; Pater gives the poems a tinge of penitence and an image of return, and leaves the rest to them. The wanderer returns; to what, the essay does not say.

## Places to read

The word occurs once.

**MIC §8** Some of Michelangelo's poems have the colour of penitence, as from a wanderer returning home.

## See also

Carnal; Consciousness of ignorance; Discordant note; Dolce amaro; Frozen orthodoxy; Ideal sentiment; Madrigal; New catholicism; Platonic calm.

# Pietà

*The Virgin mourning over her dead son, Michelangelo's favourite subject, widened into the pity of all mothers · The Renaissance*

*Pietà*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Italian, "pity": in Christian art, the image of the Virgin holding or mourning the dead Christ.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Pietà, pity, the pity of the Virgin Mother over the dead body of Christ, expanded into the pity of all mothers over all dead sons" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

## Meaning

The image of the Virgin with the dead Christ across her knees, the *Vesperbild* or evening image of German devotion, grew in northern Europe in the fourteenth century as a subject for private prayer, apart from the narrative scenes of the Deposition and the Lamentation. Italian named it *Pietà*, the word for both pity and piety (see Pity). It is an image of grief stilled into contemplation: no action, only a mother and her son.

## Use in the book

The word stands at the head of the second sentence of the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: the pity of the Virgin Mother over the dead body of Christ, "expanded into the pity of all mothers over all dead sons", is with the entombment "the subject of his predilection" (MIC §20; see Entombment).

The widening of the word, from one mother's pity to the pity of all mothers, is the essay's reading of the subject: Michelangelo's Pietàs are not, for Pater, images of a unique redemptive death but of every such grief. The next sentence calls the feeling "almost heathen" (MIC §20; see Heathen sorrow), a sorrow without the Christian hope.

Michelangelo returned to the subject across his life. The marble Pietà in St Peter's, carved in Rome at the end of the 1490s, shows a young Virgin holding the body across her lap, and is the only work he signed, on the band across her breast. About 1540 he drew a Pietà for Vittoria Colonna, the Virgin with raised arms and the body sunk between her knees. In his last decades he carved two more: the group now in the cathedral museum of Florence, meant for his own tomb, in which Nicodemus is said to bear his features, and which he broke and abandoned; and the Rondanini Pietà, now in Milan, on which he was working days before his death, the two figures fused into one upright, wasted form.[503] The Oxford drawing Pater describes, the body sunk to the earth between the mother's feet, may be counted in this series (MIC §20; see Entombment).

The series can be read as moving the way Pater's paragraph moves. The first Pietà is beautiful and calm; the last is barely a form at all, and in it the "relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life" (MIC §20; see Formlessness) seems to take hold of the stone. Pater does not trace the series, but his paragraph goes the same way, from the Pietà to the formless faces of the Medici figures and at last to the new body (MIC §20; see New body).

The Italian word joins the feeling and the devotion. Pater translates it as "pity" and then widens it, and on this reading the feeling outlasts the devotion: the Pietà is the traditional image of the sentiment of which

[503] The Pietà of St Peter's, about 1498–99; the drawing for Vittoria Colonna, about 1540 (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston); the Florentine Pietà, about 1547–55 (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo); the Rondanini Pietà (Castello Sforzesco, Milan).

Michelangelo is the achievement, "and, first of all, of pity" (MIC §20; see Pity).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "Pietà" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §20** Pietà, the pity of the Virgin Mother over the dead Christ, expanded into the pity of all mothers over all dead sons, is the subject of Michelangelo's predilection.

## See also

Entombment; Formlessness; Heathen sorrow; New body; Pity.

# Pietism

*that ideal of gentle pietism*

Attested: *pietism* (WIN §51). Pietism was a movement in German Protestantism, begun in the late seventeenth century by Philipp Jakob Spener, whose *Pia desideria* (1675) asked for a religion of the heart, of private devotion and inward conversion, against the dry orthodoxy of the Lutheran schools. Pater uses the word in his account of what Goethe's culture left behind. "It comes easily and naturally, perhaps, to certain 'other-worldly' natures to be even as the Schöne Seele, that ideal of gentle pietism, in Wilhelm Meister: but to the large vision of Goethe, this seemed to be a phase of life that a man might feel all round, and leave behind him" (WIN §51). The *Schöne Seele*, "the beautiful soul", is the narrator of the "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul", the sixth book of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795–96), a woman's account of a life given to inward devotion; Goethe says that it arose from the conversations and letters of his mother's friend Susanna Katharina von Klettenberg, a pietist.[504] The note at WIN §51 says that Pater treats the passage as "the portrait of a spiritually serious mode of life that Goethe can encompass within the larger novel". The phrase is generous, "gentle", and the judgement is not a dismissal: the pietist life is one that a man "might feel all round", a phase, not an error. It stands beside the sensuous nature that Goethe would not let overgrow him and the commonplace metaphysical instinct that one who would mould his life to artistic perfection may have to renounce (WIN §51; see Im Ganzen); each is a form of life to be known and passed through.

## See also

Christian asceticism; Im Ganzen; Natural piety; Schöne Seele.

[504] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, part II, book 8.

# Polytheism

*The religion of many gods, which Pater refuses to see as merely gay and graceful: in Greece it holds almost every sad and wild note of the medieval church · The Renaissance*

*polytheism*; *the classical polytheism*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Belief in, or worship of, many gods.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek polytheism, Pater says, anticipated almost every "wild or melancholy note of the medieval church" (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §26 says that Pater "draws an analogy between Christian devotional sorrow and certain Greek cults".

**A place to read.** WIN §§24, 26.

## Meaning

*Polytheism* is from the Greek *polys*, many, and *theos*, god. The Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria used *polytheia* for the error of those who worship many gods, and the word came into modern use with the French *polythéisme* of Jean Bodin (1580), and into English early in the seventeenth century, a generation before its opposite, *monotheism*. It was a word of reproach, made by believers in one God for the religions of others. Pater uses it against that reproach. His Greek polytheism is not an infancy of religion but a complete religion, as various as Christianity and as sad.

## Use in the book

The word first comes in a quotation Pater means to correct. To the common view of Greek religion as "the religion of art and beauty" (WIN §24; see Religion of art and beauty) he adds an instance: "Thus Cardinal Newman speaks of 'the classical polytheism which was gay and graceful, as was natural in a civilised age.' Yet such a view is only a partial one" (WIN §24).[505] It fixes the eye on the bright edge of Hellenic culture and loses sight of "the sombre world across which it strikes" (WIN §24; see Chthonian divinities). The correction is the essay's whole account of Greek religion. "Greek religion, where we can observe it most distinctly, is at once a magnificent ritualistic system, and a cycle of poetical conceptions" (WIN §24): ritual from the pagan sentiment, poetry from the myth (see Pagan sentiment; Myth). Religions grow "by natural laws out of man's life" (WIN §24; see Natural law), and change as life changes: "They brighten under a bright sky, they become liberal as the social range widens, they grow intense and shrill in the clefts of human life, where the spirit is narrow and confined, and the stars are visible at noonday" (WIN §24).

[505] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (London, 1845); revised edition (London, 1878), ch. VI, sect. 1.

The twenty-sixth paragraph shows the polytheism of the many. "This religion is itself pagan, and has in any broad view of it the pagan sadness. It does not at once, and for the majority, become the higher Hellenic religion. The country people, of course, cherish the unlovely idols of an earlier time, such as those which Pausanias found still devoutly preserved in Arcadia" (WIN §26); Pausanias was a Greek travel writer of the second century AD. "The wilder people have wilder gods, which, however, in Athens, or Corinth, or Lacedæmon, changing ever with the worshippers in whom they live and move and have their being, borrow something of the lordliness and distinction of human nature there" (WIN §26). The gods live in their worshippers, a phrase Pater borrows, unmarked, from the King James Version of Paul's sermon at Athens, where it is in God that "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), and turns round: here it is the gods who live in men. Then the catalogue of the mendicants, purifications and mournful mysteries (WIN §26; see Addolorata), and the exclamation that scarcely a wild or melancholy note of the medieval church was not anticipated by Greek polytheism (WIN §26; see Heathen sorrow).

The word can be read as Pater's challenge to two audiences at once. Against the Christian apologist, who set the "gay and graceful" classical polytheism against the gloomy rites of the East, with their guilt and expiation, he shows that Greek religion had its own gloom; against the Hellenist, for whom Greece was all light, he shows its gloom. What remains is a religion like any other, rooted in the same sentiment, with its bright and its dark sides, and its distinction is only that, "under happy conditions", it could rise to an art (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities). The many gods of the polytheism are, on this reading, the human form multiplied, and that is why their religion could transform itself "into an artistic ideal" (WIN §26; see Artistic ideal).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §24** Newman's view of a gay and graceful classical polytheism is only partial; Greek religion is a ritual system and a cycle of poetical conceptions.

**WIN §26** The wilder people have wilder gods; scarcely a melancholy note of the medieval church but was anticipated by Greek polytheism.

## See also

Addolorata; Artistic ideal; Chthonian divinities; Heathen sorrow; Myth; Natural law; Pagan sentiment; Religion of art and beauty.

*The former life in which, on the Platonic account, lovers first knew each other, so that love at first sight is a recognition · The Renaissance previous state of existence*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A life before this one: the soul's existence before its present birth.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "He accounts for love at first sight by a previous state of existence—*la dove io t'amai prima*" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §14 renders *la dove io t'amai prima* "There where I loved you before", and says that "Pater reads the earlier love as taking place in a former existence".

**A place to read.** MIC §14.

## Meaning

The idea is Platonic: the soul, before it entered the body, saw the forms, and among them beauty itself; in this life a beautiful face recalls what it saw, and love is a kind of memory.[506] From this doctrine Michelangelo, on Pater's account, drew an account of love at first sight. If the soul recognises in a face what it knew before birth, the first sight is not first but a recognition, and two souls may have known each other already.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentence of the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which closes its comparison of Dante and Plato: "He accounts for love at first sight by a previous state of existence—*la dove io t'amai prima*" (MIC §14). The Italian, from Michelangelo's sonnet "La vita del mie amor non è 'l cor mio", the edition renders "There where I loved you before": a place, *la dove* (modern *là dove*, "there where"), as if the former life were a country the lovers had lived in.[507]

The sentence is the paragraph's last example of the Platonic tradition at work in Michelangelo's verse. Dante's love began in this world, "in early youth" (MIC §14; see Platonic lover; Anti-natal state); Michelangelo's, in the poem Pater quotes, began before the world. The Platonic doctrine, which the paragraph has set against Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body (see Passage of the soul; Resurrection of the body), gives the poet a way of explaining the suddenness of love: it is sudden because it is old.

"Accounts for" is Pater's word, and it is exact: the doctrine in the poem is an explanation, a way of making sense of an experience. The edition's note marks the reading as Pater's, but the sonnet bears it out. Love, it says,

[506] Plato, *Phaedrus* 249c–251a.

[507] Michelangelo, sonnet "La vita del mie amor non è 'l cor mio" (Girardi 34), lines 5–6, 12–13.

was given to the poet "when the soul departed from God", *nel dipartir l'alma da Dio*, and he turns to the beloved's eyes, which hold "all paradise", "to return there where I loved you first". The "there" is where the soul was before birth. The sonnet is the same whose first two lines Pater prints by themselves as the eleventh paragraph of the essay (MIC §11; see Amor).

The doctrine has two other places in the book, the "anti-natal state" of the tenth paragraph and Winckelmann's "phase of pre-existence" (MIC §10; WIN §19; see Anti-natal state); in all three Pater uses a single myth, for love, for beauty and for genius, and in each it explains an experience as remembrance.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §14** Michelangelo accounts for love at first sight by a previous state of existence: there where I loved you before.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §14 says: "English: There where I loved you before. Italian. Pater reads the earlier love as taking place in a former existence."

## See also

Amor; Anti-natal state; Passage of the soul; Platonic lover; Resurrection of the body.

# Primitive form

*The first form of man and the morning of the world, on which the aged Michelangelo dreams in a worn-out society · The Renaissance*

*primitive form*; *primitive*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The first or original form: here, man as he was at the beginning of the world.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo dreams "on the morning of the world's history, on the primitive form of man, on the images under which that primitive world had conceived of spiritual forces" (MIC §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §16.

## Meaning

The Latin *primitivus*, first of its kind, from *primus*, first, gave English "primitive" in the sense of original, earliest. By Pater's day the word was also the anthropologists' term for peoples thought to preserve an early stage of

human life, and the collectors' term for the painters before Raphael. Pater uses it in its first sense, of the beginning of things.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second half of the last sentence of the sixteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay: Michelangelo lingers on as a revenant (see Revenant), "dreaming, in a worn-out society, theatrical in its life, theatrical in its art, theatrical even in its devotion, on the morning of the world's history, on the primitive form of man, on the images under which that primitive world had conceived of spiritual forces" (MIC §16; see Theatricality).

The sentence makes a contrast of ages. The society around him is "worn-out", late, theatrical; his dream is of the "morning", the first man, the earliest images of the spiritual. The three objects of the dream rise in abstraction: a time, a form, a way of imagining. The "primitive form of man" can be read as Adam, whom Michelangelo had painted on the Sistine ceiling as a figure "akin to the rugged hillside on which it lies" (MIC §3; see Satyr-like); and "the images under which that primitive world had conceived of spiritual forces" as the prophets and sibyls of the ceiling, and the God who divides light from darkness.

The dream gives the essay's two subjects, creation and death, a meeting point. The old man near death dreams of the beginning; the "creation of life itself in its supreme form" (MIC §3; see Creation of life) is the subject of his old age's imagination as of his youth's work. The essay can be read as circling back here to its start: the Michelangelo of the first paragraphs, whose genius concerns itself "almost exclusively with the making of man" (MIC §3), is the Michelangelo of the last, dreaming of "the primitive form of man".

"Primitive" elsewhere in the book is a word of origins, and sometimes of rudeness. the twin cups of Amis and Amile bear witness to "the enjoyment of beautiful handiwork by a primitive people" (FRE §10); in Heine's tale the gods, after the triumph of Christianity, are beset as they had been "during the primitive ages", when the Titans scaled Olympus (PIC §2); Michelangelo gives the Doni Madonna "the uncouth energy of the older and more primitive 'Mighty Mother'" (PIC §15; see Mighty Mother); Ronsard wishes to restore the letter *i* "to its primitive liberty" (BEL §14). In each, the primitive is the earlier, sometimes cruder, sometimes freer, than what followed.

The phrase can be read as Pater's sympathy with the old Michelangelo made a picture: the artist who, finding his own age theatrical, turns his mind to the first age of all.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "primitive" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §10** The twin cups witness to the enjoyment of beautiful handiwork by a primitive people.

**PIC §2** In Heine's tale the gods are beset as they had been during the primitive ages, when the Titans scaled Olympus.

**PIC §15** Michelangelo gives the Doni Madonna the energy of the more primitive Mighty Mother.

**MIC §16** The aged Michelangelo dreams on the primitive form of man and the images of that primitive world.

**BEL §14** Ronsard would restore the letter i to its primitive liberty.

## See also

Creation of life; Mighty Mother; Revenant; Satyr-like; Theatricality.

## Profane and sacred

*his profane and sacred persons*

Attested: *profane and sacred* (BOT §5). The two kinds of subject a painter of the Renaissance might take, the pagan and worldly and the Christian. The book's other use of the pair has the common order, "the sacred and the profane" (PIC §15; see Sacred and profane); here, of Botticelli, it is reversed. "True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment with which he infuses his profane and sacred persons" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles). The reversal can be read as putting the pagan first, though the essay finds the sentiment in the Madonnas before it "carries" it, as the strangest thing, "into classical subjects" (BOT §8). The point of the phrase, though, is the single sentiment across the line. Venus and the Madonna alike have "a sense of displacement or loss about them" (BOT §5), so that the distinction between profane and sacred matters less, in Botticelli, than the look they share. The Leonardo essay goes further and calls Leonardo, who "handles sacred subjects continually", "the most profane of painters" (LEO §25).

## See also

Profane poetry; Sacred and profane; Wistfulness of exiles.

## Profession

*profession*; *professional*

Attested: *profession* (BEL §12, twice; WIN §11, twice; WIN §12); *professional* (FRE §§6, 33; WIN §5, three times). A profession is first a public declaration, from the Latin *profiteri*, to declare openly: the vows of a monk, or the profession of faith required of a convert, which for the

Roman Church took the form fixed by Pope Pius IV in 1564.[508] From the declaration the word passed to the calling a man declares, and in that sense Pater uses it of Du Bellay, who had looked forward to "the profession of a soldier, hereditary in his family" (BEL §12). In the Winckelmann essay the two senses meet. Winckelmann spoke with scorn of his professional education, and the "professional guardians of learning" tried to suppress him (WIN §5; see Votary), as the first essay sets the "merely professional, official, hireling ministers" of the medieval system against the humanist (FRE §6). Then the other sense. "Probably the thought of a profession of the papal religion was not new to Winckelmann" (WIN §11), and in 1754, to reach Rome, he made it. "Unquiet still at the word 'profession,' not without a struggle, he joined the Roman Church, July the 11th, 1754" (WIN §11). The quotation marks show Pater dwelling on the word, and can be read as saying that what troubled Winckelmann was not the doctrine but the declaring. The next paragraph judges it: the insincerity of his religious profession was "only one incident" of a culture in which the moral instinct was merged in the artistic (WIN §12; see Religious sense). The man who would not be a professional of learning made a profession of faith, and the irony can be read as the essay's own.

## See also

Absolution; Higher life; Nuncio; Religious sense; Votary.

# Pyx

*pyxes*

Attested: *pyxes* (LEO §5). The Greek *pyxis*, a box of boxwood (*pyxos*), became in the Church the small vessel in which the consecrated Host is kept, or carried to the sick. Pater lists pyxes among the beautiful objects of Verrocchio's workshop, "reliquaries, pyxes, silver images for the pope's chapel at Rome, strange fancy-work of the middle age" (LEO §5; see Reliquary). The goldsmith made the vessel; its use was sacramental. The word can be read as a small foreshadowing in the essay. The boy who grew up among vessels made to hold the Host was to paint the Last Supper as the Eucharist seen "not as the pale Host of the altar, but as one taking leave of his friends" (LEO §27; see Conventional associations; Consecrated Host).

## See also

Ambry; Chasing; Consecrated Host; Conventional associations; Reliquary.

[508] Pius IV, bull *Iniunctum nobis* (13 November 1564).

*The essay's theme: making the old gods and Christ agree · The Renaissance*
*reconciliation*; *reconcile*, *reconciled*, *reconciling*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Reconciliation is the bringing together again of what is at odds: two parties, two faiths, two philosophies.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "No account of the Renaissance can be complete without some notice of the attempt made by certain Italian scholars of the fifteenth century to reconcile Christianity with the religion of ancient Greece" (PIC §1). Pico is "an early instance of those who, after following the vain hope of an impossible reconciliation from system to system, have at last fallen back unsatisfied on the simplicities of their childhood's belief" (PIC §8).

**In this edition.** The Introduction says that Pater "finds another kind of revival in Pico, who hopes to bring philosophical and religious traditions into conversation"; the Outline calls the chapter "a study of the desire to reconcile traditions".

**A place to read.** PIC §§1, 8, 15.

## Meaning

The Latin *reconciliare* is to make friends again. In the New Testament reconciliation is God's restoring of the world to himself in Christ, in Paul's account of the apostle's ministry;[509] in the history of the church it is the healing of a schism, and the Council of Ferrara–Florence proclaimed in 1439 a union of the Greek and Latin Churches that did not last.[510] Pater uses the word of faiths and philosophies, and of a single life.

## Use in the book

The word is the Pico essay's theme. It opens the essay, as the attempt "to reconcile Christianity with the religion of ancient Greece" (PIC §1), and the next sentence widens it: "To reconcile forms of sentiment which at first sight seem incompatible" belonged to "the generous instincts of that age" (PIC §1; see Many-sided intellectual culture). The essay then sets Pico's attempt among others. The council of 1438 met "for the reconciliation of the Greek and Latin Churches" (PIC §6; see Platonic academy); Pico's "generous hope" was to reconcile the philosophers "with one another, and all alike with the Church" (PIC §8; see Erudition). And it ranks the means. The scholars of the fifteenth century could reconcile only by allegory, making the religions agree "as subsisting side by side" (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation); the modern scholar might reconcile them as

[509] 2 Corinthians 5:18–19.

[510] Council of Florence, decree of union *Laetentur caeli* (6 July 1439).

stages of one growth (PIC §3; see Development; Historic sense); the artists reconciled them in images (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation); and a later age would find "the true method of effecting a scientific reconciliation" (PIC §15; see Scientific reconciliation).

The personal verdict comes in the middle, in the sentence on Pico quoted above (PIC §8). "Vain", "impossible", "unsatisfied": the reconciliation of systems fails. But Pico himself is "reconciled indeed to the new religion, but still with a tenderness for the earlier life" (PIC §13; see Natural piety), and his life is "so perfect a parallel to the attempt made in his writings to reconcile Christianity with the ideas of paganism" (PIC §13; see Analogue). The essay can be read as finding the reconciliation that the systems could not make in a person and in art. What Pico's writings attempted, his life and the painters achieved.

Outside the Pico essay the word names reconciliations that are lived rather than argued. In the Renaissance of the first essay "whatsoever things are comely" are "reconciled, for the elevation and adorning of our spirits" (FRE §33; see Whatsoever things are comely; Unity of culture). In the Winckelmann essay Winckelmann "might reflect that while Rome had reconciled itself to the Renaissance", Protestant Germany had not (WIN §12), and his friendships with young men, "bringing him into contact with the pride of human form", "perfected his reconciliation to the spirit of Greek sculpture" (WIN §14; see Beauty of living form). A Church reconciles itself to an age, a man to an art. Reconciliation in the book succeeds where it is lived.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "reconciliation" or the verb occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §33** In the unity of culture whatsoever things are comely are reconciled.

**PIC §1** No account of the Renaissance is complete without the attempt to reconcile Christianity with the religion of ancient Greece.

**PIC §3** A modern scholar might reconcile the religions as stages in the education of the human mind.

**PIC §4** The fifteenth-century scholars tried to reconcile the religions as subsisting side by side.

**PIC §5** The allegorical interpretation is the feebler counterpart of the reconciliation seen in the art of the time.

**PIC §6** The council of 1438 met for the reconciliation of the Greek and Latin Churches.

**PIC §8** Pico's generous hope of reconciling the philosophers; the vain hope of an impossible reconciliation from system to system.

**PIC §13** Pico, reconciled to the new religion, tried in the Heptaplus to reconcile Plato with Moses.

**PIC §15** For that age the only possible reconciliation was an imaginative one; a later age conceived a scientific reconciliation.

**WIN §12** Winckelmann might reflect that Rome had reconciled itself to the Renaissance.

**WIN §14** Winckelmann's friendships with young men perfected his reconciliation to the spirit of Greek sculpture.

## In this edition

The Introduction says that Pater "finds another kind of revival in Pico, who hopes to bring philosophical and religious traditions into conversation". The Outline says that in the chapter "The life of a young scholar becomes a study of the desire to reconcile traditions". The note at PIC §6 says that "Efforts to reach agreement between the Greek and Latin Churches brought Greek-speaking theologians and scholars to Italy before the fall of Constantinople".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Analogue; Artistic reconciliation; Beauty of living form; Development; Erudition; Historic sense; Many-sided intellectual culture; Natural piety; Platonic academy; Scientific reconciliation; Unity of culture; Whatsoever things are comely.

# Relic

*relic*; *relics*

Attested: *relics* (BEL §9; WIN §§9, 22, 46, 47); *relic* (WIN §42; CON §3; C73 §4). A relic is what remains, from the Latin *reliquiae*, remains; in the church, the body or a fragment of the body of a saint, or a thing he touched, kept and venerated. The word moves through the book from the sacred to the antique to the mind. In the Du Bellay essay it keeps its religious sense, in Du Bellay's own comparison: those who will have learning only in Greek and Latin make him think of relics seen through a little pane of glass and never touched (BEL §9; see Reliquary). In the Winckelmann essay the relics are the remains of ancient art, and the essay speaks of them in a believer's language. Winckelmann, who had known Greece only in words, finds its life "still fervent in the relics of plastic art" (WIN §9); Christian art had buried some relics of the antique in itself, "ready to work wonders when their day came" (WIN §46; see Christian art), as a saint's relics work

miracles; and to the Christian ascetic their recovery was like the opening of a plague-pit (WIN §47; see Plague-pit). Winckelmann's own nature is "itself like a relic of classical antiquity, laid open by accident to our alien, modern atmosphere" (WIN §42; see Accident). The Conclusion takes the word smallest of all. Analysis divides experience until what is real in life fines itself down to a single sharp impression, "with a sense in it, a relic more or less fleeting, of such moments gone by" (CON §3; C73 §4; see Impression). The saint's relic was what lasted of a holy life; the Conclusion's relic is what lasts, a moment longer, of a moment, and the book can be read as ending its uses of the word with a relic that is itself passing.

## See also

Accident; Christian art; Impression; Plague-pit; Reliquary.

# Religion and culture

*Named beside philosophy in 1873 as powers that startle the spirit into observation: the revision kept philosophy and let religion go · The Renaissance*

*religion and culture*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Faith and the cultivation of the mind, taken together as services to the human spirit.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The service of philosophy, and of religion and culture as well, to the human spirit, is to startle it into a sharp and eager observation" (C73 §5).

**In this edition.** The notes at C73 §5 say that the first edition "explicitly extends that service to religion and culture as well as philosophy", and that "the express inclusion of religion gives the catalogue of ways to sharpen attention a wider reach".

**A place to read.** C73 §5.

## Meaning

In the England of 1873 the pair can be read as an echo of Matthew Arnold, whose phrase on criticism the Preface quotes without naming him (PRE §2; see To see the object as in itself it really is). His *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) had set culture, the study of perfection, beside religion, which it calls "the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself", and found that the two come to the same conclusion about what perfection is.[511] In the year of *The Renaissance* Arnold went further. *Literature and Dogma* (1873) read the Bible as literature rather than as dogma and defined religion as "morality

[511] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), chapter I (titled "Sweetness and Light" in later editions).

touched by emotion".[512] For Arnold religion has conduct for its object, and culture, though "bent on seeing things as they are", moves also by "the moral and social passion for doing good": both are to make men better.

## Use in the book

Pater's sentence gives the pair another service. Philosophy, religion and culture are to "startle" the spirit "into a sharp and eager observation" (C73 §5; see Sharp and eager observation), and the sentences that follow say what the observation is to catch: a form grown perfect in hand or face, a tone on the hills or sea, a mood that is real "for that moment only" (C73 §5; see Moment). Set beside Arnold, the sentence can be read as turning religion from conduct to perception: its service becomes the one that a poem or a picture gives, to wake the attention. When the 1873 Conclusion comes back to religion it asks nothing different: "religious or philosophical ideas" are instruments of criticism (C73 §6; see Religious or philosophical ideas), and "political or religious enthusiasm" is one of the high passions that give "this quickened sense of life" (C73 §7; see Political or religious enthusiasm).

The essays had prepared the claim. The Pico essay imagines a modern scholar for whom all religions "arise spontaneously out of the human mind, as expressions of the varying phases of its sentiment concerning the unseen world" (PIC §3; see Religious sense), and the Winckelmann essay, while calling the view "only a partial one", grants that "we are accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty" (WIN §24; see Religion of art and beauty). A religion valued for the sentiment it expresses and the beauty it makes is close to one valued for the observation it rouses.

The revised text makes the service that "of philosophy, of speculative culture", and the observation "a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4; see Speculative culture). Religion is gone. The change can also be read as a retreat from a provocation. To say that religion's service is to startle the spirit into observation is to make religion one more instrument of sensation, and the objection of Pater's Brasenose colleague John Wordsworth, that the Conclusion taught that "no fixed principles either of religion or morality can be regarded as certain" (see Abstract morality), shows how the Conclusion was heard. The revised text leaves the claim unsaid.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the revised sentence, in the order of the book.

**CON §4** The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, is to startle the human spirit to a life of constant and eager observation.

[512] Matthew Arnold, *Literature and Dogma* (London, 1873), chapter I, §2.

**C73 §5** In 1873 the service is that of philosophy, "and of religion and culture as well".

## See also

Abstract morality; General culture; Moment; Political or religious enthusiasm; Religion of art and beauty; Religious or philosophical ideas; Religious sense; Sharp and eager observation; Speculative culture; To see the object as in itself it really is.

# Religion of art and beauty

*The view of Greek religion as a worship of beautiful gods and sacred poems, which Pater calls only a partial one · The Renaissance*
*the religion of art and beauty*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A religion whose worship lies chiefly in its art and whose gods are ideals of beauty: the name modern writers gave to the religion of the Greeks.

**In *The Renaissance*.** We are accustomed to think of Greek religion "as the religion of art and beauty", a view that Pater calls "only a partial one" (WIN §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §§24–26.

## Meaning

The phrase can be read as gathering two names that German philosophy had given to the religion of Greece. G. W. F. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) called it *die Kunst-Religion*, the religion of art, the stage of spirit in which the god is known in the statue, the hymn and the drama; his lectures on the philosophy of religion called it *die Religion der Schönheit*, the religion of beauty, beside the religion of sublimity of the Jews and the religion of expediency of the Romans.[513] The feeling behind the names was older. Friedrich Schiller's poem "Die Götter Griechenlandes" ("The Gods of Greece", 1788) had mourned the beautiful gods whom a colder faith had driven from the world.[514] By Pater's time the view was a commonplace of the educated, and that is how he introduces it: as what "we are accustomed to think".

[513] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bamberg and Würzburg, 1807), chapter VII, section B, "Die Kunst-Religion"; *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, ed. P. Marheineke (Berlin, 1832), Part II, "Die Religion der Schönheit".

[514] Friedrich Schiller, "Die Götter Griechenlandes", *Der Teutsche Merkur* (March 1788).

## Use in the book

The phrase opens Pater's account of Greek religion, in the twenty-fourth paragraph. "Greek art, when we first catch sight of it, is entangled with Greek religion. We are accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty, the religion of which the Olympian Zeus and the Athene Polias are the idols, the poems of Homer the sacred books" (WIN §24). Cardinal Newman's "classical polytheism which was gay and graceful" is cited as an instance, and the view is judged at once: it is "only a partial one" (WIN §24; see Polytheism). It fixes the eye "on the sharp, bright edge of high Hellenic culture" and loses sight of the sombre world across which that edge strikes (WIN §24; see Chthonian divinities).

Two of the three items are exact. The Olympian Zeus is Pheidias's gold and ivory statue at Olympia, the most famous work of Greek sculpture in antiquity. The "sacred books" are Homer's poems because, as Herodotus wrote, Homer and Hesiod had given the Greeks their theogony, named their gods and shown their forms.[515] The Athene Polias is a harder case. Athena "of the city" was the name of the ancient image kept in the Erechtheion on the Acropolis, which the Athenians said had fallen from heaven,[516] not of Pheidias's gold and ivory Athena of the Parthenon. Pater does not say which he means, but the list can be read as holding, unremarked, the kind of ancient and unlovely idol that the essay sets later against the art of the masters (WIN §26; see Polytheism).

The correction takes two paragraphs. Greek religion is "at once a magnificent ritualistic system, and a cycle of poetical conceptions" (WIN §24; see Polytheism): its ritual grows from a universal pagan sentiment, sad, earthbound and older than Greece (WIN §§24–25; see Pagan sentiment; Ritual), and its poetry from a mythology "not due to a religious source at all" (WIN §26; see Myth). Greek religion has its mendicants and purifications, its worship of sorrow and its mournful mysteries (WIN §26; see Addolorata; Worship of sorrow). Only at the end of the account does Greek art arise from it, "under happy conditions" (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities), and the religion become "an artistic ideal" (WIN §26; see Artistic ideal).

The argument reverses the view it began with. For Hegel and Schiller the Greek religion was a religion of art; for Pater it is a religion like others, rooted in the same sentiment, which became art "under happy conditions". The religion of art and beauty is not where Greek religion starts but what, in a few places and for a few people, it became: the bright edge, not the world it crosses. The phrase can be read as the first statement of the theme Pater pursued in his later studies of Demeter and Dionysus, the darkness under the Greek light (see Chthonian divinities).

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[515] Herodotus, *Histories* II.53.

[516] Pausanias, *Description of Greece* I.26.5–27.1.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraphs that correct it, in the order of the book.

**WIN §24** We are accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty; such a view is only a partial one.

**WIN §25** The pagan sentiment, part of the eternal basis of all religions, attaches itself to the usages of patriarchal life; here are the beginnings of a ritual.

**WIN §26** Greek religion has its worship of sorrow; out of it, under happy conditions, arises Greek art.

## See also

Addolorata; Artistic ideal; Chthonian divinities; Myth; Pagan sentiment; Polytheism; Ritual; Sublime; Worship of sorrow.

### Religion of darkness

*the religion of darkness*

Attested: *the religion of darkness* (PIC §1). Paganism as the early Christians saw it: the worship of demons, opposed to the light of Christ. "An earlier and simpler generation had seen in the gods of Greece so many malignant spirits, the defeated but still living centres of the religion of darkness, struggling, not always in vain, against the kingdom of light" (PIC §1; see Kingdom of light). The view was the Fathers'. Augustine's *City of God* argues at length that the gods of the nations were evil demons who desired worship.[517] Pater's "earlier and simpler generation" places the view in the past and can be read as judging it gently: simple, not wicked. The gods are "defeated but still living", and they fight "not always in vain" (PIC §1): the phrase can be read as keeping them alive for the essay's later stages, when they return in Heine's story as exiles and in Renaissance art as figures of beauty (PIC §§2, 15; see Ambrosia; Artistic reconciliation). The religion of darkness becomes, in the course of the essay, the "dreams of a dead faith" (PIC §15).

## See also

Ambrosia; Artistic reconciliation; Kingdom of light.

### Religious observance

*religious observance*

[517] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, books VIII–X.

Attested: *religious observance* (WIN §26). An observance is a keeping, from the Latin *observare*, to watch over or keep: the keeping of a rule, a feast or a rite. Pater uses the phrase in his account of how myth and ritual combine in Greek religion. Mythology fixes itself upon the ritual and gives it new meanings, and while the ritual stays unchanged the æsthetic element expands (WIN §26; see Myth). Then the law: the fixed element is always "the religious observance", the fluid one "the myth, the religious conception" (WIN §26; see Myth). The word chosen for the fixed element can be read as exact. An observance is something kept rather than understood, and the twenty-fifth paragraph has shown the rite, "promoted now with a consciously religious motive", losing its domestic character and so "becoming more and more inexplicable with each generation" (WIN §25; see Ritual). The observance stays while the myth changes, the æsthetic element being "only accidentally connected with it" (WIN §26; see Myth); and out of the religion that holds both, "under happy conditions", Greek art arises (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities).

## See also

Chthonian divinities; Myth; Pagan sentiment; Ritual.

# Religious reverie

*Devotion as dreaming, and the line between a pious and a wayward dream · The Renaissance*

*religious reverie*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Religious reverie is devout contemplation that passes into images: a waking dream of holy things.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Botticelli's picture "may have been only one of those familiar compositions in which religious reverie has recorded its impressions of the various forms of beatified existence" (BOT §5).

**In this edition.** The note at BOT §5 says that "Here gloria denotes a painted vision of heavenly glory or of the blessed".

**A place to read.** BOT §5, with GIO §12.

## Meaning

The French *rêverie* is from *rêver*, to dream, and in Old French the verb meant to wander or to rave. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (1782) had made the word a name for a kind of thinking that follows its own drift,[518] and Pater uses it often, of monks and of artists (see Reverie). "Religious" fixes the drift on holy things. It is not prayer, which

[518] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* (1782).

addresses God, nor doctrine, which states him, but the mind dwelling on heaven and seeing pictures.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes twice. In the Botticelli essay it names a genre and a defence. After the Palmieri story Pater allows the innocent account quoted above, "—Glorias, as they were called, like that in which Giotto painted the portrait of Dante; but somehow it was suspected of embodying in a picture the wayward dream of Palmieri, and the chapel where it hung was closed" (BOT §5; see Gloria; Incarnation).

The sentence sets two dreams side by side. Religious reverie records its impressions; Palmieri's dream is "wayward". Both are dreams, and the picture could be read as either; "somehow it was suspected" of the second. "Recorded its impressions" gives devotion the critic's vocabulary (see Impression): the Glorias are not illustrations of doctrine but records of what the devout imagination saw when it dwelt on the blessed. Orthodoxy, in this account, draws its line between two dreams, and the line is not visible in the paint.

In the Giorgione essay the phrase is placed. The early Venetian painters "seem never for a moment to have been so much as tempted" to forget "that painting must be before all things decorative, a thing for the eye, a space of colour on the wall", and treated it so, "this, to begin and end with; whatever higher matter of thought, or poetry, or religious reverie might play its part therein, between" (GIO §12). Here religious reverie is one of the higher matters that may enter a picture, but only "between" its beginning and its end, which are colour and decoration (see Anders-streben).

The two uses can be read as Pater's account of religious art in brief. Florence let reverie govern the picture, and so its pictures could be suspected of heresy; Venice kept reverie in its place, and so its pictures were safe and sensuous. Pater loves both, and the book's argument about matter and form favours the Venetian (see Matter and form). Yet the Botticelli essay shows what the Florentine way gave: pictures in which a sentiment, pious or wayward, could rise "through the veil of its ostensible subject" (BOT §1; see Original sentiment), and in which a critic could read the soul of an age.

## Places to read

Both paragraphs in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §5** The censured picture may have been one of the familiar compositions in which religious reverie recorded its impressions of beatified existence.

**GIO §12** For the Venetians painting was decorative to begin and end with, whatever religious reverie might play its part between.

## In this edition

The note at BOT §5 says that "Here gloria denotes a painted vision of heavenly glory or of the blessed. Pater allows that a familiar devotional composition could have acquired the more unusual meaning associated with Palmieri later." An earlier note at BOT §5 says that the National Gallery attributes the picture, The Assumption of the Virgin, to Francesco Botticini.

## See also

Anders-streben; Beatified existence; Gloria; Impression; Incarnation; Matter and form; Original sentiment; Reverie.

# Religious sense

*Religion as a faculty of the mind, with a history · The Renaissance religious sense*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The religious sense is the capacity in human nature from which religions spring: a feeling toward the unseen, common to all peoples, which takes different forms in different ages.

**In *The Renaissance*.** A modern scholar "might go on to observe that each has contributed something to the development of the religious sense" (PIC §3); the fifteenth-century scholars would reconcile the religions "not as successive stages in a regular development of the religious sense, but as subsisting side by side" (PIC §4).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §4 calls the sentence on the historic sense "a Victorian judgment about the past", and speaks of "Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

**A place to read.** PIC §§3–4.

## Meaning

To speak of a religious "sense" is to treat religion as a faculty, like the sense of beauty or the sense of humour: something in the mind before it is something in a creed. The idea took shape at the end of the century before Pater's. Friedrich Schleiermacher, the German theologian, defined religion in his *Speeches on Religion* (1799) as "sense and taste for the infinite";[519] and Max Müller, in the first of his lectures on the science of religion, published in the year of *The Renaissance*, called religion a mental faculty which "enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names, and under

[519] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Über die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern* (Berlin, 1799), second speech: "Sinn und Geschmak fürs Unendliche".

varying disguises".[520] On this view the religions of the world are the many expressions of one human capacity.

## Use in the book

The phrase belongs to the modern scholar's method, which the Pico essay describes and Pico's age lacked. The religions, he might observe, "arise spontaneously out of the human mind, as expressions of the varying phases of its sentiment concerning the unseen world" (PIC §3; see Natural product). That sentiment can be read as the religious sense, and it grows: each religion "has contributed something to the development of the religious sense" (PIC §3; see Development). The fifteenth century could not see this; it sought to reconcile the religions as subsisting side by side (PIC §4; see Successive stages; Allegorical interpretation).

The phrase makes a large claim quietly. If religions are expressions of a human sense, then no one of them is the whole truth and none is merely false; each is a phase. The modern scholar might "justify the existence of each" (PIC §3), and the basis of reconciliation would then be "the inexhaustible activity and creativeness of the human mind itself, in which all religions alike have their root, and in which all alike are reconciled" (PIC §3; see Reconciliation). The religious sense can be read as Pater's way of reconciling Christianity with the religion of Greece where Pico failed: not by making them say the same thing, but by finding both in the same faculty.

The Winckelmann essay shows the sense in a single life. Winckelmann's religious profession was insincere, and Pater suggests that "at the bar of the highest criticism, perhaps, Winckelmann may be absolved": the insincerity "was only one incident of a culture in which the moral instinct, like the religious or political, was merged in the artistic" (WIN §12). In him the religious sense was one of the instincts the artistic absorbed. The book does not deny the religious sense; it studies it, as one faculty among the others, with a history.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §3** Religions arise from the mind's sentiment concerning the unseen world; each has contributed to the development of the religious sense.

**PIC §4** The fifteenth-century scholars reconciled the religions not as stages in the development of the religious sense but as subsisting side by side.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §4 calls the sentence on the historic sense "a Victorian judgment about the past", marking "a difference between Pico's search for

[520] F. Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (London, 1873), lecture I.

truths he believed traditions shared and Pater's historical account of beliefs as the products of different cultures and times".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Development; Natural product; Reconciliation; Successive stages.

## Religious sentimentalism

*religious sentimentalism*

Attested: *religious sentimentalism* (LEO §14). "Sentimentalism" is the indulgence of feeling for its own sake, feeling that is enjoyed rather than acted on. Pater uses the phrase of Ludovico Sforza, in a sentence that sets crime and piety side by side: the duke who "murdered his young nephew by slow poison" yet "blended mere earthly passion with a sort of religious sentimentalism" (LEO §14; see Earthly passion; Susceptibility). "A sort of" withholds respect. The murder is Pater's charge (see Device). The religious feeling returns at the Duchess Beatrice's death, which "was followed in Ludovico by one of those paroxysms of religious feeling which in him were constitutional": in the church she had loved "mass was said a hundred times a day for her repose" (LEO §26; see Repose). "Constitutional" makes the piety a matter of temperament, like a tendency to fever. The phrase can be read as the essay's portrait of a court in which sins were "brilliant" and amusements "exquisite" (LEO §15; see Pageant), and devotion had become one more refinement of feeling.

## See also

Device; Earthly passion; Pageant; Repose; Susceptibility.

## Reliquary

*The precious case for relics: among Verrocchio's beautiful objects, and in Du Bellay's figure for the dead languages shut up in books · The Renaissance*

*reliquaries*; *reliquaires*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A case of precious metal or crystal made to hold the relics of a saint.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Beautiful objects lay about there—reliquaries, pyxes, silver images for the pope's chapel at Rome, strange fancy-work of the middle age, keeping odd company with fragments of antiquity, then but lately discovered" (LEO §5).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §11 translates *péris et mises en reliquaires de livres* "Perished and placed in the reliquaries of books" and says that "A language preserved in books has lost the daily circulation Du Bellay prizes".

**A place to read.** LEO §5, with BEL §11.

## Meaning

The Medieval Latin *reliquiarium* comes from *reliquiae*, remains. The reliquary was among the chief works of the medieval goldsmith: a casket, a cross, a statue or a model of the arm or head whose bone it held, made of gold, silver and enamel, and in the later middle ages often given a window of crystal through which the relic could be seen and venerated but not touched. It joined the most precious craft to the most holy matter.

## Use in the book

The word comes twice, and the two uses face each other across the book. In the Leonardo essay it heads the list of what the boy saw in Verrocchio's workshop: "Beautiful objects lay about there—reliquaries, pyxes, silver images for the pope's chapel at Rome, strange fancy-work of the middle age, keeping odd company with fragments of antiquity, then but lately discovered" (LEO §5; see Pyx). The sentence can be read as the Renaissance in a single room. The reliquaries and pyxes are the middle age's sacred craft; the fragments of antiquity are the newly found remains of the pagan world; and they keep "odd company" on the same benches. The antique fragments are relics of another faith, and the workshop treats both kinds of remains as objects of beauty. The Winckelmann essay gives the ascetic's view of such finds: the restored relics of the antique were to him like "an ancient plague-pit" opened (WIN §47; see Plague-pit). The boy who grew up among them was to become "the most profane of painters", handling "sacred subjects continually" (LEO §25; see Conventional associations).

In the Du Bellay essay the reliquary is a figure for death. Du Bellay pleads for the French language as a living speech, to be used "in daily communion of speech" (BEL §11; see Mother-tongue), and "it was impossible to have this impulse in Greek and Latin, dead languages shut up in books as in reliquaries—péris et mises en reliquaires de livres" (BEL §11), which the note renders "Perished and placed in the reliquaries of books". Two paragraphs earlier Du Bellay had compared to relics the scholars who thought that science and poetry could be written only in the dead languages: "Those who speak thus," he says, "make me think of the relics which one may only see through a little pane of glass, and must not touch with one's hands" (BEL §9). The reliquary preserves, and in preserving it removes from use.

The two uses suggest the book's double feeling about the past. Verrocchio's reliquaries make the sacred beautiful and keep it among living

things, beside the newly unearthed fragments of Greece and Rome. Du Bellay's reliquaries keep the ancient languages safe and dead. The Renaissance the book describes is neither a museum nor a shrine: it takes the old things out of their cases and puts them to use, as Du Bellay wanted the ancient poets imitated in French, not merely translated, and as Verrocchio's workshop set the antique beside the medieval.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "reliquaries" or *reliquaires* occurs, with the relics of BEL §9 and WIN §47, in the order of the book.

**LEO §5** Reliquaries and pyxes lay in Verrocchio's workshop beside fragments of antiquity lately discovered.

**BEL §9** Du Bellay compares those who will write only in the ancient tongues to relics seen through a little pane of glass.

**BEL §11** Greek and Latin are dead languages shut up in books as in reliquaries.

**WIN §47** To the Christian ascetic the restored relics of the antique were like an opened plague-pit.

## See also

Ambry; Chasing; Conventional associations; Cope; Hieratic preciseness; Mother-tongue; Plague-pit; Pleiad; Pyx; Relic.

# Reminiscence

*The recovery in this life of knowledge the soul had before birth: a Platonic "fancy" that Pater uses for intuition · The Renaissance*
*reminiscence*; *forgotten knowledge*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A remembering; in Plato's doctrine, *anamnēsis*, the recovery in this life of knowledge the soul had before it was born.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Winckelmann seems to realise "that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge hidden for a time in the mind itself" (WIN §19).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §19 says that Pater "imagines Winckelmann's intuitive seeing as recollection, a knowledge recovered with the help of desire".

**A place to read.** MIC §§10, 14; WIN §19.

## Meaning

*Reminiscence* is from the Latin *reminisci*, to call to mind, and in philosophy it renders the Greek *anamnēsis*, recollection. The doctrine is

Plato's, and he gives it two demonstrations. In the *Meno* Socrates questions a slave who has never learned geometry, and the boy, step by step, finds the side of a square twice the size of a given one; since no one taught him, Socrates argues, he was recollecting what his soul already knew.[521] In the *Phaedo* the argument turns on equality: we see sticks and stones that are equal yet fall short of equality itself, and we could not judge them to fall short unless we had known the Equal before we were born.[522] The *Phaedrus* gives the doctrine its myth, in which understanding is "a remembering of what our soul once saw" when it journeyed with a god (see Anti-natal state).[523] In each version learning is not acquiring but recovering, and the sign of it is the ease with which, once prompted, the mind knows.

## Use in the book

The word comes once, in the nineteenth paragraph, at the end of Pater's account of Winckelmann's intuition. He catches "the thread of a whole sequence of laws in some hollowing of the hand, or dividing of the hair"; he "seems to realise that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge hidden for a time in the mind itself", as if his mind had been lover and philosopher in some earlier life and were beginning its career again "with a certain power of anticipating its results" (WIN §19; see φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος). Two words carry the sentence. "Fancy" says that Pater does not hold the doctrine: it is a figure, not a belief. "Realise" says that Winckelmann makes the figure real (see Realise): his way of knowing looks so much like recollection that the old fancy seems for once to be true.

The doctrine explains what the paragraph has described. Winckelmann's literary life gave the impression "of excitement, intuition, inspiration" (WIN §19; see φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Intuition); he apprehended the Hellenic manner "not through the understanding, but by instinct or touch" (WIN §19; see Temperament); the world of Greek art seemed to call out in him "new senses fitted to deal with it" (WIN §19; see New organ). Knowledge that comes at a touch, before study, is what the *Meno* calls recollection. Pater borrows the explanation without the metaphysics, and keeps what it describes: a sense of recognition, the feeling of knowing again what one sees for the first time.

The book has given the doctrine twice before, in the Michelangelo essay, as a doctrine of love. Michelangelo asks whether his last passion is carnal affection or *il raggio ardente*, the burning ray, of what Pater glosses as "Plato's anti-natal state" (MIC §10; see Anti-natal state), and he accounts for love at first sight by a previous state of existence (MIC §14; see Previous state of existence). The Winckelmann essay moves the doctrine from love to knowledge, without losing the lover (see φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος).

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[521] Plato, *Meno* 81c–86b.

[522] Plato, *Phaedo* 72e–77a, especially 74a–75d.

[523] Plato, *Phaedrus* 249b–c: *ἀνάμνησις ἐκείνων ἃ ποτ' εἶδεν ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ συμπορευθεῖσα θεῷ*.

The word can be read as Pater's name for a recognition that runs through the book. The Renaissance is a recovery of the antique, the buried fire rising from the soil (WIN §9; see Buried fire), and Winckelmann's finding of Greek art "reproduces for us the earlier sentiment of the Renaissance" (WIN §9); in that finding Hermione "melts from her stony posture" (WIN §9; see Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst), and life recovers its lost proportions. The lost proportions are not invented but restored.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which "reminiscence" occurs, with the paragraphs in which Pater gives the Platonic doctrine of a life before birth, in the order of the book.

**MIC §10** Michelangelo debated whether his love was carnal affection or the burning ray of Plato's anti-natal state.

**MIC §14** Love at first sight is explained by a former life.

**WIN §19** Winckelmann seems to realise the fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge hidden for a time in the mind itself.

## Elsewhere in Pater

The essay "Wordsworth" (1874) uses the same word for the same doctrine. Wordsworth's sense of the soul's hidden powers carried him back, Pater writes, to the notion of an earlier state of existence, "the fancy of the Platonists—the old heresy of Origen", and so to the longing for childhood of the ode on the recollections of early childhood.[524] There too the doctrine is a "fancy".

## Later readings

The American critic Carolyn Williams took "Recovery as Reminiscence" as the title of the last part of her study of Pater's historical method, *Transfigured World* (1989).[525]

## See also

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Anti-natal state; Buried fire; Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst; Intuition; New organ; Previous state of existence; Rapid intuition; Realise; Temperament.

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[524] Walter Pater, "On Wordsworth", *Fortnightly Review* (April 1874); as "Wordsworth" in *Appreciations* (London, 1889); Library Edition (London, 1910), pp. 54–55.

[525] Carolyn Williams, *Transfigured World: Walter Pater's Aesthetic Historicism* (Ithaca, 1989), Part Four, "'Recovery as Reminiscence': The Greek Studies and *Plato and Platonism*".

# Resurrection

*The rising of the dead, which Pater makes the real subject of the Last Judgment and the pattern of all Michelangelo's art · The Renaissance resurrection*; *Resurrection*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The rising again of the dead; in Christian doctrine, Christ's rising on the third day and the general rising of the dead at the end of time.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Not the Judgment but the Resurrection is the real subject of his last work in the Sistine Chapel" (MIC §4).

**In this edition.** The note at MIC §4 says that "Pater reads the upward movement of the resurrected bodies as the governing action of the Last Judgment", and adds that "The altar wall also includes the descent of the damned".

**A place to read.** MIC §4, with MIC §3.

## Meaning

The Latin *resurrectio*, from *resurgere*, to rise again, is the word of the creeds: "the resurrection of the body" in the Apostles' Creed, "the resurrection of the dead" in the Nicene. In art the general resurrection is part of the Last Judgment, where the dead climb from their graves at the angels' trumpets before Christ divides the saved from the damned.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the second sentence of the fourth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which gives examples of "this creation of life" as the motive of all his work (MIC §4; see Creation of life): "Not the Judgment but the Resurrection is the real subject of his last work in the Sistine Chapel; and his favourite pagan subject is the legend of Leda, the delight of the world breaking from the egg of a bird" (MIC §4).

The claim about the Last Judgment is a reading against the title. The great fresco of the altar wall, painted between 1536 and 1541, is a Judgment: Christ raises his arm, the saved rise, the damned fall. Pater says its "real subject" is the Resurrection: in the fresco, the bodies rise from the earth at the lower left, the skeletons putting on flesh. The edition's note marks the reading as Pater's, and recalls the damned descending on the same wall. Pater's reading takes from the Judgment the part that fits his account of Michelangelo, life returning to the dead.

The pagan example makes the same point. Leda, visited by Zeus as a swan, laid an egg from which, in one version of the myth, Helen was born. Michelangelo painted a Leda for the Duke of Ferrara in 1530; the picture is lost and known from copies, in which the twins Castor and Pollux climb from the broken shell beside her. "The delight of the world" can be read as

Helen, and Pater's phrase as making her birth a hatching, life breaking out of a shell, and so a pagan resurrection.

The preceding paragraph had used the word of the Creation itself: with Michelangelo "the beginning of life has all the characteristics of resurrection" (MIC §3; see Animation). The two paragraphs can be read together as the core of Pater's account. In Michelangelo creation looks like resurrection, the Judgment is a resurrection, and the pagan myth he loved best is a birth from a shell. All his subjects are one subject: life coming "always as relief or recovery" (MIC §4; see Relief or recovery).

The fourteenth paragraph gives the word its doctrinal form, "Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body" (MIC §14; see Resurrection of the body), and the twentieth paragraph its doubt: Michelangelo is ignorant "of the new body and its laws" (MIC §20; see New body). The resurrection that is the motive of his art is not, on Pater's account, a belief he held firmly; it is a pattern of feeling, life returning to the dead, that his art expresses whatever his faith.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "resurrection" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §3** With Michelangelo the beginning of life has all the characteristics of resurrection.

**MIC §4** Not the Judgment but the Resurrection is the real subject of the Last Judgment.

**MIC §14** Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body is opposite to the Platonic dream for all effects of art.

## In this edition

The note at MIC §4 says: "Pater reads the upward movement of the resurrected bodies as the governing action of the Last Judgment. The altar wall also includes the descent of the damned, an essential part of the scene's Christian iconography."

## See also

Animation; Creation of life; New body; Relief or recovery; Resurrection of the body.

# Resurrection of the body

*Dante's belief that the body is kept even in heaven, the principle opposite to the Platonic dream for all effects of art · The Renaissance*

*resurrection of the body*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The Christian doctrine that the dead will rise in their bodies at the end of time.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body, through which, even in heaven, Beatrice loses for him no tinge of flesh-colour, or fold of raiment even" (MIC §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §14.

## Meaning

The medieval Church took the article of the Apostles' Creed (see Resurrection) to mean that the risen body would be the same body, glorified. Dante gives the doctrine its poetry. In the *Paradiso* Solomon tells him that when "the glorious and holy flesh" is put on again, the souls will be more complete and so more pleasing, their light and their sight increased; and the blessed show such longing for their dead bodies that Dante thinks they long for them perhaps (*forse*) not only for their own sake but for their mothers' and fathers' and all they loved.[526]

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the fourteenth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, at the head of its contrast between Dante's belief and "the Platonic dream of the passage of the soul", two principles "diametrically opposite" for art (MIC §14; see Bodily form; Passage of the soul).

Pater gives the doctrine its effect on a poet. Because Dante believes the body will rise, his Beatrice in heaven is not a soul only but a woman, who loses "no tinge of flesh-colour, or fold of raiment even" (MIC §14). "Even" comes twice: even in heaven, even the fold of her dress. The belief keeps the visible world in paradise, and the poetry that comes of it is full of things seen. The next sentences give the contrast in style: Dante's story is "a piece of figured work" (MIC §14; see Figured style), while in Michelangelo's poems "frost and fire are almost the only images", and there are "almost no incidents" (MIC §14; see Refining fire).

The phrase can be read as giving "devout materialism" its theological ground (MIC §14; see Devout materialism). The middle age sanctified all that hand and eye present because it believed that the body itself would be saved; the resurrection of the body is the doctrine that makes matter holy. Michelangelo, following the Platonic tradition, presses through the visible instead, and his poems lose the visible world that Dante's belief kept.

Pater's sympathies may be read in the picture. The essay follows Michelangelo the Platonist, but its Beatrice in heaven is drawn with love; and the Winckelmann essay's regret that the modern problem can no longer

[526] Dante, *Paradiso* XIV.43–66.

be solved "by perfection of bodily form" (WIN §51; see Bodily form) is closer to Dante's regard for the body than to Plato's haste to be rid of it.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**MIC §14** Dante's belief in the resurrection of the body keeps Beatrice's flesh-colour even in heaven, opposite to the Platonic dream.

## See also

Bodily form; Devout materialism; Figured style; Passage of the soul; Platonic lover; Refining fire; Resurrection.

# Ritual

*The fixed element of religion, rising from the usages of daily life and outliving them, on which myth and art are built · The Renaissance*

*ritual*; *ritualistic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The prescribed form of a religious rite, or the body of such forms.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek religion is "at once a magnificent ritualistic system, and a cycle of poetical conceptions" (WIN §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §§24–26, 31.

## Meaning

*Ritual* is the Latin *ritualis*, belonging to rites, from *ritus*, an established custom. In English it had long been a word of liturgy, and in the 1860s it was a word of controversy: the "Ritualists" of the Church of England were restoring vestments, candles and incense to the parish church, a Royal Commission on Ritual was appointed in 1867, and Parliament passed the Public Worship Regulation Act against them in 1874. Pater uses the word of Greece and of Jewish worship (PIC §13), and does not refer to the quarrel; but his account can be read as the reverse of the Ritualists'. Ritual for him is not the dress of a doctrine but the oldest thing in religion, older than any doctrine it may later be given.

## Use in the book

In the Winckelmann essay the word comes first in Pater's correction of the view of Greek religion as a religion of art (see Religion of art and beauty). Greek religion "is at once a magnificent ritualistic system, and a cycle of poetical conceptions" (WIN §24; see Polytheism). The twenty-fifth

paragraph tells where the ritual came from. The pagan sentiment, the sadness of men who love the earth and must leave it, "attaches itself in the earliest times to certain usages of patriarchal life, the kindling of fire, the washing of the body, the slaughter of the flock, the gathering of harvest, holidays and dances" (WIN §25). Then: "Here are the beginnings of a ritual, at first as occasional and unfixed as the sentiment which it expresses, but destined to become the permanent element of religious life. The usages of patriarchal life change; but this germ of ritual remains, promoted now with a consciously religious motive, losing its domestic character, and therefore becoming more and more inexplicable with each generation" (WIN §25).

The account is a history in three steps. The rite begins as a domestic act, the lighting of a fire or the bringing in of a harvest; it outlives the household that needed it; and, kept now "with a consciously religious motive", it becomes unintelligible. "Therefore" is the hinge: the rite grows inexplicable because it has lost the domestic use that explained it. The twenty-sixth paragraph adds the next stage. More definite conceptions come from mythology and "fix themselves upon this ritual", changing it and giving it new meanings (WIN §26; see Myth); mythology brings to "the unprogressive ritual element" the power of the wing (WIN §26; see Ascension; ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις); and while the ritual "remains unchanged", the æsthetic element expands freely (WIN §26; see Myth). The fixed element is always "the religious observance", the fluid one "the myth" (WIN §26; see Myth; Religious observance).

The thirty-first paragraph shows what grew from the fixed element. Greek gymnastics "originated as part of a religious ritual" (WIN §31; see Gymnastics): the worshipper was to make himself fleet and fair, white and red, like the gods, and the youth who rivalled his gods saw "his increased beauty" pass "back into them" (WIN §31; see Fleet and fair; Palaestra). Greek art can be read, on this account, as descending not from the myths alone but also from the ritual, from bodies trained for a rite. The Pico essay gives the other fortune of ritual, as a store of symbols for allegory: Pico, harmonising Plato and Moses, lays hold on "the symbols of the Jewish ritual" (PIC §13; see Double meaning).

The word can be read as the ground of the essay's whole account of the arts. The ritual is fixed, the myth fluid, and Greek art arose where the fluid element could play over the fixed one without breaking it. Pater's sympathy can be read as being with the rite as with the sentiment it expresses: "this germ of ritual" is the part of religion that belongs to everyone, and the essay's praise of the few who rose above it does not forget the many who kept it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "ritual" or "ritualistic" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Pico lays hold on the symbols of the Jewish ritual to harmonise Plato and Moses.

**WIN §24** Greek religion is at once a magnificent ritualistic system, and a cycle of poetical conceptions.

**WIN §25** The usages of patriarchal life are the beginnings of a ritual; the germ of ritual remains, becoming more inexplicable with each generation.

**WIN §26** Mythology fixes itself upon the ritual; while the ritual remains unchanged, the æsthetic element expands.

**WIN §31** Greek gymnastics began as part of a religious ritual.

## Later readings

The Scottish orientalist William Robertson Smith made the priority of ritual a principle of the study of religion. In his *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (1889) he argued that ancient religion consisted in fixed practice rather than belief, and that "in almost every case the myth was derived from the ritual, and not the ritual from the myth".[527] Pater's paragraph of 1867 gives the same order, a fixed rite and a fluid myth that comes later and gives it new meanings, though for Pater the myth has a source of its own, "not due to a religious source at all" (WIN §26; see Myth).

## See also

ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις; Anodyne; Ascension; Double meaning; Fleet and fair; Gymnastics; Myth; Pagan sentiment; Palaestra; Polytheism; Religion of art and beauty; Religious observance; Talisman.

# Sabbatic joy

*The rest after labour, and the joy of that rest, carved on the Tuscan tombs · The Renaissance*

*sabbatic joy*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Sabbatic is belonging to the Sabbath, the day of rest; sabbatic joy is the joy of rest after work.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Tuscan tombs are "inexhaustible in suggestions of repose, of a subdued sabbatic joy, a kind of sacred grace and refinement" (ROB §11).

[527] William Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites: First Series, The Fundamental Institutions* (Edinburgh, 1889), Lecture I.

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.
**A place to read.** ROB §11.

## Meaning

The Hebrew *shabbat* is a ceasing, a rest, and the Sabbath is the seventh day on which, in Genesis, God rested from the work of creation (Genesis 2:2–3). Christian writers made the Sabbath an image of the rest of the blessed: the Letter to the Hebrews says that a sabbath rest remains for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9), and Augustine ends *The City of God* with the eternal Sabbath, in which "we shall be at rest and shall see, we shall see and shall love, we shall love and shall praise".[528] "Sabbatic" carries that whole history: rest after labour, the rest of the dead, and the joy of the rest that is promised.

## Use in the book

The phrase occurs once, in the sentence on the Tuscan tombs: "Their noblest works are the careful sepulchral portraits of particular persons", monuments "inexhaustible in suggestions of repose, of a subdued sabbatic joy, a kind of sacred grace and refinement" (ROB §11; see Sepulchral portrait). The three phrases rise in religious force: repose is the word of art criticism (see Repose), sabbatic joy is biblical, sacred grace is the language of devotion. The tombs, on this reading, show death as a Sabbath, the end of work and the beginning of rest, and the rest is a joy.

"Subdued" keeps the joy quiet, as "repose" keeps the whole sentence at rest. The joy is not rapture; it is the quiet pleasure of a day when nothing need be done. The adjective is the essay's constant restraint at work, the same that keeps Luca's colours "a little paler than nature" (ROB §12; see Garland) and Botticelli's imagery "subdued" by his means and taste (BOT §8; see Minor tones). A loud joy on a tomb would be caricature (see Caricature); a subdued one is truthful.

The phrase gains from what follows it in the essay. The next paragraph begins with Luca's own life, "a life of labour and frugality, with no adventure and no excitement" (ROB §12; see Frugality). The sculptors of the tombs were workers, and their monuments carve the rest that work earns. The Sabbath of the dead in stone and the labour of the living in the workshop belong to one picture of a life.

The phrase can be read as the most strictly biblical of Pater's images for the Tuscan sculptors, and a revealing one. The Greek repose of the Winckelmann essay is the calm of gods who never laboured; the sabbatic joy of the Tuscan tombs is the rest of mortals after their work, and it belongs to the Christian centuries. The della Robbia essay, which sets the Tuscans between Greek and modern, finds their peace in the Christian Sabbath.

[528] Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XXII.30.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**ROB §11** The Tuscan tombs are inexhaustible in suggestions of repose, of a subdued sabbatic joy.

## See also

Caricature; Frugality; Garland; Minor tones; Repose; Sepulchral portrait.

# Sacred and profane

*The two traditions whose mixture made a new mythology · The Renaissance*

*the sacred and the profane*; *sacred*; *profane*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The sacred is what is set apart for God or the gods; the profane is what lies outside the holy precinct, the common and the secular.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The mythology of the Italian Renaissance was a strange flower "which grew up from the mixture of two traditions, two sentiments, the sacred and the profane" (PIC §15).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §15 says that Pater's description of the Doni Tondo's background nudes as fauns "serves his account of pagan forms surviving within Christian art".

**A place to read.** PIC §15.

## Meaning

The Latin *sacer* is consecrated, set apart; *profanus* is "before the temple", *pro fano*, what stands outside the sacred enclosure, where anyone may go. The pair is spatial before it is moral: a line is drawn round the holy place, and everything else is profane. To mix the two is to bring the outside in, and religions have commonly guarded against it.

## Use in the book

Pater describes the mixture with an image of mixed earth: sacred earth from Jerusalem was mingled with the common clay of the Campo Santo at Pisa, and from it grew a flower "unlike any flower men had seen before" (PIC §15; see Anemone). "Just such a strange flower was that mythology of the Italian Renaissance" (PIC §15), grown, in the words quoted above, from the sacred and the profane. The image is exact: sacred earth and common clay are the sacred and the profane in their first, spatial sense, and from their mixture something new grows. The mythology is not a compromise between the two traditions but a third thing, "with a tone and qualities of its own" (PIC §15; see Artistic reconciliation).

The rest of the book finds the mixture in its painters. Botticelli infuses "his profane and sacred persons" with one sentiment (BOT §5; see Profane and sacred). Leonardo, though he "handles sacred subjects continually, ... is the most profane of painters" (LEO §25), and his Saint John, seen in a version without the cross, has a "strange likeness to the Bacchus which hangs near it", which set Gautier thinking of Heine's decayed gods (LEO §25; see Decayed gods). Heine's exiled gods, with whom the Pico essay began (PIC §2; see Ambrosia), have found work in Christian pictures. In a Holy Family of Giorgione's school "a singular charm of liquid air" fills "the eyes and lips, the very garments, of its sacred personages" (GIO §16). The sacred subject remains; the sentiment is profane.

The book can be read as treating the mixture as the Renaissance itself. The fifteenth century "consecrated everything with which art had to do as a religious object" (PIC §1): it made the profane sacred. And Leonardo used "incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake", but "as a cryptic language for fancies all his own" (LEO §29; see For their own sake): he made the sacred serve the profane. Both movements cross the line round the temple, and Pater's book follows them across it without alarm.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which the sacred and the profane are set together, in the order of the book; "sacred" alone comes in nine further paragraphs, and "profane" alone once more (FRE §2; see Profane poetry).

**PIC §15** Sacred earth from Jerusalem mingled with the common clay of Pisa; the mythology of the Renaissance grew from the mixture of the sacred and the profane.

**BOT §5** Botticelli infuses his profane and sacred persons with one peculiar sentiment.

**LEO §25** Though he handles sacred subjects continually, Leonardo is the most profane of painters.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §15 says that the Doni Tondo's "background nudes have prompted different readings", and that "Pater's description of them as fauns is an interpretation that serves his account of pagan forms surviving within Christian art".

## See also

Ambrosia; Anemone; Artistic reconciliation; Decayed gods; For their own sake; Profane and sacred; Profane poetry.

## Sacred grove

*sacred groves*

Attested: *sacred groves* (PIC §2). A wood consecrated to a god, where trees might not be cut; the Latin *lucus*, the Greek *alsos*. In Heine's story the exiled gods take to trades: "Under these circumstances, many whose sacred groves had been confiscated, let themselves out for hire as wood-cutters in Germany, and were forced to drink beer instead of nectar" (PIC §2; see Ambrosia). The joke has two edges. The gods of the groves become wood-cutters, felling the trees that were once holy to them; and they do it in Germany, whose ancient tribes, as Tacitus reported, worshipped their gods in groves rather than temples.[529] The confiscation belongs to the triumph of Christianity: the groves of the old religion were taken, and their gods put to work. Heine tells it as comedy, and Pater quotes it as the overture to an essay about the gods' return.

### See also

Ambrosia; Iconoclastic zealot.

## Sacred Office

*Sacred Office*

Attested: *Sacred Office* (FRE §15). The church's service, the Mass or the hours of prayer said through the day. Having resolved to keep faith with his friend, Amile "departed to the chamber of his wife, and bade her go hear the Sacred Office. And he took a sword, and went to the bed where the children were lying" (FRE §15; see Keep faith). He sends her to church, and is left alone with the children; the deed is framed by worship: the bells ring "of their own accord" as the friends go to church to give thanks, and the children are found alive at "the hour of Tierce" (FRE §§17–18; see Tierce). The capital letters are Pater's, and his English keeps the tale's devotional tone.

### See also

Keep faith; Offices of the dead; Tierce.

## Schöne Seele

*Schöne Seele*

Attested: *Schöne Seele* (WIN §51). The phrase is German, "beautiful soul", and the edition's note renders it so and points to the "Confessions of

[529] Tacitus, *Germania* 9: "lucos ac nemora consecrant".

a Beautiful Soul" in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795–96). The sixth book of the novel is the spiritual autobiography of a pious woman, inward, gentle and withdrawn from the world, who finds peace in a religion of the heart (see Pietism). Friedrich Schiller had given the phrase a philosophical sense two years earlier, calling a beautiful soul one in which duty and inclination agree, so that virtue becomes nature;[530] and G. W. F. Hegel was later to judge it severely, as a conscience too pure to act.[531] Pater uses it in the fifty-first paragraph: the Schöne Seele, "that ideal of gentle pietism", was to Goethe a phase of life to be felt all round and left behind (WIN §51; see Pietism). The beautiful soul is thus one of the forms of culture that the life *im Ganzen*, in the whole, passes through (see Im Ganzen). Pater does not mock it, and does not stay with it.

## See also

Im Ganzen; Passionate coldness; Pietism; Self-culture.

## Secret wisdom

*secret wisdom*

Attested: *secret wisdom* (PIC §13; LEO §2). Knowledge kept from the many and passed to the few. "The Heptaplus is dedicated to Lorenzo the Magnificent, whose interest, the preface tells us, in the secret wisdom of Moses is well known" (PIC §13; see Cabala). The secret wisdom of Moses is the hidden sense of Genesis, which Pico believed the Cabala preserved, and which the allegorist brings up from beneath the letter (see In recessu divinius aliquid). Pico used the same words of his own discovery: his conclusions on the Orphic hymns read them "secundum Magiam, id est, secretam divinarum rerum naturaliumque sapientiam", "according to magic, that is, the secret wisdom of things divine and natural", which he claimed to have first found in them.[532] The Leonardo essay turns the phrase to suspicion: Leonardo "seemed to his contemporaries to be the possessor of some unsanctified and secret wisdom" (LEO §2). "Unsanctified" marks the difference. Pico's secret wisdom is of God; Leonardo's, in his contemporaries' eyes, is unhallowed.

## See also

Cabala; In recessu divinius aliquid.

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[530] Friedrich Schiller, "Über Anmut und Würde", *Neue Thalia* (1793).

[531] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bamberg and Würzburg, 1807), chapter VI, section C, c, "Das Gewissen. Die schöne Seele, das Böse und seine Verzeihung".

[532] Pico, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* (Rome, 1486), heading of the thirty-one conclusions on the hymns of Orpheus.

## Sensible communion

*sensible communion*

Attested: *sensible communion* (PIC §10). A sharing that can be felt by the senses; "sensible" in its old meaning, perceptible, and "communion" in its Christian one, the fellowship of the faithful with one another and with God. The phrase comes in Pater's account of the use of Pico's theory: Pater speaks of "this high dignity of man, thus bringing the dust under his feet into sensible communion with the thoughts and affections of the angels" (PIC §10; see Dignity of human nature). The sentence spans the whole ladder of being in a breath, from "the dust under his feet", the earth from which man was made, to the angels; man, the bond of the world, joins them (see Nodus et vinculum mundi; Little world). "Sensible" is the bold word. The communion with the angels is not only spiritual but felt, through the body that is made of dust. The phrase can be read as the theory's gift to the Renaissance: it gave the senses a share in the highest things, and so prepared the rehabilitation of the body (PIC §10; see Rehabilitation of human nature).

### See also

Dignity of human nature; Little world; Nodus et vinculum mundi; Rehabilitation of human nature.

## Seraphic intelligence

*the seraphic intelligence*

Attested: *the seraphic intelligence* (PIC §13). The mind of the seraphim, the highest of the angels. In Isaiah's vision the seraphim stand above the throne of God, and one of them touches the prophet's lips with a burning coal;[533] the Hebrew name was taken to mean "burning ones", and the treatise *On the Celestial Hierarchy* ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite places them first of the nine orders of angels and explains their name as fire and heat.[534] Pico's system of correspondences ends with them: beyond the fire of the elements and the sun's fire, "in the super-celestial world there is the fire of the seraphic intelligence" (PIC §13; see Elementary fire; Super-celestial). Pico's Latin in the Heptaplus places in the region beyond the world *ignis seraphicus intellectus*, the seraphic fire that is intellect.[535] That fire "loves" (PIC §13). The angels of fire are the angels of love, and in Pico's highest world, it can be read, intellect itself burns as charity, as the old etymology required.

[533] Isaiah 6:2–7.

[534] Pseudo-Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia* VII.1.

[535] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), second proem.

## See also

Elementary fire; Super-celestial.

# Shutting the eyes

*The Platonists' derivation of "mystic": to see the more, inwardly · The Renaissance*

*shutting the eyes*; *shut*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The phrase gives the Platonists' account of the word "mystic": the mystic is one who shuts his eyes on the outward world in order to see inwardly.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The word mystic has been usually derived from a Greek word which signifies to shut, as if one shut one's lips, brooding on what cannot be uttered; but the Platonists themselves derive it rather from the act of shutting the eyes, that one may see the more, inwardly" (PIC §7).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §7 says that Pater links Ficino's translation of Plotinus "to his portrait of Ficino as drawn toward an inward and contemplative form of Platonism".

**A place to read.** PIC §7.

## Meaning

The Greek verb *myein* means to close, of the lips or of the eyes, and from it come *mystēs*, the initiate, and *mystērion*, the rite he may not speak of. The usual derivation takes the lips: the initiate keeps silent about what he has seen. The other takes the eyes: the initiate closes them to the world in order to see the god. Both are possible from the Greek, and Pater sets them side by side.

## Use in the book

Pater gives the two derivations as two kinds of mystic. One shuts his lips, "brooding on what cannot be uttered": his mystery is a secret. The other shuts his eyes, "that one may see the more, inwardly": his mystery is a vision. The Platonists, Pater says, prefer the second, and the preference defines them. Their mysticism is not silence but sight, turned inward (see Mystic).

He turns the derivation at once on a face. "Perhaps the eyes of the mystic Ficino, now long past the midway of life, had come to be thus half-closed" (PIC §7). The old scholar's eyes are half shut, as a Platonist's should be, and when a young man "not unlike the archangel Raphael" (PIC §7) enters his chamber, Ficino "seems to have thought there was something not wholly earthly about him" (PIC §7; see Co-operation of the stars). The half-closed eyes, it can be read, see the more, inwardly. Pater's "Perhaps" leaves the reader free to think the eyes merely tired.

The image can be read against the book's own method. The Preface takes from Matthew Arnold the critic's aim, "To see the object as in itself it really is" (PRE §2; see To see the object as in itself it really is), and its critic looks, with open eyes, at "this song or picture" (PRE §2). Pater's critic is the opposite of the Platonic mystic, and the Winckelmann essay names the danger of the other way: "The suppression of the sensuous, the shutting of the door upon it, the ascetic interest, may be even now foreseen" (WIN §45), in the abstracted gods of Greek sculpture itself. To shut the eyes, or the door, on the sensuous world is the road that leads away from Greek art. Pater gives the Platonists their derivation, and keeps his own eyes open.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph on the shutting of the door upon the sensuous, in the order of the book; "shut" comes in seven further paragraphs in other senses.

**PIC §7** The Platonists derive the word mystic from shutting the eyes, that one may see the more, inwardly; Ficino's eyes perhaps half-closed.

**WIN §45** The suppression of the sensuous, the shutting of the door upon it, may be foreseen in the abstracted gods.

## Pater's sources

Pater does not name the Platonists he means. The best-known Platonic call to shut the eyes is Plotinus's, in his treatise on beauty: the soul that would see true beauty must not look for it in bodies but must, "as if with eyes closed", exchange this sight for another and wake it, a sight that all possess and few use. His verb, *myein*, is the root of "mystic".[536]

## In this edition

The note at PIC §7 says that "Pater links this work", Ficino's translation of Plotinus, "to his portrait of Ficino as drawn toward an inward and contemplative form of Platonism". Another note there identifies the young traveller with Raphael as Tobias, "the son of Tobit".

## See also

Co-operation of the stars; Mystic; To see the object as in itself it really is; Vision and ecstasy.

# Spirit of freedom

*spirit of freedom*

[536] Plotinus, *Enneads* I.6.8, lines 25–27: *οἷον μύσαντα ὄψιν ἄλλην ἀλλάξασθαι καὶ ἀνεγεῖραι, ἣν ἔχει μὲν πᾶς, χρῶνται δὲ ὀλίγοι.*

Attested: *spirit of freedom* (FRE §32). In Pater's quotation marks, the third and last age of the world foretold by Joachim of Fiore, the age of the Holy Spirit, after the ages of the Father and the Son. The antinomian spirit "influences the thoughts of those obscure prophetical writers, like Joachim of Flora, strange dreamers in a world of flowery rhetoric of that third and final dispensation of a 'spirit of freedom,' in which law shall have passed away" (FRE §32; see Dispensation; Antinomianism). Pater's sentence holds two judgements: the writers are "obscure" and "strange dreamers", but their dream can be read as the medieval Renaissance's own, a freedom beyond law. The note at FRE §32 says that "Pater emphasizes the freedom later readers found in this scheme".

## See also

Antinomianism; Dispensation; Franciscan order.

# Spiritual

*The word that the Leonardo essay moves from a world beyond matter to the finest operations of matter itself · The Renaissance*

*spiritual*, *spiritually*; *spirituality*, *spiritualities*; *unspirituality*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Belonging to the spirit rather than the body; in religion, belonging to the soul and to God rather than to the world.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The faces of Leonardo's drawings make one aware of "all those finer conditions wherein material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual" (LEO §23).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §23, with WIN §§33, 43.

## Meaning

"Spiritual" is the Late Latin *spiritualis*, from *spiritus*, breath. In the language of the Church it is the opposite of "carnal" and of "temporal": the spiritual is the soul's, the Church's, God's, as against the body's and the world's. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians sets the body that is sown, the body of the natural life, against the spiritual body that is raised (1 Corinthians 15:44), and Pater's Michelangelo is "so ignorant of the spiritual world, of the new body and its laws" (MIC §20) that he "does not surely know whether the consecrated Host may not be the body of Christ" (MIC §20; see Consecrated Host). Pater uses the word in this sense often, and he also gives it a sense of his own.

## Use in the book

The religious sense runs through the book. Abelard prefigures a Renaissance that wins a kingdom of feeling "not opposed to but only beyond and independent of the spiritual system then actually realised" (FRE §6). In Heine's story of the gods in exile, a god suspected for his beautiful singing is "handed over to the spiritual tribunal" (PIC §2; see Spiritual tribunal). The Winckelmann essay speaks of the side of Plato "which seems to pass beyond Plato into a world no longer pagan, and based upon the conception of a spiritual life" (WIN §7), of "religious progress, like all purely spiritual progress" (WIN §25), and asks how the artist could "ever again endure the greyness of the ideal or spiritual world?" (WIN §43). In these uses the spiritual is the other world, and art stands to one side of it.

The Leonardo essay turns the word round. Leonardo's drawn faces are "the clairvoyants" (LEO §23; see Clairvoyance), through whom one becomes aware of "those finer conditions wherein material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual" (LEO §23; see Magnetic). The spiritual here is not opposed to matter. It is matter at its finest, matter that has risen by the subtlety of its operation: the spiritual begins where only "the finer nerve and the keener touch can follow". The sentence makes the spiritual a degree of the natural, as the essay's natural magic makes wonder a degree of science (see Natural magic). It can be read as Pater's boldest revision of a religious word. The faces that show these forces are "not of the Christian family" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias), and the spirituality they reveal belongs to nerves and electricity, not to the soul's salvation.

The Winckelmann essay carries the new sense into a theory of the arts. The human form is "itself one entire medium of spiritual expression, trembling, blushing, melting into dew, with inward excitement" (WIN §33); "That spirituality which only lurks about architecture as a volatile effect, in sculpture takes up the whole given material, and penetrates it with an imaginative motive" (WIN §33). Greek sculpture shows the mind beginning and ending "with the finite image", yet losing "no part of the spiritual motive" (WIN §28). The artist "has gradually sunk his intellectual and spiritual ideas in sensuous form" (WIN §43; see Sensuous form). On this account the spiritual lives in the sensuous, and the danger is the spiritualist's, who is "satisfied as he watches the escape of the sensuous elements from his conceptions" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). The book's two senses of the word meet in Michelangelo, whose genius was "spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age" (ROB §9) and whose sculpture keeps the old spiritual inwardness in a new form, and in La Gioconda, whose face holds "the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves" (LEO §31; see Imaginative love).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "spiritual", "spiritually", "spirituality", "spiritualities" or "unspirituality" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §5** Dante wove into his work whatever was spiritually significant in actual life.

**FRE §6** The Renaissance wins a kingdom of feeling beyond the spiritual system then realised.

**PIC §2** The pagan god is handed over to the spiritual tribunal.

**PIC §12** Pico had a fine touch for spiritual things.

**ROB §9** The Greeks relieved the unspirituality of pure form; Michelangelo's genius was spiritualised by medieval reverie.

**MIC §2** Some men of inventive temperament have relieved conceptions of merely moral or spiritual greatness.

**MIC §16** Michelangelo dreams on the images under which the primitive world conceived of spiritual forces.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo is ignorant of the spiritual world, of the new body and its laws.

**LEO §23** Material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual.

**LEO §31** The mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition is in La Gioconda's face.

**WIN §5** Schiller and such as he are spiritual adventurers.

**WIN §7** The side of Plato that passes into a world based upon a spiritual life; the youths of the Lysis, uninfected by any spiritual sickness.

**WIN §13** Rome was to Winckelmann, spiritually, native soil.

**WIN §22** The spiritual forces of the past live on with an underground life.

**WIN §25** Religious progress, like all purely spiritual progress, is confined to a few.

**WIN §28** Greek art loses no part of the spiritual motive.

**WIN §29** Physical conditions generate some rare type of intellectual or spiritual life.

**WIN §32** The spiritualities of architecture are felt rather than seen.

**WIN §33** The human form is one entire medium of spiritual expression; sculpture's spirituality takes up its whole material.

**WIN §40** The purity of life of the Panathenaic horsemen blends intellectual, spiritual and physical elements.

**WIN §43** The artist sinks his spiritual ideas in sensuous form; the greyness of the spiritual world; a disavowal of a spiritual world.

## See also

Clairvoyance; Consecrated Host; Daughters of Herodias; Imaginative love; Magnetic; Natural magic; Sensuous form; Sensuousness; Spiritual tribunal; Spiritualise; Theme or motive.

### Spiritual sickness

*spiritual sickness*

Attested: *spiritual sickness* (WIN §7). Pater uses the phrase of Plato's *Lysis*, the dialogue on friendship that opens among young men at a wrestling school. The modern student, he says, most often meets Plato on the side that seems to pass beyond him "into a world no longer pagan, and based upon the conception of a spiritual life" (WIN §7; see Spiritual). What Plato offered Winckelmann was the other side, "wholly Greek, and alien from the Christian world", the group of brilliant youths in the *Lysis*, "still uninfected by any spiritual sickness", who found the end of all endeavour in the aspects of the human form (WIN §7; see Affinity). The sentence can be read as making the spiritual life itself the infection. From the Greek side of the line, the conception that the soul is at odds with the body is a disease that has not yet reached these boys, and the word "still" says that it will. Pater does not mention it, but Goethe, talking with Eckermann in 1829, called the classical healthy and the romantic sick (see Romantic spirit). The essay's last pages answer the diagnosis. The modern world is "distracted by so many sorrows" (WIN §50; see Unity with one's self), and its problem can no longer be solved by perfection of bodily form (WIN §51; see Bodily form); its health, on this reading, must be won through the sickness, not by going back to a time before it.

## See also

Affinity; Bodily form; Contagion; Romantic spirit; Spiritual; Unity with one's self.

### Spiritual tribunal

*the spiritual tribunal*

Attested: *the spiritual tribunal* (PIC §2). A church court, judging heresy; "spiritual" as against the secular courts. In Heine's story Apollo lives as a shepherd in Lower Austria. "Here, however, having become suspected on account of his beautiful singing, he was recognised by a learned monk as one of the old pagan gods, and handed over to the spiritual tribunal. On the rack he confessed that he was the god Apollo" (PIC §2; see Vampire). The tribunal is the Inquisition in all but name: suspicion, a learned accuser, torture, confession, execution. Heine's irony lies in the charge. Apollo is

condemned for being what he is, a pagan god, and what betrayed him was his beautiful singing. The scene can be read as the essay's darkest image of the conflict it sets out to describe: the reconciliation Pico sought was preceded by a long persecution, and the god's last song before his execution made the women weep (PIC §2).

## See also

Iconoclastic zealot; Vampire.

# Spiritualise

*To lift toward spirit: what sculpture does to stone and the middle age did to Michelangelo, and what the spiritualist overdoes · The Renaissance*

*spiritualise*; *spiritualising*, *spiritualised*; *spiritualist*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To make spiritual: to refine from the material, or to give a spiritual meaning or temper.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo came "with a genius spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age" (ROB §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §§6, 9, with WIN §43.

## Meaning

"Spiritual" is the Latin *spiritualis*, belonging to the *spiritus*, the breath and the spirit; to spiritualise is to make a thing belong more to spirit than to matter. The verb was used by preachers of the spiritual sense of Scripture and of the refinement of the soul, and in the nineteenth century "spiritualist" named both the philosopher who held the primacy of spirit and the believer in communication with the dead. Pater uses it of art, of a mind, and of a temper he distrusts.

## Use in the book

The della Robbia essay uses the verb twice. In the sixth paragraph it is one of the three things every great system of sculpture does to stone, "etherealising, spiritualising, relieving, its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6; see Etherealise). In the ninth it is done to a man: Michelangelo came "with a genius spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age", and the Greek system "could not satisfy him" (ROB §9; see Inwardness; Reverie). The two uses explain each other. Michelangelo, spiritualised by the medieval centuries, demanded of sculpture that it be spiritualised too, that it "bring what was inward to the surface" (ROB §9; see Individual expression). The same paragraph names the opposite of the quality: Greek

sculpture had a way of relieving "the hardness and unspirituality of pure form" (ROB §9; see Relieve).

The Michelangelo essay gives the verb to religion. In earlier days Michelangelo "might have been for spiritualising the papal sovereignty, like Savonarola" (MIC §16; see Artistic reconciliation). Spiritualising the papacy is the reformer's programme, to make the Church's power spiritual instead of worldly; Michelangelo, living on into a "frozen orthodoxy", could take no part in it.

The Winckelmann essay sets the artist against the spiritualist. Art may help the spectator escape "the tyranny of the senses", but only because the artist has "sunk his intellectual and spiritual ideas in sensuous form" (WIN §43; see Sensuous form; Tyranny of the senses). Then: "The spiritualist 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. But the artist steeps his thought again and again into the fire of colour" (WIN §43). The spiritualist wants the colour to fade; the artist dips the garment again.

The uses can be read as a warning built into a word of praise. To spiritualise stone, to lift it from heaviness and death, is the work of all noble sculpture; to spiritualise a genius, as the middle age did Michelangelo's, is to give it its depth. But spiritualising carried to its end is bleaching, the escape of the sensuous, and that is the spiritualist's satisfaction and the artist's death. Pater's sculptors spiritualise the stone and keep the stone; his Winckelmann deals with the sensuous "in the pagan manner" (WIN §43), "with no sense of shame or loss".

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "spiritualise" or its family occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** Each great system of sculpture resists by etherealising, spiritualising, relieving its stiffness.

**ROB §9** Michelangelo's genius was spiritualised by the reverie of the middle age; Greek sculpture relieved the unspirituality of pure form.

**MIC §16** Michelangelo might have been for spiritualising the papal sovereignty, like Savonarola.

**WIN §43** The spiritualist watches the sensuous elements escape; the artist steeps his thought in the fire of colour.

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Etherealise; Individual expression; Indwelling soul; Introspection; Inwardness; Relieve; Reverie; Sensuous form; Tyranny of the senses.

## Talisman

*talismans*

Attested: *talismans* (WIN §25). A talisman is an object believed to carry a protective power, a stone, a ring or an inscribed figure. The word came into the European languages from the Arabic *ṭilsam*, which is the late Greek *telesma*, a consecrated thing or a rite of consecration, from *telein*, to complete or to perform the rites. Pater uses it in his account of the pagan sentiment, the sadness of men who love the earth and must leave it. As the earth loses its colour and the senses fail, man "clings ever closer to it", and since the decay of the body must go on to the end, he is careful for "charms and talismans, which may chance to have some friendly power in them, when the inevitable shipwreck comes" (WIN §25; see Pagan sentiment). The talisman can be read as the smallest form of the rites that the paragraph goes on to describe, the faith of one man in one object (see Ritual). Pater's tone is not scornful. The words "may chance" grant the doubt, and the "inevitable shipwreck" grants the need; the paragraph ends by calling such worship the anodyne that religion has added to the law that makes life sombre for most of mankind (WIN §25; see Anodyne).

### See also

Anodyne; Home-sickness; Pagan sentiment; Ritual.

## Tanquam lana alba et tanquam nix

*tanquam lana alba et tanquam nix*; *the hair like wool*

Attested: *tanquam lana alba et tanquam nix* (WIN §27); *the hair like wool* (WIN §27). The Latin is from the Vulgate of the Book of Revelation, where John sees one like the Son of Man, whose head and hairs were white; the edition's note renders the Latin "Like white wool and like snow"; *tanquam* is the older printed spelling of *tamquam*, "as".[537] The image is older than Revelation. In Daniel's vision the Ancient of Days has hair like spotless wool, *quasi lana munda*.[538] Pater sets the words inside his description of Fra Angelico's Coronation of the Virgin in San Marco: Jesus, "with rosy nimbus and the long pale hair" of the figure in the Apocalypse, is setting a crown of pearl on the head of Mary (WIN §27; see Nimbus). Two sentences later the hair returns in English, "the hair like wool", first of the outward things that are for Angelico only symbols of an inexpressible world (WIN §27; see Symbol). The Latin can be read as Pater's evidence for his argument. Angelico did not paint a man's hair; he painted a text, and the

[537] Revelation 1:14 (Vulgate): *caput autem eius et capilli erant candidi tamquam lana alba et tamquam nix*.

[538] Daniel 7:9 (Vulgate): *capilli capitis eius quasi lana munda*.

hair is white because a prophet said so. In the paragraph that follows Pater sets against it the Venus of Melos, which is "in no sense a symbol" (WIN §28; see Finite image).

## See also

Finite image; Mystic; Nimbus; Sensible form; Symbol; Symbolism.

## The perfect

*the perfect*

Attested: *the perfect* (PIC §13), as a noun for persons; "the perfect" as an adjective in six further paragraphs. The initiated, those mature enough to receive a hidden teaching. Pythagoras, taught by the ancient philosophers who hid divine things, became a master of silence, "speaking wisdom only among the perfect" (PIC §13; see Master of silence). The phrase is Paul's, in the King James Version: "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect" (1 Corinthians 2:6). Paul's Greek word, *teleioi*, is also the word of the mystery religions for the fully initiated, and the sentence can be read as joining the two worlds as Pico joined them: the apostle and the Pythagorean speak wisdom only to the initiated. Elsewhere the adjective is used of Dante, "the perfect flower of ideal love" (FRE §29), and of things: "the perfect identification of matter and form" (GIO §12), "the perfect animal nature of the Greeks" (WIN §29).

## See also

Master of silence; Mystery.

## Tierce

*Tierce*

Attested: *Tierce* (FRE §18). The canonical hour said at the third hour of the day, about nine in the morning, after Matins, Lauds and Prime; the Latin *tertia* (*hora*), the third hour. In Pater's English of Amis and Amile the time is given as the father goes in to weep over his children: "And it was already the hour of Tierce. And going in alone to the children to weep over them, he found them at play in the bed; only, in the place of the sword-cuts about their throats was as it were a thread of crimson" (FRE §18; see Comradeship). The note at FRE §18 explains that Terce "was the 'third hour' of the liturgical day, conventionally around nine in the morning", and that "The detail gives a precise devotional time to the discovery that the children are alive".

## See also

Comradeship; Sacred Office; Vesture.

### Time of lilies

*the time of lilies*

Attested: *the time of lilies* (PIC §§11, 12). A prophecy of Pico's death, and its fulfilment in a pun. Camilla Rucellai declared on first seeing him "that he would depart in the time of lilies—prematurely, that is, like the field-flowers which are withered by the scorching sun almost as soon as they are sprung up" (PIC §11; see Disembodied beauty). The image is biblical: the life of man is grass and a wild flower, here and gone, and in the Epistle of James the sun's heat dries the grass and drops its flower.[539] Pico died in November, on the very day the French king entered Florence, "yet in the time of lilies—the lilies of the shield of France, as the people now said, remembering Camilla's prophecy" (PIC §12; see Double meaning). The fleur-de-lis on the French arms turned the season into an army. The edition's note at PIC §11 says that the biography turns the prophecy into a pun, and that the coincidence "prepares the essay's account of Pico reading the world as a system of signs" (see Omen). The prophecy comes true by changing its meaning, as Pico's allegories made texts come true.

## See also

Disembodied beauty; Double meaning; Omen.

### Tonsure

*tonsure*

Attested: *tonsure* (GIO §15). The tonsure, from the Latin *tonsura*, a shearing, is the shaven crown or shaven head by which a man entering the clergy or a religious order was marked; it was the outward sign that he had left the world. Pater uses the word in his description of the Concert of the Pitti, "in which a monk, with cowl and tonsure, touches the keys of a harpsichord, while a clerk, placed behind him, grasps the handle of a viol" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord). In Pater's account both musicians nearest the keyboard are churchmen, a monk and a clerk (see Clerk); the Uffizi sees one, the Dominican who holds the viola da gamba and touches the player's shoulder, while the man at the keyboard wears a fur-trimmed cloak. Either way the sign of withdrawal from the world is painted in a scene of private music. The detail can be read as the essay's account of Giorgione's art in small: the religious figure is present, but the picture is not a devotional one,

[539] Psalm 103:15–16; Isaiah 40:6–8; James 1:10–11.

and the tonsure is a fact of costume and character, like the third figure's "cap and plume" (GIO §15; see Cowl).

## See also

Clerk; Cowl; Harpsichord; Viol.

## Uncertain twilight

*uncertain twilight*; *twilight*

Attested: *uncertain twilight* (FRE §6); *twilight* (MIC §20; GIO §21; BEL §22). Twilight is the half-light between day and night; uncertain, it is a state in which nothing can be decided. Pater writes that "When Abelard died, like Tannhäuser", the knight of German legend who sought absolution at Rome, "he was on his way to Rome": "What might have happened had he reached his journey's end is uncertain; and it is in this uncertain twilight that his relation to the general beliefs of his age has always remained" (FRE §6; see Absolution; Eternal justice). The figure suits Pater's Abelard, who in this "prefigures the character of the Renaissance", a movement beyond, not against, the spiritual system of its age (FRE §6; see Renaissance). Twilight returns twice in its plain sense (GIO §21; BEL §22), and once as the name of one of Michelangelo's figures for the Medici tombs, whose titles, "Night and Day, The Twilight and The Dawn, are far too definite for them" (MIC §20).

## See also

Absolution; Eternal justice; Liberty of the intellect; Renaissance.

## Unsanctified and secret wisdom

*What Leonardo's contemporaries suspected him of possessing: a knowledge got outside the Church, which the essay turns into an artist's secret · The Renaissance*

*unsanctified and secret wisdom*; *secret*, *secrets*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A hidden knowledge not hallowed by religion, the kind a magician might have.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Leonardo's type of beauty seems "to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within; so that he seemed to his contemporaries to be the possessor of some unsanctified and secret wisdom; as to Michelet and others to have anticipated modern ideas" (LEO §2).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §2 says that Vasari's first edition "associated Leonardo's speculative disposition with religious heterodoxy".

**A place to read.** LEO §2, with LEO §§13, 24.

## Meaning

"Sanctified" is made holy, from the Latin *sanctificare*; "unsanctified" is not made holy, not blessed by the Church. It is a milder word than "unholy" or "profane". A wisdom that is unsanctified is not necessarily wicked; it has simply not passed through the Church's hands. "Secret" is the Latin *secretus*, set apart: what is withheld from the many and shared, if at all, with the initiated.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the essay's second paragraph, in its account of Leonardo's reputation. His type of beauty "is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights" (LEO §2; see Exotic), and it "seems more than that of any other artist to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within; so that he seemed to his contemporaries to be the possessor of some unsanctified and secret wisdom; as to Michelet and others to have anticipated modern ideas" (LEO §2). The sentence sets two verdicts side by side. To his own age Leonardo's strangeness meant a knowledge unblessed by the Church; to the nineteenth century, to Michelet and others, it meant that he was ahead of his time. The same quality, "some scheme of the world within", is read as magic in one century and as modernity in the next. The paragraph has already given the first verdict a source: the first edition of Vasari made Leonardo "a bold speculator, holding lightly by other men's beliefs, setting philosophy above Christianity" (LEO §2; see Bold speculator).

The essay then lets the word "secret" run through the life. Leonardo is a man who "passes unmoved through the most tragic events ... like one who comes across them by chance on some secret errand" (LEO §2). His discontent lay "in the secret places of his nature" (LEO §9). At his crucibles he seemed a magician "possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge" (LEO §13; see Alchemy). He offers Ludovico, "for a price, strange secrets in the art of war" (LEO §14). He penetrates "the most secret parts of nature" (LEO §18), and his drawn faces pass on the forces of nature "in a chain of secret influences" (LEO §23; see Chain of secret influences). His pupils are chosen for "just enough genius to be capable of initiation into his secret" (LEO §24), and his strange fruits came "Out of the secret places of a unique temperament" (LEO §24; see End in itself). La Gioconda, like the vampire, "learned the secrets of the grave" (LEO §31; see Vampire).

The sequence can be read as the essay's quiet answer to the charge of the second paragraph. The contemporaries were right that Leonardo had a secret, and wrong about what it was. The secret is not a doctrine against the Church but a knowledge of nature and a temperament, and it is passed on, like the wisdom of the old mysteries, by initiation, to pupils who efface

themselves for it. The Pico essay had used the same words of a sanctified tradition: Lorenzo de' Medici's interest, the preface of the Heptaplus tells us, "in the secret wisdom of Moses is well known" (PIC §13; see Secret wisdom). Pico's secret wisdom is of God; Leonardo's, unsanctified, is of nature and of art.

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Leonardo essay in which "secret" or "secrets" occurs, with PIC §13, in the order of the book.

**PIC §13** Lorenzo's interest in the secret wisdom of Moses, the Heptaplus's preface says, is well known.

**LEO §2** Leonardo seemed to his contemporaries to possess some unsanctified and secret wisdom; he passes through tragic events as on some secret errand.

**LEO §9** A seed of discontent lay in the secret places of his nature.

**LEO §13** He seemed the sorcerer or magician, possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge.

**LEO §14** He offers Ludovico strange secrets in the art of war.

**LEO §18** He penetrated into the most secret parts of nature.

**LEO §23** His faces pass on the forces of nature in a chain of secret influences.

**LEO §24** His pupils were capable of initiation into his secret; he brought fruits out of the secret places of a unique temperament.

**LEO §31** La Gioconda has learned the secrets of the grave.

**LEO §34** At Rome he was suspected of secret French sympathies.

## See also

Alchemy; Bold speculator; Chain of secret influences; End in itself; Exotic; High indifference; Mystery; Secret wisdom; Solitary culture of beauty; Vampire.

# Vampire

*The god taken for a revenant, and the lady who has died many times · The Renaissance*

*vampire*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A vampire, in the folklore of eastern Europe, is a dead man who rises from the grave to feed on the living, and who may be stopped by a stake driven through the body.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Heine's Apollo, executed as a pagan god, is sought in his grave for a stake "in the belief that he had been a vampire", but the grave is empty (PIC §2). La Gioconda "is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave" (LEO §31).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §2 says that in Heine's story "The travails of Apollo make the appeal of pagan beauty felt even by the people who condemn him".

**A place to read.** PIC §2, with LEO §31.

## Meaning

The word came into western languages in the 1720s and 1730s, from Serbian through German, with official reports of corpses in Habsburg Serbia said to have risen and drained the living; the case of Arnold Paole, written up by army surgeons in 1732, was read all over Europe.[540] The literary vampire followed: John Polidori's "The Vampyre" (1819), and in Pater's own years Sheridan Le Fanu's "Carmilla" (1872). The vampire is the dead who will not stay dead.

## Use in the book

The word first comes at the end of Heine's story of the exiled gods, which opens the Pico essay. Apollo, discovered as a shepherd in Lower Austria by his beautiful singing, confesses on the rack, sings once more, and is executed. "Some time afterwards the people wished to drag him from the grave again, that a stake might be driven through his body, in the belief that he had been a vampire, and that the sick women would by this means recover. But they found the grave empty" (PIC §2; see Ambrosia; Spiritual tribunal). The Christian peasants take the old god for a revenant, and they are right in a sense they do not mean: the gods of Greece do return. The empty grave can be read as the essay's first image of its theme. The pagan religion was buried, and it rose again in the art of the Renaissance.

The second vampire is Pater's own, in the most famous passage of the book. La Gioconda's beauty is "wrought out from within upon the flesh" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within), and all the ages, from "the animalism of Greece" to "the sins of the Borgias", have moulded it (LEO §31; see Animalism). She is the vampire of the sentence quoted above, and "has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her" (LEO §31). She is Leda and Saint Anne, pagan and Christian, mother of Helen and mother of Mary. The vampire here is not a horror but a figure of persistence: a being who has lived through every age, died with each, and returned.

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[540] Johann Flückinger and others, *Visum et Repertum* (dated Belgrade, 26 January 1732), the report on the vampires of Medveđa, with the case of Arnold Paole.

The two vampires can be read together as the book's darker image of its humanism. The essence of humanism, at the end of the Pico essay, is the belief "that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality" (PIC §16; see Humanism). The vampire is that belief told as a ghost story: the past does not lose its vitality, it comes back, and it comes back hungry. Apollo's empty grave and Lady Lisa's many deaths are the same return, seen first with Heine's irony and then with Pater's fascination.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** The people wished to drive a stake through Apollo's body, believing he had been a vampire; they found the grave empty.

**LEO §31** Like the vampire, La Gioconda has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave.

## Later readings

The poet W. B. Yeats printed Pater's sentences on La Gioconda, broken into lines of free verse, as the first poem of his *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1936), saying in his introduction that "only by printing it in vers libre can one show its revolutionary importance"; the vampire stands in its second line.[541]

## In this edition

The note at PIC §2 says that "Heinrich Heine's Die Götter im Exil imagines the ancient gods surviving the triumph of Christianity in displaced, often comic forms", and that "The travails of Apollo make the appeal of pagan beauty felt even by the people who condemn him".

## See also

Ambrosia; Animalism; Beauty wrought from within; Humanism; Spiritual tribunal; Symbolism.

# Venusberg

*Venusberg*

Attested: *Venusberg* (FRE §32). The "mountain of Venus" of German legend, in which the goddess keeps her court, and where the knight Tannhäuser lived with her before seeking absolution at Rome (FRE §6; see Absolution). The antinomian love of the middle age "was the return of that ancient Venus, not dead, but only hidden for a time in the caves of the Venusberg, of those old pagan gods still going to and fro on the earth, under

[541] W. B. Yeats, ed., *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892–1935* (Oxford, 1936), introduction and first poem.

all sorts of disguises" (FRE §32; see Antinomianism). "Going to and fro on the earth" can be heard as an echo of Satan's answer in the book of Job, "From going to and fro in the earth" (Job 1:7, in the King James Version), and the pagan gods take the devil's place. "Under all sorts of disguises" is the phrase of Heine's *Gods in Exile*, which Pater quotes at the start of the next essay: the gods had to "hide themselves among us here on earth, under all sorts of disguises" (PIC §2). The legend was much in the air in Pater's time, in Heine's poem and in Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser* (1845). The note at FRE §6 tells how "The knight leaves the enchanted Venusberg and asks the pope to absolve him".

## See also

Absolution; Antinomianism; Idolatry.

# Vision and ecstasy

*Plotinus's limit, and the road from the Platonist's sight of the unseen to the painter's · The Renaissance*

*vision and ecstasy*; *vision*; *visionary*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Vision is the sight of what the eyes cannot see; ecstasy, from the Greek for "standing outside", is the state in which the self is carried beyond itself.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Ficino resolved to translate "Plotinus, that new Plato, in whom the mystical element in the Platonic philosophy had been worked out to the utmost limit of vision and ecstasy" (PIC §7).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §7 says that Ficino's "complete Latin translation of Plotinus appeared in 1492".

**A place to read.** PIC §7.

## Meaning

In Plotinus *ekstasis*, the standing outside oneself (see Ecstasy), is the last step of the ascent, where the soul no longer sees the One as an object but becomes one with it; Porphyry, his pupil, says that Plotinus reached that union four times while he was with him.[542] Vision and ecstasy are the two ends of the mystic's road: first he sees, then he is taken out of himself.

## Use in the book

In the Pico essay the phrase measures Plotinus, in the sentence quoted above (PIC §7; see Mystic; Shutting the eyes). The words "utmost limit" place him at the end of a road that began in Plato, and Ficino, resolving to translate him on the day Pico arrives, sets out down it. The essay keeps the

[542] Plotinus, *Enneads* VI.9.11, where the union is called *ekstasis*; Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 23.

phrase historical: it describes what Plotinus reached, not what Pater recommends. The book's own ecstasies are of another kind, an artist's absorption in his work and the Conclusion's life kept at its height (LEO §29; CON §§5–6; see Ecstasy).

The word "vision" follows a path of its own, from the Platonist's sight of the unseen to the painter's. Botticelli's design for the engraved Dante of 1481 is "no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision" (BOT §3), and he is "a visionary painter", who resembles Dante in his visionariness, and the genius of which he is the type "usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own" (BOT §4; see Visionary painter). The science of Leonardo's age sought "in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences" (LEO §13; see Divination), and Leonardo's later work strains to hold "that larger vision of the opening world" (LEO §20). In the Winckelmann essay the word names a way of seeing a whole age: the Greek youth of humanity was "satisfied with the vision of itself" (WIN §31), and to "the large vision of Goethe" gentle pietism was a phase of life that a man "might feel all round, and leave behind him" (WIN §51). The book can be read as keeping the mystic's word and giving it to the artist: vision is still the sight of more than is there, but it is reached through the eyes, not by closing them.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with every paragraph in which "vision" or "visionary" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §7** In Plotinus the mystical element in Platonism had been worked out to the utmost limit of vision and ecstasy.

**BOT §3** Botticelli's design for the Inferno is no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision.

**BOT §4** Botticelli is a visionary painter, and in his visionariness he resembles Dante.

**BOT §6** Botticelli, visionary as he is, is so forcible a realist.

**MIC §14** Dante's Beatrice is a child, with the wistful, ambiguous vision of a child.

**LEO §13** The science of Leonardo's age sought in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences.

**LEO §20** Leonardo was to entertain in a narrow medium that larger vision of the opening world.

**WIN §22** In a fresco of Raphael a space of tranquil sky is broken in upon by the beatific vision.

**WIN §31** The unperplexed youth of humanity was satisfied with the vision of itself.

**WIN §51** To the large vision of Goethe gentle pietism seemed a phase of life that a man might feel all round, and leave behind him.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §7 says that "Ficino's complete Latin translation of Plotinus appeared in 1492", and that Pater "links this work to his portrait of Ficino as drawn toward an inward and contemplative form of Platonism".

## See also

Beatific vision; Divination; Ecstasy; Mystic; Shutting the eyes; Unseen beauty; Visionary painter.

# Votive

*votive*

Attested: *votive* (MIC §7). Offered in fulfilment of a vow, from the Latin *votum*, a vow: votive candles, flowers and images are left at shrines in thanks for a prayer answered or in hope of one. Pater uses the word in his account of the year Michelangelo spent in Bologna, after he had fled Florence on the omen of a friend's dream (MIC §7; see Omen): "But about the portals of its vast unfinished churches and its dark shrines, half hidden by votive flowers and candles, lie some of the sweetest works of the early Tuscan sculptors, Giovanni da Pisa and Jacopo della Quercia, things as winsome as flowers; and the year which Michelangelo spent in copying these works was not a lost year" (MIC §7). The votive offerings frame the sculptures as devotion frames art: the works stand among the flowers left by the faithful, and are themselves "as winsome as flowers". The "vast unfinished churches" include San Petronio, whose central portal carries the Genesis reliefs of the Sienese sculptor Jacopo della Quercia (see Creation of life), and the Pisan work in Bologna is the shrine of Saint Dominic, made in the 1260s by the workshop of the Pisan sculptor Nicola Pisano, for which Michelangelo carved three small figures in that year.[543] The sentence can be read as the essay's evidence for its claim that he must be approached "through his predecessors" (MIC §17; see Tradition of sentiment): the sweetness he learned in Bologna came from carvings half hidden by votive flowers.

## See also

Creation of life; Omen; Tradition of sentiment.

[543] The Arca di San Domenico, in the church of San Domenico, Bologna; Michelangelo's figures, of 1494–95, are an angel with a candlestick, Saint Petronius and Saint Proculus.

## Whatsoever things are comely

*whatsoever things are comely*; *comely*

Attested: *whatsoever things are comely* (FRE §33); *comely* (PRE §6, and nine further paragraphs). In Pater's quotation marks, an echo of the apostle Paul's counsel to the Philippians, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, ... whatsoever things are lovely, ... think on these things" (Philippians 4:8, in the King James Version). Pater's "comely" can be read as standing for "lovely", the King James rendering of the Greek *prosphilē*, things dear or pleasing. In the Renaissance "all breathes of that unity of culture in which 'whatsoever things are comely' are reconciled, for the elevation and adorning of our spirits" (FRE §33; see Unity of culture). So read, it turns the verse from love toward beauty. "Comely", seemly and handsome, is one of his favourite words: the Preface speaks of "a refined and comely decadence" (PRE §6), and the word comes in nine further paragraphs: the Renaissance seeks "a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life" (FRE §1), Abelard is "the famous and comely clerk" (FRE §3), and the brilliant youths of Plato's *Lysis* find "the end of all endeavour in the aspects of the human form, the continual stir and motion of a comely human life" (WIN §7).

### See also

House Beautiful; Unity of culture.

## Wistful speculation

*The mood of the Medici chapel, a place neither of consolation nor of terror · The Renaissance*

*wistful speculation*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Speculation is thought about what cannot be known for certain; wistful speculation is such thought touched with longing.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The sacristy of San Lorenzo "is a place neither of consoling nor of terrible thoughts, but of vague and wistful speculation" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

### Meaning

The Latin *speculari* is to watch, to look out from a height, and speculation was first the act of looking, then the act of contemplating, and then of theorising beyond the evidence. "Wistful", a word of uncertain

origin, means full of vague longing. Joined, they make a mood rather than a method: thought that looks toward what it cannot reach, and longs for it.

## Use in the book

The phrase's chief passage is in the twentieth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, after the account of the Medici figures as expressions of the vague fancies that arise when the mind thinks of the dead (see Disembodied spirit): "I suppose no one would come to the sacristy of San Lorenzo for consolation; for seriousness, for solemnity, for dignity of impression, perhaps, but not for consolation. It is a place neither of consoling nor of terrible thoughts, but of vague and wistful speculation" (MIC §20).

The two sentences place the chapel between two extremes. A church tomb is usually a place of consolation, its sculpture speaking of hope; the northern art of death, the Danse Macabre, is a place of terrible thoughts (see Danse Macabre). The Medici chapel is neither. It offers "seriousness", "solemnity", "dignity of impression", and Pater adds "perhaps" even to these; consolation it does not offer. What it gives is a mood: "vague", because nothing is known; "wistful", because the mind longs to know.

The next sentence explains the mood: here again Michelangelo is the disciple of the Platonists rather than of Dante (MIC §20; see Discipleship). Dante's belief is "formal, precise, and firm"; the Platonist's thought about the soul after death is speculation, and Michelangelo's is wistful because his hope rests only on "the consciousness of ignorance" (MIC §20; see Consciousness of ignorance). The chapel is that consciousness made into architecture and sculpture.

"Wistful" is one of Pater's words, and it recurs at his most sympathetic moments. Botticelli's persons, "in a certain sense like angels", have "the wistfulness of exiles" (BOT §5; see Wistfulness of exiles), and the Madonna's "true children" have "that look of wistful inquiry" (BOT §7); Winckelmann's dreams of travel have "a wistful sense of something lost to be regained" (WIN §4); the young Goethe awaited Winckelmann "with that wistful eagerness which marked his youth" (WIN §21); Dante's Beatrice has "the wistful, ambiguous vision of a child" (MIC §14). In each, wistfulness is longing for what is out of reach, felt without bitterness.

On one reading, this is the mood the whole book holds before ultimate things. The Conclusion, written in the same years, speaks of "a counted number of pulses" given to us (CON §4) and offers no consolation beyond the moment; its feeling about death is close to the feeling Pater finds in the Medici chapel. The sacristy of San Lorenzo, on this reading, is a place in the book where Pater's own attitude is set in stone.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "wistful" or "wistfulness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §5** Botticelli's persons have the wistfulness of exiles.

**BOT §7** The Madonna's true children, the poor among whom she lived, have a look of wistful inquiry.

**MIC §14** Beatrice has the wistful, ambiguous vision of a child.

**MIC §20** The sacristy of San Lorenzo is a place of vague and wistful speculation.

**LEO §28** The painted arabesques of helmets and armour at Loches, where Ludovico Sforza was held prisoner, may be the fruit of a wistful after-dreaming over Leonardo's experiments.

**WIN §4** Winckelmann's plans of travel show a wistful sense of something lost to be regained.

**WIN §21** Goethe awaited Winckelmann with the wistful eagerness of his youth.

## See also

Consciousness of ignorance; Danse Macabre; Discipleship; Disembodied spirit; Wistfulness of exiles.

# Worship of sorrow

*Sorrow made an object of devotion: Carlyle's name, after Goethe, for Christianity, which Pater finds in Greek religion too · The Renaissance worship of sorrow*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Devotion that makes suffering holy: the reverence for grief, humiliation and death that Goethe and Carlyle saw as the heart of Christianity.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek religion too has "its worship of sorrow, its addolorata, its mournful mysteries" (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note on *addolorata* at WIN §26 says that Pater "draws an analogy between Christian devotional sorrow and certain Greek cults".

**A place to read.** WIN §§26, 45–46.

## Meaning

The phrase is the Scottish essayist Thomas Carlyle's, in English. In *Sartor Resartus* (1833–34) his philosopher Teufelsdröckh, emerging from despair, asks the reader whether he knows "that 'Worship of Sorrow'", whose temple was founded some eighteen centuries ago and now lies in

ruins, though in a crypt the altar still stands and its lamp still burns; earlier in the same chapter Teufelsdröckh has told the reader to close his Byron and open his Goethe.[544] The idea is Goethe's. In *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years* (*Wanderjahre*, 1821) the elders of the educational province teach three reverences, for what is above us, for what is beneath us and for our equals. The religion founded on the reverence for what is beneath us, which they call the third, is the Christian, and it teaches us to recognise lowliness and poverty, mockery and contempt, disgrace and misery, suffering and death, as divine; the Eldest invites Wilhelm to return after a year, when he too will be initiated into "the holy place of pain", *das Heiligtum des Schmerzes*.[545] Carlyle's quotation marks can be read as marking a borrowed idea.

## Use in the book

Pater uses the phrase twice, and in different voices. In the twenty-sixth paragraph it is his own, and it is applied to Greece. Greek religion "too has its mendicants, its purifications", and the list ends with "its worship of sorrow, its addolorata, its mournful mysteries" (WIN §26; see Addolorata), the *addolorata* being the Virgin of Sorrows. Every item in the list is a Christian thing found in a pagan place, and the next sentence draws the moral: scarcely a wild or melancholy note of the medieval church was not anticipated by Greek polytheism (WIN §26; see Heathen sorrow). The worship of sorrow, which Goethe and Carlyle had made the mark of Christianity, is older than Christianity. The forty-fifth paragraph names its rites, the "mournful mysteries of Adonis, of Hyacinthus, of Demeter" (WIN §45; see Mournful mysteries), in which a god mourns a lost beloved.

In the forty-sixth paragraph the phrase is in quotation marks, and it means Christianity. Christian art had to find a sensuous expression for ideas that discredit the world of sense (WIN §46; see Sensuous form), and medieval painting solved the problem: in the very "worship of sorrow", Pater writes, the native blitheness of art asserted itself, and the religious spirit, as Hegel says, "smiled through its tears" (WIN §46; see Blitheness). The quotation marks can be read as Carlyle's, borrowed for his name of the Christian religion. Pater accepts the name and denies its conclusion. Teufelsdröckh finds the altar of the worship of sorrow still standing among the ruins of its temple; Pater finds in it a place where art kept its smile.

The two uses can be read as one argument in two directions. Greek religion was not all light; it had its sorrow. Christian art was not all sorrow; it had its light. The young Raphael could infuse "that pagan blitheness" into religious works (WIN §46; see Blitheness), and the Greek gods were

[544] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* (London, 1838; first in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1833–34), Book II, chapter 9, "The Everlasting Yea".

[545] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1821), chapters 10–11; revised edition (1829), Book II, chapters 1–2: *Niedrigkeit und Armut, Spott und Verachtung, Schmach und Elend, Leiden und Tod*; *das Heiligtum des Schmerzes*.

troubled with thoughts of "a limit to duration, of inevitable decay, of dispossession" (WIN §45; see Dispossession). The worship of sorrow is the common ground on which the two religions meet, and the blitheness of art the common ground of their arts.

### Places to read

Every paragraph in which "worship of sorrow" occurs, with the paragraph on the mournful mysteries of Greek religion, in the order of the book.

**WIN §26** Greek religion too has its worship of sorrow, its addolorata, its mournful mysteries.

**WIN §45** Greek religion has its mournful mysteries of Adonis, of Hyacinthus, of Demeter.

**WIN §46** In the very worship of sorrow the native blitheness of art asserted itself.

### See also

Addolorata; Blitheness; Dispossession; Heathen sorrow; Mournful mysteries; Religion of art and beauty; Sensuous form.

## Images from nature and science

### Accidental combination

*accidental combination*; *accidental*, *accidentally*

Attested: *accidental combination* (PIC §13); *accidental* in five further paragraphs (GIO §2; WIN §§34, 37, 40, 49); *accidentally* in two (LEO §28; WIN §26). A chance meeting of events, things that fall together without design. In Pico's world nothing falls together by chance. "Omens, prophecies, supernatural coincidences, accompany Pico himself all through life. There are oracles in every tree and mountain-top, and a significance in every accidental combination of the events of life" (PIC §13; see Omen; Oracle). The sentence closes Pater's account of Pico's system of correspondences, in which "every accident in the lives of men, is filled with higher meanings" (PIC §13; see Correspondence); the accidental combination can be read as accidental only to those who cannot interpret it. The Winckelmann essay gives the adjective the opposite value. Greek sculpture reveals not what is accidental in man but "the tranquil godship in him" (WIN §34; see Godship), and "All that is accidental" is removed so that the supreme types may make their simple effect (WIN §37). For Pico chance is full of meaning; for the Greek ideal it is what art leaves out.

## See also

Correspondence; Godship; Omen; Oracle.

# Active principle

*The constituent that gives a work its effect · The Renaissance active principle*

## At a Glance

**The word.** In the chemistry of drugs, the active principle of a plant is the substance in it to which its effect is due.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Wordsworth's sense of "a life in natural things" is the active principle of his poetry, which the critic must follow up, disengage and measure (PRE §5).

**In this edition.** The notes at PRE §5 identify the two poems of Wordsworth that Pater names.

**A place to read.** PRE §5, the whole paragraph.

## Meaning

"Principle" is the Latin *principium*, a beginning or source. Chemists used it for the constituent of a substance that gives it its character, and pharmacists of the nineteenth century spoke of the active principle of a drug or a medicinal plant, the compound to which its action is owed, as morphine is the chief active principle of opium. The phrase fits Pater's virtue exactly: the virtue of a herb (PRE §3) lies in its active principle.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the Preface's longest example. Wordsworth's verse is a "great mass" in which "there is much which might well be forgotten", yet "scattered up and down it, sometimes fusing and transforming entire compositions, like the Stanzas on Resolution and Independence, or the Ode on the Recollections of Childhood, sometimes, as if at random, depositing a fine crystal here or there, in a matter it does not wholly search through and transmute, we trace the action of his unique, incommunicable faculty, that strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things, and of man's life as a part of nature, drawing strength and colour and character from local influences, from the hills and streams, and from natural sights and sounds" (PRE §5; see Life in natural things; Local influences). Then: "Well! that is the virtue, the active principle in Wordsworth's poetry; and then the function of the critic of Wordsworth is to follow up that active principle, to disengage it, to mark the degree in which it penetrates his verse" (PRE §5).

The passage applies the whole method to one poet. The virtue is named, and so is its source in the poet, a faculty; its distribution in the work is uneven, whole poems in some places, single lines in others; and the critic has

three tasks, to follow it, to disengage it, and to measure how far it reaches (see Disengage). The word "active" matters. The principle is not a theme or an idea but something that acts on the reader, and on the poet's own matter, which it penetrates as a drug's principle acts in the body.

The choice of Wordsworth is telling. What Pater names as his active principle is itself a sense of activity in nature, "a life in natural things", and of "man's life as a part of nature". The critic's chemistry is applied to a poet of living nature, and the example can be read as joining the Preface's scientific language to Romantic poetry.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**PRE §5** The sense of a life in natural things is the virtue, the active principle in Wordsworth's poetry, which the critic must follow up, disengage and measure.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater wrote at length on Wordsworth in an essay of 1874, collected in *Appreciations* (1889), where the Preface's phrase returns: "this sense of a life in natural objects, which in most poetry is but a rhetorical artifice, is with Wordsworth the assertion of what for him is almost literal fact". There he also names the poet's end: "Contemplation—impassioned contemplation—that, is with Wordsworth the end-in-itself, the perfect end."[546]

## In this edition

The notes at PRE §5 identify the two poems Pater names: "Resolution and Independence", which "centers on an encounter with an elderly leech-gatherer", and the ode whose usual title, the note says, is "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood". The first note says that Pater "contrasts poems pervaded by Wordsworth's distinctive quality with individual lines where that quality appears only briefly".

## See also

Chemist; Disengage; Incommunicable faculty; Life in natural things; Local influences; Powers or forces; Virtue.

# Alchemy

*The old art of transmutation, which Leonardo turned from gold to painting · The Renaissance*

*alchemy*; *alchemist*

[546] Walter Pater, "Wordsworth", in *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (London, 1889); first published as "On Wordsworth", *Fortnightly Review* (1874).

## At a Glance

**The word.** The medieval art that sought to turn base metals into gold and to make an elixir of life, by fire, distillation and secret knowledge.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "… in the moment of bien-être, the alchemy complete: the idea is stricken into colour and imagery" (LEO §21).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §13, with LEO §21.

## Meaning

The word reached English through the Old French *alkemie* and the Medieval Latin *alchimia* from the Arabic *al-kīmiyā*, whose own source is uncertain. The alchemists sought the stone that would transmute metals and the elixir that would prolong life (see Elixir). Their work joined the furnace and the crucible to a theory of purification in which the refining of matter mirrored the refining of the soul, and their writings were full of secret names and images. By the nineteenth century alchemy was a byword for science before method, though historians of chemistry already traced their own discipline to it (see Chemist).

## Use in the book

The word belongs to the Leonardo essay, and to its account of the years in which he "had almost ceased to be an artist" (LEO §13). Those around him saw him over his crucibles: "Poring over his crucibles, making experiments with colour, trying, by a strange variation of the alchemist's dream, to discover the secret, not of an elixir to make man's natural life immortal, but of giving immortality to the subtlest and most delicate effects of painting, he seemed to them rather the sorcerer or the magician, possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge, living in a world of which he alone possessed the key" (LEO §13). The variation is the point of the sentence. Leonardo keeps the alchemist's apparatus and his hope of immortality, and changes the object: not man's life but the life of a painted effect, which fades as surely as the body.

Pater then names the kind of thinking. "What his philosophy seems to have been most like is that of Paracelsus or Cardan; and much of the spirit of the older alchemy still hangs about it, with its confidence in short cuts and odd byways to knowledge" (LEO §13). Paracelsus, the Swiss physician and alchemist (1493–1541), and Girolamo Cardano, the Milanese physician, mathematician and astrologer (1501–1576), stand for a science that trusts the leap of insight rather than the slow road of method. The same paragraph calls the science of that age "all divination, clairvoyance" (LEO §13; see Divination; Clairvoyance), and the alchemy that "hangs about" Leonardo's philosophy is the same habit of mind.

The word returns eight paragraphs later as a figure, and there the alchemy succeeds. Leonardo will not work until "that moment of bien-être,

which to imaginative men is the moment of invention", and in that moment "the alchemy complete: the idea is stricken into colour and imagery" (LEO §21; see Bien-être; Refined and graceful mystery). The essay has just named his problem, "the transmutation of ideas into images" (LEO §20; see Transmutation of ideas into images), and the alchemist's word for that change now becomes a figure for it: ideas are the base matter, imagery the gold. Taken together, the two uses may be seen as the essay's judgement on Leonardo's science. The alchemy of the crucible drew him away from art; the alchemy of the imagination is art itself.

The image also answers the Preface. There the critic is a chemist, who disengages a virtue "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Chemist): he separates and names, and changes nothing. The artist, in the moment of *bien-être*, is an alchemist, who changes one substance into another. The book keeps the two figures apart, and the difference between them can be read as the difference between the critic's work and the artist's.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "alchemy" or "alchemist" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §13** Over his crucibles Leonardo pursues a strange variation of the alchemist's dream; his philosophy keeps the spirit of the older alchemy, with its short cuts to knowledge.

**LEO §21** In the moment of bien-être the alchemy is complete, and the idea is stricken into colour and imagery.

## Pater's sources

Vasari tells that when Pope Leo X gave Leonardo a commission in Rome, Leonardo at once began to distil oils and herbs for the varnish, and the pope said that this man would never do anything, since he thought of the end before the beginning.[547] The same Life tells of animals of wax that flew when blown up and of a lizard fitted with wings that quivered with quicksilver; Pater's Leonardo at Rome, "surrounded by his mirrors and vials and furnaces, making strange toys that seemed alive of wax and quicksilver" (LEO §34), can be read as drawing on these stories.

## See also

Bien-être; Chemist; Clairvoyance; Divination; Elixir; Refined and graceful mystery; Transmutation of ideas into images.

# Anemone

*anemone*

[547] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Leonardo da Vinci.

Attested: *anemone* (PIC §15). The windflower, whose name the Greeks took from *anemos*, wind. Pater tells a legend of the Campo Santo, the cemetery of Pisa: "When the ship-load of sacred earth from the soil of Jerusalem was mingled with the common clay in the Campo Santo at Pisa, a new flower grew up from it, unlike any flower men had seen before, the anemone with its concentric rings of strangely blended colour, still to be found by those who search long enough for it, in the long grass of the Maremma" (PIC §15). The Maremma is the marshy coast of southern Tuscany. The flower is the image of the mythology of the Italian Renaissance, "which grew up from the mixture of two traditions, two sentiments, the sacred and the profane" (PIC §15; see Sacred and profane; Artistic reconciliation). The choice of flower can be read as fitting more closely than Pater says. In Greek myth, as Ovid tells it, the anemone sprang from the blood of Adonis, the mortal lover of Venus, short-lived as he was;[548] the pagan flower is made to grow from Christian earth, its "concentric rings of strangely blended colour" the visible sign of the mixture.

## See also

Artistic reconciliation; Sacred and profane.

## Antitype

*antitype*

Attested: *antitype* (LEO §18). The Greek *antitypos* means answering as an impression answers to its die. Christian interpreters used it for the reality that a figure of the Old Testament foreshadows, and the New Testament uses the word itself in that sense (1 Peter 3:21), though at Hebrews 9:24 the "antitypes" are the earthly copies of the true sanctuary. In ordinary English an antitype is the counterpart that matches a type. Pater uses the word of Leonardo's landscapes (LEO §18; see Bizarre): "hollow places full of the green shadow of bituminous rocks, ridged reefs of trap-rock which cut the water into quaint sheets of light,—their exact antitype is in our own western seas" (LEO §18). Trap-rock is the dark volcanic stone that weathers into steps, as the Swedish *trappa*, stair, records. The painted rocks look like fancy; the coasts of the British west show them to be fact, and the paragraph goes on to call it a landscape not of dreams but of places far withdrawn (LEO §18; see Finesse). The theological word can be read as reversing the usual order of art and nature, so that the picture is the type and the real coast its fulfilment.

[548] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.731–739.

## See also

Bizarre; Finesse; Recherché; Type.

### Apparent rest

*apparent rest*

Attested: *apparent rest* (CON §3; C73 §3). Rest that only seems to be rest: the stillness of a thing that is moving too slowly to be seen to move. The phrase comes in the Conclusion's image of the river, where Pater sets the outer world against the inner. In the world of thought and feeling, he says, the changes are no longer those of "the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest", but "the race of the mid-stream" (CON §3; see Mid-stream). The changes of the body and of the objects round us, the gradual darkening of the eye, the gradual fading of colour from the wall, are like water near the bank: it flows, but so slowly that it seems still. The mind is the middle of the river, where the current is seen. The phrase concedes something to common sense. The world does look stable, and Pater does not deny that it looks so; the image can be read as making the look a matter of speed, as the stillness of the shore-side water is. The image may recall the river that Plato's Socrates gives in the same breath as the Conclusion's epigraph, the saying that all things move on and nothing stays (see πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει). The 1873 text had "the gradual darkening of the eye and fading of colour from the wall,—the movement of the shore side" (C73 §3).

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Mid-stream; Perpetual motion; Whirlpool.

### Breath

*The first sign of life and its last trace, which sculpture must communicate to stone · The Renaissance*

*breath*; *breathe*, *breathes*, *breathing-place*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The air drawn into and expelled from the lungs; the sign of life; in the old languages, the spirit.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Incompleteness is Michelangelo's way of "communicating to it breath, pulsation, the effect of life" (ROB §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §10, with MIC §20.

## Meaning

The Hebrew *ruach*, the Greek *pneuma* and the Latin *spiritus* each mean both breath and spirit, and the creation story in Genesis makes the connection an act: God shapes man from the dust of the ground and blows into his nostrils the breath (*neshamah*) of life, and man becomes a living being (Genesis 2:7). The first man is a figure modelled from earth and brought to life by breath. "Breath" in English keeps the bodily sense, but in Pater it always has the other within reach.

## Use in the book

The word's chief use is in the tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay, in the sentence that solves the riddle of Michelangelo's unfinished work: incompleteness is his way of "communicating to it breath, pulsation, the effect of life" (ROB §10; see Equivalent of colour; Pulsation). Breath and pulse are the two signs by which one tells a living body from a dead one, and a statue has neither. The sculptor cannot give real breath; he can give its effect, and incompleteness, on Pater's account, does so by leaving the form unsettled, as if still drawing itself out of the stone (see Incompleteness; Half-realised form). The sentence makes the sculptor a small creator, doing to marble what Genesis tells of the dust.

The Michelangelo essay brings breath back at the other end of life. Michelangelo's thought of the "new body" after death ends in "a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind" (MIC §20; see Etherealise; New body). The breath that gives life to the statue is the last trace of life in the dead. The same essay makes the creation of life Michelangelo's motive, a life "kindled" in the rough-hewn mass (MIC §4; see Rough-hewn).

The verb elsewhere names a shared air. In the Renaissance of the Preface, artists and philosophers "breathe a common air, and catch light and heat from each other's thoughts" (PRE §8; see Common air); within the enchanted region of the Renaissance "all breathes of that unity of culture", and Leonardo "lives in a land where controversy has no breathing-place" (FRE §33; see Unity of culture).

The uses can be read as one image at three scales. Breath is the life of a body, the spirit of an age and the effect of a work of art. Pater's sculptor breathes into stone, his Renaissance breathes a common air, and his Michelangelo imagines the new body as a breath, a feather in the wind; in each, breath is the frailest sign of life and the surest.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "breath" or "breathe" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PRE §8** In a Renaissance artists and philosophers breathe a common air.

**FRE §33** Within the region of the Renaissance all breathes of the unity of culture; for Leonardo controversy has no breathing-place.

**PIC §9** Man is a little world: a body mingled of earthy elements, and ethereal breath, and more.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness communicates to pure form breath, pulsation, the effect of life.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo imagines the new body as a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind.

**LEO §28** Ludovico was allowed at last to breathe fresher air.

**GIO §23** The air in the school of Giorgione seems as vivid as the people who breathe it.

**WIN §25** The breath of religious initiators passes over the many.

## See also

Common air; Equivalent of colour; Ethereal breath; Etherealise; Half-realised form; Incompleteness; New body; Pulsation; Rough-hewn; Unity of culture.

# Brooding spirit of life

*The hidden power of life in Michelangelo's figures, ready to burst into summer · The Renaissance*

*brooding spirit of life*; *brood*, *brooding*, *brooded*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A spirit that broods: that sits over something as a bird sits over its eggs, warming it into life.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The brooding spirit of life itself is there; and the summer may burst out in a moment" (MIC §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** MIC §5.

## Meaning

To brood is first a bird's action, to sit on eggs and hatch them, and then to hover over, and then to think long and darkly. The first sense has a famous religious use. The second verse of Genesis, in the King James Version, says that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters", and the Hebrew verb, used elsewhere of an eagle over its young, was read by many commentators as brooding. Milton made the reading English poetry: the Spirit "Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss / And mad'st it

pregnant".[549] A brooding spirit of life is thus a life-giving power that sits over matter and quickens it.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands at the end of the fifth paragraph of the Michelangelo essay, which answers the question of where his sweetness lies. The secret of the sweetness, it says, is "this penetrative suggestion of life", in figures that have no lovely natural objects or draperies, only "the austere truths of human nature" (MIC §5; see Suggestion of life; Austere dignity). Then the turn: "but he penetrates us with a feeling of that power which we associate with all the warmth and fulness of the world, the sense of which brings into one's thoughts a swarm of birds and flowers and insects. The brooding spirit of life itself is there; and the summer may burst out in a moment" (MIC §5).

The passage solves the puzzle of the second paragraph. Michelangelo has no flowers, no forests, no lovely accessories; the world of natural things, the second paragraph says, has almost no existence for him (MIC §2; see Life in natural things). Yet the feeling of nature's fulness is there, not in what he shows but in what his figures hold. The "swarm of birds and flowers and insects" is brought "into one's thoughts", not onto the canvas. The spirit of life is "brooding", not yet hatched; "the summer may burst out in a moment", but it has not. The sweetness of Michelangelo lies in this held power, the life that warms the stone without breaking it.

The image gives, on this reading, the essay's whole argument in a figure. The creation of life, "off-hand and immediately, in the cold and lifeless stone" (MIC §3; see Creation of life), the Adam waiting for "a touch of the finger-tips" (MIC §3; see Expectancy and reception), the rocks that "have but to cast away the dust and scurf that they may rise" (MIC §4; see Master of live stone): all are moments before life breaks out, and the brooding spirit is what fills them. The comparison with Genesis, which the words invite, makes Michelangelo's art a repetition of the first creation, the spirit brooding over the waters before the world.

"Brood" has its other senses elsewhere in the book. In the passage of Heine's *Gods in Exile* that opens the Pico essay, the monks who broke the temples are "the black brood of monks" (PIC §2); the mystic, by one derivation, is one who shuts his lips, "brooding on what cannot be uttered" (PIC §7; see Mystic); Leonardo "brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals" (LEO §9); into painting, music and poetry, the arts of the romantic and modern ages, "may be translated every delicacy of thought and feeling, incidental to a consciousness brooding with delight over itself" (WIN §33). In the Leonardo and Winckelmann sentences the brooding is long thought; in the Michelangelo it is the warmth that hatches life. Read

[549] Genesis 1:2; the eagle, Deuteronomy 32:11; John Milton, *Paradise Lost* I.21–22.

together, they set Leonardo, who broods over nature to know it, beside Michelangelo, whose figures carry nature's brooding in themselves.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "brood", "brooding" or "brooded" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** In Heine's account, the black brood of monks broke down the temples and pursued the gods.

**PIC §7** The mystic, by one derivation, shuts his lips, brooding on what cannot be uttered.

**MIC §5** In Michelangelo the brooding spirit of life itself is there, and the summer may burst out in a moment.

**LEO §9** Leonardo brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals.

**WIN §33** Into painting, music and poetry, the modern arts, may be translated every delicacy of a consciousness brooding with delight over itself.

## See also

Austere dignity; Creation of life; Expectancy and reception; Life in natural things; Master of live stone; Mystic; Suggestion of life.

# Buried fire

*the buried fire of ancient art*

Attested: *buried fire* (WIN §9). Pater uses the image for the Renaissance discovery of ancient sculpture, which Winckelmann repeats in his own life. "Filled as our culture is with the classical spirit, we can hardly imagine how deeply the human mind was moved, when, at the Renaissance, in the midst of a frozen world, the buried fire of ancient art rose up from under the soil" (WIN §9). The figure joins two opposites, ice and fire, and two places, above and below the ground. The medieval world is "frozen"; the ancient statues, dug up from the earth of Rome, are a fire that had burned on underground, like a volcano's, and breaks out. The image can be read as answering the ascetic's in the forty-seventh paragraph, for whom the same discovery was the opening of "an ancient plague-pit" (WIN §47; see Reliquary): where the ascetic smells death in the buried bodies, Pater feels warmth. It also prepares the essay's other fires. Winckelmann's enthusiasm "burns like lava" within its limits (WIN §10; see Enthusiasm), the artist "steeps his thought again and again into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise), and Winckelmann handles the pagan marbles "with unsinged hands" (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism). The fire is the life of the senses

in ancient art, and the essay's question is who can touch it without being burned.

## See also

Christian asceticism; Enthusiasm; Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst; Reliquary; Spiritualise.

### Centre of the universe

*centre of the universe*; *centre*, *centres*

Attested: *centre of the universe* (PIC §9); *centre* in three further paragraphs (FRE §6; LEO §12; WIN §26); *centres* in three (PIC §1; MIC §19; WIN §32). The place of the earth in the old astronomy of Ptolemy, which put it motionless at the middle of the spheres; Copernicus moved the sun there in 1543.[550] "For Pico the earth is the centre of the universe: and around it, as a fixed and motionless point, the sun and moon and stars revolve, like diligent servants or ministers. And in the midst of all is placed man" (PIC §9; see Little world; Copula). The simile can be read as carrying the theory: the heavens serve, and man, at the centre, is served. Pater calls it "a misconception of the place in nature both of the earth and of man" (PIC §9; see Dignity of human nature), and the next paragraph gives the modern picture, "the earth but a mote in the beam" (PIC §10; see Infinite spaces). The earth at the centre and man at the centre of the earth's world stand or fall together.

## See also

Copula; Dignity of human nature; Infinite spaces; Little world.

### Chain of secret influences

*The current of nature's finer forces that Leonardo's women seem to receive and pass on to us · The Renaissance*

*chain of secret influences*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A chain of hidden powers, passed on from one being to the next, as the power of a magnet passes along a hanging chain of rings.

**In *The Renaissance*.** These people seem "to become, as it were, the receptacle of them, and pass them on to us in a chain of secret influences" (LEO §23).

[550] Ptolemy, *Almagest* I.5 and I.7; Nicolaus Copernicus, *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (Nuremberg, 1543), book I.

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at LEO §23 explains the Daughters of Herodias.

**A place to read.** LEO §23.

## Meaning

"Influence" comes from the Latin *influere*, to flow in. In medieval astrology it was the ethereal fluid that flowed from the stars and acted on the characters and fortunes of men, and it kept a sense of hidden action long after the astrology was gone (see Influence). "Secret influences" are such powers working unseen. The chain is an old image of power handed on. In Plato's *Ion* Socrates compares the poet's inspiration to the stone that holds up iron rings and gives each the power to hold up the next, so that the Muse moves the poet, the poet the reciter, and the reciter the audience, all hanging from one source.[551]

## Use in the book

The phrase closes Pater's account of the women of Leonardo's drawings. The paragraph has gathered them into a series, "Daughters of Herodias" who "are not of the Christian family" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias), and made them "the clairvoyants", instruments through which "one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature" (LEO §23; see Clairvoyance). Its last two sentences show the forces at work. "It is as if in certain significant examples we actually saw those forces at their work on human flesh. Nervous, electric, faint always with some inexplicable faintness, these people seem to be subject to exceptional conditions, to feel powers at work in the common air unfelt by others, to become, as it were, the receptacle of them, and pass them on to us in a chain of secret influences" (LEO §23; see Common air; Receptacle).

The sentence has three stages, and they can be read as following the order of the *Ion*'s chain. The forces are in "the common air"; the women feel them and receive them, as a receptacle; and they "pass them on to us". The viewer is the last link. The picture is not a record of a force once felt but a means by which the force still reaches whoever looks. The hedges are as careful as the claim is large. "It is as if", "seem", "as it were": Pater offers the chain as the impression the drawings make, not as a doctrine about nature.

The vocabulary is that of Pater's own century. "Nervous, electric" and the "magnetic" of two sentences before (see Magnetic) are the words of the physiology and the mesmerism of the mid-century, in which the nerves carried a current and certain sensitive persons were said to feel what others could not. Pater describes the women of the drawings in words close to those the mesmerists used of their subjects, and his modern words may be

[551] Plato, *Ion* 533d–536b.

taken as giving the old idea of influence a new body: the current of the stars becomes a current in the nerves.

The phrase can be read as the Leonardo essay's version of the Preface's theory. There works of art are "receptacles of so many powers or forces", which "possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues or qualities" (PRE §2; see Powers or forces; Virtue), and the critic's task is to feel their effect and name it (PRE §3). In the Leonardo essay the receptacle is a person, and the force passes through her to the viewer, who stands where the Preface's critic stands, feeling its influence (PRE §3). The same essay speaks of Leonardo's pupils as men capable of "initiation into his secret" (LEO §24), and the chain of influences can be read as the picture's way of initiating whoever looks into the same secret.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's women seem to feel powers at work in the common air, to become their receptacle, and to pass them on to us in a chain of secret influences.

## See also

Clairvoyance; Common air; Daughters of Herodias; Doubtful sex; Influence; Magnetic; Powers or forces; Receptacle; Virtue.

# Chalybeate

*chalybeate*

Attested: *chalybeate* (MIC §12). Impregnated with iron, said of mineral springs; from the Latin *chalybs*, steel, from the Greek *chalyps*, which took its name from the Chalybes, a people of the southern shore of the Black Sea famous in antiquity as workers of iron. Chalybeate springs, with their sharp metallic taste, were drunk as tonics. Pater uses the word in his account of the tone of Michelangelo's sonnets: their tone is "a calm and meditative sweetness" (MIC §12; see Meditative sweetness), and "The cry of distress is indeed there, but as a mere residue, a trace of bracing chalybeate salt, just discernible in the song which rises like a clear, sweet spring from a charmed space in his life" (MIC §12). The image is exact. The poems are a spring of sweet water, and the distress that critics have heard in them is only a trace of mineral, enough to give a tang, and "bracing", a tonic rather than a poison. The iron in the water can be read as the strength in the sweetness, the essay's theme in a taste (see Ex forti dulcedo).

## See also

Ex forti dulcedo; Meditative sweetness.

# Chemist

*The critic as analyst of a compound · The Renaissance*
*chemist*; *alchemist*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A chemist studies the composition of substances, separating compounds into their elements and identifying them.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The critic notes the virtue he has disengaged "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3), and the image governs the language of the paragraph on Wordsworth: elements, combination, débris, heat, fusing, crystallising, transmuting (PRE §5). The Leonardo essay gives its ancestor, the alchemist (LEO §13).

**In this edition.** The note at PRE §3 says the chemist's image "makes criticism sound like a disciplined inquiry into what produces an effect".

**A place to read.** PRE §§3 and 5.

## Meaning

The word is a shortening of "alchemist" (French *chimiste*, Medieval Latin *chimista* from *alchimista*), whose root is the Arabic *al-kīmiyā*, and the two were not fully parted until the eighteenth century.[552] By Pater's time chemistry was the model of an exact science of analysis: the chemist reduced a substance to its elements, isolated them, and named them, and the number of known elements was still growing.

## Use in the book

The simile closes the Preface's account of the critic's function. He must "distinguish, ... analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue" by which a work produces its impression, and "His end is reached when he has disengaged that virtue, and noted it, as a chemist notes some natural element, for himself and others" (PRE §3; see Disengage; Virtue). The comparison claims three things for criticism. Its object is a real property, as an element is real; its method is analysis, the separation of that property from what it is mixed with; and its result can be shown to others.

The fifth paragraph carries the image on. The virtue is found "in combination" with "commoner elements", and it takes "great nicety to disengage" it (PRE §5; see Element). Few artists work "quite cleanly", leaving only what their imagination has "wholly fused and transformed" (PRE §5; see Débris; Fuse). In Wordsworth the heat of genius has "crystallised a part, but only a part," of the work, and his faculty sometimes deposits "a fine crystal here or there, in a matter it does not wholly search

[552] William R. Newman and Lawrence M. Principe, "Alchemy vs. Chemistry: The Etymological Origins of a Historiographic Mistake", *Early Science and Medicine* 3 (1998), 32–65.

through and transmute" (PRE §5; see Crystallise; Transmute). Then comes the term that ends the paragraph, "the active principle", from the chemistry of drugs (PRE §5; see Active principle). The artist's imagination works like heat on matter, and the critic's like analysis on the result.

The chemist has a predecessor in the book. Leonardo, over his crucibles, pursued "a strange variation of the alchemist's dream", seeking immortality not for the body but for the subtlest effects of painting (LEO §13; see Alchemy). The alchemist sought to transmute; the chemist only notes. The Conclusion returns to the science of elements with "phosphorus and lime and delicate fibres" (CON §2; see Natural elements), and there analysis no longer finds a virtue to keep but dissolves the self it studies (CON §3). The Preface's chemist can be read as the confident form of a method whose limits the Conclusion explores.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "chemist" or "alchemist" occurs, and the paragraph in which the image is carried on, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** The critic notes the virtue he has disengaged, as a chemist notes a natural element, for himself and others.

**PRE §5** The virtue is found in combination with commoner elements; the heat of genius fuses, crystallises and transmutes; the critic disengages the active principle.

**LEO §13** Leonardo over his crucibles pursues a variation of the alchemist's dream, immortality for the subtlest effects of painting.

## In this edition

The note at PRE §3 observes that "Pater's next image, the chemist isolating an element, makes criticism sound like a disciplined inquiry into what produces an effect", and the note at PRE §5 on "débris" says that the image "extends the Preface's comparison of criticism to chemistry".

## See also

Active principle; Alchemy; Crystallise; Débris; Disengage; Element; Fuse; Natural elements; Transmute; Virtue.

# Clairvoyance

*The clear seeing of hidden things that Pater gives to the science of Leonardo's age and to the women of his drawings · The Renaissance*

*clairvoyance*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The power of perceiving what is hidden from the senses, at a distance or beneath the surface.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "They are the clairvoyants, through whom, as through delicate instruments, one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature" (LEO §23).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §13, with LEO §23.

## Meaning

The French *clairvoyance*, from *clair*, clear, and *voir*, to see, meant sagacity, a clear view of things. English took the word in the late 1830s from the French mesmerists, for the power their entranced subjects were said to have of seeing through walls, at a distance, or into the body, and the spiritualism of the next decades made it common. Pater's use holds both senses: penetrating insight, and the gift of the sensitive few.

## Use in the book

The noun stands in the first sentence of the thirteenth paragraph of the Leonardo essay, joined to "divination" (LEO §13; see Divination). What it describes is a way of knowing. The science of that age was "unsubjected to our exact modern formulas", and sought "in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences". The paragraph sets this against the orderly reasoner of the later treatise on painting, who would not give the impression Leonardo made on those around him (LEO §13; see Divination). To them he seemed "the sorcerer or the magician" (LEO §13; see Alchemy). Clairvoyance can be read as the name of that impression, a knowledge got by insight rather than by order.

The same paragraph returns to the idea with the adjective. To Leonardo philosophy was to be something "clairvoyant of occult gifts in common or uncommon things", from the reed at the brook-side to the star that draws near but once in a century (LEO §13; see Clairvoyant; Occult gifts). The range of the objects is the point: the reed and the comet are equally open to the clear-seeing eye.

Ten paragraphs later the clairvoyance has passed from the painter to the persons he draws. The women of his drawings "are the clairvoyants, through whom, as through delicate instruments, one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature, and the modes of their action, all that is magnetic in it, all those finer conditions wherein material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual, where only the finer nerve and the keener touch can follow" (LEO §23; see Magnetic; Spiritual). In the thirteenth paragraph clairvoyance was a method of inquiry; in the twenty-third it is a quality of the faces, and through them it reaches the viewer (see Chain of secret influences). The essay can be read as tracing a single line: the

painter who sought a clairvoyant science found it at last in his art, where it could be shown though not proved.

The Michelangelo essay uses the adjective of the spirit of his poems, "almost clairvoyant through the frail and yielding flesh" (MIC §14; see Clairvoyant).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "clairvoyance" or "clairvoyants" occurs, in the order of the book; the adjective "clairvoyant" (MIC §14; LEO §13) is not listed.

**LEO §13** The science of Leonardo's age was all divination, clairvoyance; his philosophy was to be clairvoyant of occult gifts in common or uncommon things.

**LEO §23** The women of his drawings are the clairvoyants, through whom one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature.

## See also

Alchemy; Chain of secret influences; Clairvoyant; Divination; Double sight; Magnetic; Occult gifts; Spiritual.

# Clairvoyant

*clairvoyant*

Attested: *clairvoyant* (MIC §14; LEO §13); *clairvoyants* (LEO §23). French, "clear-seeing": able to see what is hidden from the ordinary senses, a power claimed by the mesmerists and spiritualists of Pater's century. In the Michelangelo essay the adjective describes the spirit of his poems. Michelangelo is always pressing forward from the outward beauty to the universal form (see Forma universale), and the spirit of his poems is "almost clairvoyant through the frail and yielding flesh" (MIC §14; see Houseless spirit). The spirit sees through the body as through a thin veil; the flesh is "frail and yielding", and the sight passes it. "Almost" keeps the claim within bounds: the poems give an impression of clairvoyance, not a vision. The Leonardo essay uses the adjective once, for the philosophy Leonardo sought, "clairvoyant of occult gifts in common or uncommon things" (LEO §13), the noun *clairvoyance* for the science of his age (LEO §13), and *clairvoyants* for the women of his drawings (LEO §23; see Clairvoyance). The two essays can be read as setting two kinds of clear sight side by side: Leonardo's through the surface of nature to its hidden forces, Michelangelo's through the body to the beauty beyond it.

## See also

Clairvoyance; Double sight; Forma universale; Houseless spirit.

## Cohesive force

*the cohesive force*

Attested: *the cohesive force* (CON §3; C73 §3). Cohesion, from the Latin *cohaerere*, to stick together, was the physicists' name for the attraction by which the particles of one body hold to one another, as adhesion was for the attraction between different bodies. Pater takes the term into the account of perception. Experience at first seems to bury us under a flood of external objects; but when reflexion plays upon them, they are dissipated, "the cohesive force seems suspended like some trick of magic", and each object is loosed into a group of impressions (CON §3; see Reflexion). The sentence can be read as placing what held the thing together in the unreflecting look, which reflexion dissolves as a conjuror makes a thing vanish. The physical word and the magical one sit side by side: the cohesive force is a law of nature, and its suspension is "some trick of magic". The phrase can be read beside the end of the Winckelmann essay, where necessity is "a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53; see Magic web), and beside the natural magic that professed to have the key to Leonardo's feats (LEO §10; see Natural magic): in each the science of forces keeps something of the conjuror. The 1873 text was more absolute, "the cohesive force is suspended like a trick of magic" (C73 §3); the revision added "seems" and made "a trick" "some trick", and the change can be read as Pater's caution about claiming more than the experience gives.

### See also

Magic web; Natural magic; Reflexion; Self-reflexion; Texture.

## Concurrence

*A running together of forces that will part again: the Conclusion's account of what a life is · The Renaissance*

*the concurrence*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A running together, a meeting of things or forces in one point, from the Latin *concurrere*.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Our life "is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §2.

## Meaning

*Concurrere* is to run together, as soldiers run to battle or crowds to a spectacle, and *concursus* was both a meeting and a clash. In Cicero's dialogue on the nature of the gods the Academic Cotta mocks the atomists' claim that heaven and earth were made of tiny particles "by a certain chance concourse", *concursu quodam fortuito*, and the word carried that sense into the natural philosophy of the moderns: a concurrence of causes is their meeting to produce one effect.[553] In English the word also kept the sense of agreement, as when judges concur. Pater's use is the physical one, with the stress on the meeting's being brief.

## Use in the book

The word ends the second paragraph of the Conclusion, and with it the account of the body. Pater has shown that our physical life is a perpetual motion of natural elements, that the forces which act in us act also beyond us, and that the clear outline of face and limb is only an image under which we group them, "a design in a web" (CON §2; see Web). Then the sentence that ends the paragraph: our life is flame-like in this at least, that it is "but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2; see Flame-like).

The sentence gives a life three properties. It is a concurrence: not a substance but a meeting, the point at which forces from elsewhere run together. It is "renewed from moment to moment": the meeting is not made once and kept but made again in every instant, as a flame is made again by the fuel it consumes. And the forces are "parting sooner or later on their ways": each has its own way, and the meeting is a crossing of paths that will separate. The words "on their ways" return in the fifth paragraph, where we are to discriminate in those about us, "in the very brilliancy of their gifts", "some tragic dividing of forces on their ways" (CON §5; see Tragic dividing of forces). What was physics in the second paragraph can be read as tragedy in the fifth.

The word gathers the language of forces that runs through the book. The Preface regards works of art "as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations" (PRE §3; see Powers or forces); Leonardo's women are delicate instruments through whom we become aware of "the subtler forces of nature" (LEO §23; see Clairvoyant); the Winckelmann essay ends with a network of law "bearing in it the central forces of the world" (WIN §53; see Magic web). In the Conclusion the forces are the matter of the self, and the self is their concurrence. The fourth paragraph asks how we may be present always "at the focus" (CON §4; see Focus). A concurrence that cannot last can at least be intense, and the art of life, on this account, is to be where the forces meet most.

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[553] Cicero, *De natura deorum* I.66.

The sentence can be read as Pater's answer to the materialism of his decade without a denial of it. He accepts that a life is made of forces that will separate. He does not ask what remains when they part, as the religious reader would, or conclude that nothing matters, as the despairing one would. He asks only how the concurrence, while it lasts, may be made as full as it can be.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "concurrence" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of the forces that divide on their ways, in the order of the book.

**CON §2** Life is a concurrence of forces, renewed from moment to moment, that will part sooner or later.

**CON §5** In those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts, we are to discriminate some tragic dividing of forces on their ways.

**C73 §2** In 1873 the sentence is the same.

## Elsewhere in Pater

*Marius the Epicurean* (1885) gives the Conclusion's physics to the followers of Heraclitus and Aristippus, for whom things pass away too swiftly for any real knowledge of them (see Mid-stream).[554]

## See also

Clairvoyant; Flame-like; Focus; Magic web; Mid-stream; Powers or forces; Tragic dividing of forces; Vital forces; Web.

# Co-operation of the stars

*co-operation of the stars*

Attested: *co-operation of the stars* (PIC §7). The working together of the heavenly bodies to bring an event about, in the language of astrology. When the young Pico entered Ficino's study, Ficino "seems to have thought there was something not wholly earthly about him; at least, he ever afterwards believed that it was not without the co-operation of the stars that the stranger had arrived on that day" (PIC §7). Pater keeps his distance with "seems" and "at least", and the source is Ficino himself, who "in dedicating this translation", his Plotinus, "to Lorenzo de' Medici" recorded the meeting (PIC §7). Ficino practised astrology, and his *Three Books on Life* (1489) teach how to draw down the favour of the stars.[555] The story can be read as ironic: the young man whose coming the stars arranged later wrote

[554] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

[555] Marsilio Ficino, *De vita libri tres* (Florence, 1489), book III, *De vita coelitus comparanda*.

against astrology, in the *Disputations against Divinatory Astrology* left unfinished at his death.[556]

## See also

Omen.

## Copula

*copula*

Attested: *copula* (PIC §9). A link or tie; the Latin word is a band or leash, and in logic it names the verb *is* that joins subject and predicate. In the midst of Pico's universe "is placed man, nodus et vinculum mundi, the bond or copula of the world" (PIC §9; see Nodus et vinculum mundi; Centre of the universe). Man joins the world's orders because he contains them all, from the elements to the likeness of God (PIC §9; see Little world). Pater's Latin word is Pico's: in the Oration man is, "as the Persians say", *mundi copulam, immo hymeneum*, "the copula of the world, nay, its wedding",[557] the joining of the world's parts being pictured as a marriage. Pico listed this among the praises of man that are "great, but not the chief" (see Dignity of human nature). The edition's note at PIC §9 says that "Pater's 'bond or copula' has the sense of a connecting link".

## See also

Centre of the universe; Dignity of human nature; Little world; Nodus et vinculum mundi.

## Crystallise

*crystallised*, *crystallising*; *crystal*, *crystals*

Attested: *crystallised* (PRE §5; BEL §19); *crystal* (PRE §5; PIC §10); *crystals* (LEO §9); *crystallising* (GIO §18). To form crystals, as a solution does when it cools or a substance when heat has done its work; hence to give a fixed and clear shape. "The heat of his genius, entering into the substance of his work, has crystallised a part, but only a part, of it", and his "incommunicable faculty" sometimes deposits "a fine crystal here or there" in the verse (PRE §5; see Chemist). The legend of Giorgione grew by the same process, "all that was intense or desirable in it crystallising about the memory of this wonderful young man" (GIO §18; see Impersonation), and a poem of Du Bellay is "a perfectly crystallised example" of his manner (BEL §19). The literal crystals of nature, the "hidden virtues of plants and

[556] Pico, *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem*, printed by his nephew Gianfrancesco in the *Opera* (Bologna, 1496).

[557] Pico, *Oratio* (1486), sentence 3 in the numbering of the Latin Library text.

crystals" Leonardo brooded over (LEO §9) and the "actual crystal walls" that bound Pico's world (PIC §10), stand outside the image.

## See also

Chemist; Fuse; Giorgionesque; Impersonation; Transmute.

## Débris

*débris*

Attested: *débris* (PRE §5). Fragments left over, waste. "Few artists, not Goethe or Byron even, work quite cleanly, casting off all débris, and leaving us only what the heat of their imagination has wholly fused and transformed" (PRE §5; see Chemist; Fuse). The débris is what the imagination has not worked on, and the critic must separate the virtue from it; the next sentences find much of it in Wordsworth. The note at PRE §5 gives "scraps", calls the word "already used as a borrowing in Pater's English", and says that "An artist's imaginative heat can transform some material while leaving scraps behind".

## See also

Chemist; Disengage; Fuse; Transmute.

## Dephlegmatisiren

*dephlegmatisiren*

Attested: *dephlegmatisiren* (CON §4; C73 §5). The German verb, in its older spelling, is the first of the two verbs in Novalis's definition of philosophy, which opens the fourth paragraph of the Conclusion: to philosophise "ist dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren" (CON §4; see Philosophiren). It is a word of the laboratory. *Phlegma* in the Greek of the physicians was one of the four humours, the cold and wet one, and the phlegmatic temperament was the slow and dull one; the chemists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took the word for the watery, flavourless part that comes over in distillation, and to dephlegmate a spirit was to draw that water off and leave it stronger. Novalis, who had studied at the mining academy of Freiberg, can be read as keeping both senses. To philosophise is to free the mind of its sluggish humour and to rectify it, as a distiller rectifies a spirit. The edition's note renders the word "to dispel sluggishness". Pater sets it beside the chemistry of the paragraphs before, where the body is resolved into "natural elements" and the mind into impressions (CON §§2–3; see Natural elements), and the word can be read as completing the figure: after analysis, a purifying. The book has its own chemistry of the spirit, in which Greek religion "sublimes itself" (WIN §26)

and the artist steeps his thought "into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Sublime). Novalis's verb belongs to it.

## See also

Natural elements; Philosophiren; Sublime; Vivify.

# Divination

*Knowledge by inspired guess: the method of Leonardo's science, and of the critics Pater admires · The Renaissance*

*divination*, *divinations*; *divine*, *divines*, *divining*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The finding out of hidden things by signs or by insight; knowledge that runs ahead of proof.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The science of that age was all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas, seeking in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences" (LEO §13).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** LEO §13.

## Meaning

The Latin *divinatio*, from *divinus*, belonging to the gods, was the augur's art of reading the will of the gods in the flight of birds, the entrails of victims or the fall of lots; Cicero wrote two books on it, one setting out the case for it and one against.[558] The word widened to any guess that reaches the truth before proof, and the verb "to divine" to making something out by intuition. The dowser's divining rod, which finds water under the ground, kept the old sense of a hidden gift.

## Use in the book

The noun opens the thirteenth paragraph of the Leonardo essay and names the science of his age. That science was "all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas, seeking in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences" (LEO §13; see Clairvoyance). Pater sets it against a false picture of Leonardo drawn from the orderly treatise on painting that a Frenchman compiled from his papers a century later, the picture of "the mere reasoner who subjects design to anatomy, and composition to mathematical rules". Those who think of him so "shall hardly have that impression which those around Leonardo received from him" (LEO §13). Divination is the method that matches the impression: a leap, an instant of vision, rather than a rule.

[558] Cicero, *De divinatione*, books I and II.

The verb follows in the same paragraph. Philosophy, to Leonardo, was to give "strange swiftness and double sight, divining the sources of springs beneath the earth or of expression beneath the human countenance" (LEO §13; see Double sight). The sentence can be read as playing on the water-diviner. The painter divines expression beneath a face as the diviner finds a spring beneath the ground: both find what flows under a surface. The plural returns in the account of his problem at Milan. In the narrow Florentine medium he was to entertain "those divinations of a humanity too wide for it, that larger vision of the opening world, which is only not too much for the great, irregular art of Shakespeare" (LEO §20; see Transmutation of ideas into images). The divinations are now intuitions of humanity, too large for the art that must hold them.

Outside the Leonardo essay the word names the finding of what is hidden, most often by scholars and critics. In the Renaissance, says the book's first paragraph, the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination and the desire for a more liberal way of conceiving life direct men "not only to the discovery of old and forgotten sources of this enjoyment, but to the divination of fresh sources thereof" (FRE §1; see Renaissance). Fauriel had reasons to "divine" for *Aucassin and Nicolette* "a still more ancient ancestry" (FRE §20). Pater himself divines: "From allusions in the sonnets, we may divine" that Michelangelo had debated with himself whether his last passion would be "the most desolating of all" (MIC §10; see Dolce amaro). And the Winckelmann essay makes divining the mark of its hero's genius. Winckelmann read the words of Greek poetry "divining beyond the words" a pulse of sensuous life (WIN §9; see Unexpressed pulsation); remote in time and place, he "divines those channels of ancient art, in which its life still circulates" (WIN §22); and from "a few stray antiquarianisms" he divines, as his manner was, "the temperament of the antique world" (WIN §31; see Antiquarianism).

The word can be read as a thread between Leonardo's science and Pater's criticism. The exact science of Pater's own day had no place for divination, and the Conclusion speaks its language of forces and elements. But the critics the book admires, Winckelmann above all, know as Leonardo's age knew, by an instant of vision that gathers many experiences; and the æsthetic critic of the Preface, who must feel a work's virtue before he can name it, works the same way.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the noun or the verb occurs, in the order of the book; the adjective "divine" is not listed.

**FRE §1** The desire felt in the Renaissance directs men to the discovery of old sources of enjoyment and to the divination of fresh ones.

**FRE §20** Fauriel divined for *Aucassin and Nicolette* a still more ancient ancestry.

**MIC §10** From allusions in the sonnets we may divine that Michelangelo debated whether his last passion would be the most desolating of all.

**LEO §13** The science of Leonardo's age was all divination; his philosophy divines springs beneath the earth and expression beneath the face.

**LEO §20** In the narrow Florentine medium Leonardo was to entertain divinations of a humanity too wide for it.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann divined beyond the words of Greek poetry an unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life.

**WIN §22** Remote in time and place, Winckelmann divines the channels of ancient art.

**WIN §31** From a few stray antiquarianisms Winckelmann divines the temperament of the antique world.

## See also

Antiquarianism; Clairvoyance; Dolce amaro; Double sight; Occult gifts; Renaissance; Science; Transmutation of ideas into images; Unexpressed pulsation.

# Double sight

*double sight*

Attested: *double sight* (LEO §13). Double sight is the sight that sees two things at once, or sees what others cannot; the phrase is close to the Highland "second sight", the gift of seeing what is far off or to come. Pater uses it in his account of what Leonardo wanted from philosophy: philosophy was to be "something giving strange swiftness and double sight", able to divine springs beneath the earth and expression beneath the face (LEO §13; see Divination). The sentence can be read as explaining the phrase by its examples. The double sight sees the surface and what lies beneath it, the earth and the spring, the countenance and the expression, and the two examples are the two great subjects of Leonardo's art, landscape with its waters and the human face (see Motion of great waters). "Swiftness" goes with it: this double sight does not reason its way down but sees at once. The phrase looks forward to the essay's later "strange veil of sight" through which things reach Leonardo "as in faint light of eclipse" (LEO §18; see Veil of sight): a sight that is both keener and stranger than ordinary sight.

## See also

Clairvoyance; Divination; Motion of great waters; Veil of sight.

## Doulce haleine

*doulce haleine*; *douce haleine*

Attested: *doulce haleine* (BEL §27); *douce haleine* (BEL §5). *Haleine* is breath, from the Latin *anhelare*, to breathe hard; *doulce*, in the old spelling, is sweet. The phrase comes in two of the three poems that the Du Bellay essay quotes, the first and the last, and in each the air breathes: April's breath in the one, the winds' in the other. In Rémy Belleau's "Avril" the month is "the grace and laughter / of Cypris, / her fragrance and sweet breath", *Le flair et la douce haleine*, as the note at BEL §5 renders it, Cypris being Aphrodite (BEL §5; see Changefulness). In Du Bellay's winnower's song, at the end, the winnower calls on the winds: *De vostre doulce haleine / Eventez ceste plaine / Eventez ce sejour*, "With your sweet breath, / air this plain, / air this place", while he toils at his corn in the heat of the day (BEL §27; see Vanneur). The two breaths can be read as framing the essay. Belleau's is the breath of a goddess, a perfume, an ornament of the Pleiad's mythology; Du Bellay's is the breath of the wind at work, which the winnower needs to separate the grain from the chaff. The sweetness has come down, it can be read, from Cypris to the barn door, and Pater's comment on the song puts nearly all its pleasure "in the surprise at the happy and dexterous way in which a thing slight in itself is handled" (BEL §28; see Pure effect).

## See also

Changefulness; Diminutive; Le beau sejour du commun jour; Pure effect; Vanneur; Winnow.

## Element

*element*, *elements*

Attested in the Preface: *elements* (PRE §§3, 5), *element* (PRE §3). Elsewhere the word comes in forty further paragraphs. In chemistry an element is a substance that cannot be broken down into simpler substances by chemical means; in general use, any constituent part. The Preface uses the chemical sense: the critic explains a work's influence "by analysing and reducing it to its elements" (PRE §3), notes its virtue "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Chemist), and must disengage it "from the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination" (PRE §5; see Disengage). The essays use the general sense, as in "the chief elements of Leonardo's genius" (LEO §3) and "the sensuous element in art" (GIO §1;

see Sensuous element); the Conclusion returns to the chemical sense with "natural elements" (CON §2; see Natural elements).

## See also

Chemist; Disengage; Natural elements; Sensuous element; Virtue.

## Elementary forces

*The simplest forces into which a thing can be resolved: in Leonardo's genius, curiosity and the desire of beauty; in the body, the forces of physics · The Renaissance*

*elementary forces*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The simplest forces, not further reducible, of which more complex things are composed.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Curiosity and the desire of beauty—these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius" (LEO §16).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §16, with CON §2.

## Meaning

"Elementary" comes from "element", the Latin *elementum*, a first principle, also a letter of the alphabet: what is elementary belongs to the elements and is simple. "Forces" in the physics of Pater's day were the powers of nature, heat, light, electricity, magnetism and chemical affinity, and the science of the 1840s to the 1860s had shown them to be convertible into one another, as forms of a single store of energy.[559] To speak of "elementary forces" was to speak the language of that science, which explained the complex by reducing it to the simple.

## Use in the book

The phrase makes up, with the clause that follows it, the whole sixteenth paragraph of the Leonardo essay: "Curiosity and the desire of beauty—these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius; curiosity often in conflict with the desire of beauty, but generating, in union with it, a type of subtle and curious grace" (LEO §16; see Curiosity; Desire of beauty; Subtle and curious grace). The sentence can be read as treating a genius as the physicist treats a body. It resolves it into forces, says there are two, and describes their action: sometimes opposed, sometimes joined, and in union "generating" a third thing, as two forces acting on one point produce a resultant. The paragraph's brevity is part of its effect. It stands alone

[559] William Robert Grove, *On the Correlation of Physical Forces* (1846); Hermann von Helmholtz, *Über die Erhaltung der Kraft* (1847).

between the account of Milan and the account of the return to nature, a formula set apart.

The method is the Preface's. There the critic regards works of art and the fairer forms of nature and life "as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations" (PRE §3; see Powers or forces), and his task is to analyse them. The Leonardo essay applies the method to the artist himself: the critic who resolves a picture into its virtues resolves a temperament into its forces. The rest of the essay follows the two forces through the life, their conflict at Milan (LEO §20) and the essay's last sentence, which names them both at his death (LEO §36; see Curiosity).

The phrase returns in the Conclusion, in its literal sense and with a different effect. The physical life is "a perpetual motion" of elements, "the passage of the blood, the waste and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain under every ray of light and sound—processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces" (CON §2). And the action of these forces "rusts iron and ripens corn" (CON §2; see Rust and ripen). There the reduction dissolves the person. The forces that make up a body are the same that act in rust and harvest, and our life is only their concurrence for a while.

The two passages can be read against each other. In the Leonardo essay the language of elementary forces gives the critic a hold on a genius, and the forces, joined, make a grace. In the Conclusion the same language loosens every hold, and the forces are "parting sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2). The Conclusion's sentence was written first, in a review of 1868, a year before the Leonardo essay; but in the book the Leonardo essay comes first, and its use of the phrase is the hopeful one: analysis there ends in a portrait, not a dissolution.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "elementary forces" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §16** Curiosity and the desire of beauty are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius.

**CON §2** The processes of the physical life are reduced by science to simpler and more elementary forces.

**C73 §2** The 1873 text has the sentence, with small differences of wording.

## See also

Curiosity; Desire of beauty; Elementary fire; Natural elements; Powers or forces; Rust and ripen; Subtle and curious grace.

## Elixir

*elixir*

Attested: *elixir* (LEO §13). The word came through Medieval Latin from the Arabic *al-iksīr*, perhaps from a Greek word for a drying powder laid on wounds. In alchemy the elixir was the substance that would perfect what it touched, turning base metal to gold and, taken as a medicine, prolonging life: the elixir of life. Pater uses it once, in the sentence that tells Leonardo's variation on the alchemist's dream. He sought to discover the secret, "not of an elixir to make man's natural life immortal, but of giving immortality to the subtlest and most delicate effects of painting" (LEO §13; see Alchemy). The essay can be read as recording the result with some irony. The new method of oils, welcomed for its after-thoughts, was the ruin of the Last Supper, which decayed within fifty years (LEO §26; see After-thought). Yet of La Gioconda Pater can write, "Perhaps of all ancient pictures time has chilled it least" (LEO §30). It is as if the elixir had failed on the wall at Milan and worked on the panel in the Louvre.

### See also

After-thought; Alchemy.

## Empyrean

*empyrean*

Attested: *empyrean* (GIO §23). The Greek *empyros*, in the fire, gave the Latin *empyreus*, and the empyrean was for medieval cosmology the highest heaven, a heaven of pure fire or light beyond the moving spheres, where Dante sets the vision of God at the end of the *Paradiso*.[560] Pater takes the word back to its root. "The air, moreover, in the school of Giorgione, seems as vivid as the people who breathe it, and literally empyrean, all impurities being burnt out of it, and no taint, no floating particle of anything but its own proper elements allowed to subsist within it" (GIO §23). "Literally" points to the etymology: the air is fired, purified by burning, so that nothing in it is foreign to it. The image can be read as the essay's ideal of art carried into the atmosphere. As matter is absorbed into form in the perfect work, so in Giorgione's air "no floating particle of anything but its own proper elements" remains (GIO §23); the air is all air, as music is all music.

### See also

Condition of music; Gold thread; Liquid air.

[560] Dante, *Paradiso* XXX.38–42, where the poet passes from the outermost sphere into the heaven "which is pure light" (*ch'è pura luce*).

## Ethereal breath

*ethereal breath*; *etherealisation*, *etherealising*

Attested: *ethereal breath* (PIC §9); *etherealisation*, *etherealising* (ROB §§3, 6, 10). Pater's English for Pico's *spiritus coelestis*, which the edition's note renders "celestial spirit". The ether was the fifth element of Aristotle's cosmos, the pure substance of the heavens and the stars;[561] the Latin *spiritus* is breath. In the little world of man there is "a body mingled of earthy elements, and ethereal breath" (PIC §9; see Little world): the body answers to the elements, the breath to the heavens. Pater's rendering can be read as keeping the root sense of *spiritus*, breath, where the edition's "spirit" keeps the doctrine. In the Luca della Robbia essay the adjective becomes a verb of art. Each great system of sculpture resists stone's heaviness by "etherealising, spiritualising, relieving" it (ROB §6; see Etherealise), and Michelangelo's unfinished surfaces give pure form "breath, pulsation" (ROB §10; see Breath).

### See also

Breath; Etherealise; Little world.

## Feux divins

*feux divins*

Attested: *feux divins* (BEL §20). The divine fires are the stars, the fires of heaven. The words open the second line of the sonnet that Pater calls "a perfectly crystallised example" of the Pleiad's characteristics, which are "most abundant" in Du Bellay's *Olive* (BEL §19; see Crystallise), the collection of sonnets "in praise of a half-imaginary lady" first published in 1549 and enlarged in 1550; in the enlarged *Olive* it is the second sonnet: *D'amour, de grace, et de haulte valeur / Les feux divins estoient ceinctz et les cieulx / S'estoient vestuz d'un manteau precieux / A raiz ardens de diverse couleur* (BEL §20). The note at BEL §20 renders it "With love, with grace, and with high worth / the heavenly fires were girded, and the skies / had clothed themselves in a precious mantle / with burning rays of many colors", and says that the sonnet "imagines the beloved's arrival as a collaboration between heavens and earth". At the lady's birth the stars are girded with love and grace, the sea is calm and the wind gracious; she takes her colour from lilies, her hair from gold, her lips from roses and her eyes from the sun, and her name takes immortality from the gods (BEL §20; see Immortality). The poem's furniture can be read as that of the Petrarchan love-sonnet, and the sonnet shows, on this reading, the Pleiad's manner at

[561] Aristotle, *De caelo* I.2–3.

its purest: a conventional matter given a perfect shape, the heavens themselves made into ornament.

## See also

Crystallise; Immortality; Sonnet.

### Firmament

*firmament*

Attested: *firmament* (PIC §10). The vault of heaven, imagined as a solid sphere; the Latin *firmamentum* is a support or prop. Jerome's Latin Bible uses it for the expanse God set between the waters on the second day of creation,[562] and the old astronomy made it the sphere of the fixed stars. "For Pico the world is a limited place, bounded by actual crystal walls, and a material firmament; it is like a painted toy" (PIC §10; see Logos; Crystallise). "Actual" and "material" are Pater's stress: what for a modern reader is a figure of speech was for Pico the fact of the world. The firmament shuts the world in, and the next sentences open it: "our own conception of nature, with its unlimited space, its innumerable suns" (PIC §10; see Infinite spaces).

## See also

Crystallise; Infinite spaces; Logos.

### Flame-like

*Like a flame in being always renewed and always consumed: the Conclusion's first image for a life · The Renaissance*

*flame-like*; *flame*, *flamed*, *flames*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Like a flame: bright, moving, and kept in being only by what it consumes.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "This at least of flame-like our life has, that it is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on "flame-like"; the note at CON §5 says that the flame "concentrates two qualities Pater has just set in motion" (see Hard, gem-like flame).

**A place to read.** CON §2.

[562] Genesis 1:6–8, in the Vulgate: "Fiat firmamentum in medio aquarum".

## Meaning

A flame is not a thing but a process: a region of burning gas, kept in its shape by fuel drawn in and spent at the same rate. It looks the same from moment to moment and is never the same. Heraclitus made fire the stuff of the world, "an ever-living fire, kindled in measures and quenched in measures", and the image of life as a flame, fed and consuming, runs from his fragments to the French chemist Antoine Lavoisier, who concluded with the mathematician Pierre-Simon Laplace in 1783 that breathing is a combustion, slow but like that of charcoal.[563] Pater's adjective takes from the flame only what the paragraph has proved: that a life is a form kept by a passage of matter.

## Use in the book

The word ends the Conclusion's account of the body. "This at least of flame-like our life has" (CON §2): the phrase is guarded, "at least", as if to say that the likeness may go no further than this. Then the likeness itself: our life "is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2; see Concurrence). The flame is renewed from moment to moment as the life is, and like the life it is the meeting of things that will separate. The next paragraph carries the image into the mind, where "the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring" (CON §3; see Whirlpool). The flame of the body is renewed; the flame of the mind devours. And in the fifth paragraph the image becomes a rule: to burn always "with this hard, gem-like flame" is "success in life" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The three uses make the Conclusion's argument in one image. Life is a flame, the mind's flame burns faster still, and the art of living is to burn well.

The flame in the earlier essays belongs to persons and to their brevity. Pico's mother believed that at his birth a circular flame had appeared on the wall of the chamber where she lay and suddenly vanished (PIC §8), and his own brief existence, Pater writes, "flamed itself away" (PIC §14). Giorgione, the most vivid of the Venetian masters, was "a live flame, as it seemed, in those old shadowy times", reduced almost to a name by the critics (GIO §14; see Il fuoco Giorgionesco). In the Michelangelo essay the new body after death, as Michelangelo can conceive it, is "a passing light", "a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind" (MIC §20; see New body). In each the flame is a life seen as brief, and the Conclusion makes that the description of every life.

The adjective "flame-like" is cautious where the later "gem-like" is bold. In the second paragraph the flame is a likeness the body has whether it will or no; in the fifth it is a way of living chosen and maintained. The step from

[563] Heraclitus, fragment B30 Diels-Kranz (Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* V.105); Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier and Pierre-Simon Laplace, "Mémoire sur la chaleur", read to the Académie royale des sciences in June 1783.

the one to the other is the step from description to ethics, and the Conclusion takes it without leaving the image.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "flame", "flamed", "flames" or "flame-like" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §8** Pico's mother believed that at his birth a circular flame had appeared on the wall of her chamber and suddenly vanished.

**PIC §14** Pico's own brief existence flamed itself away.

**MIC §2** Michelangelo has nothing like the fret-work of wings and flames in which Blake frames his conceptions.

**MIC §20** The new body, as Michelangelo can conceive it, is a passing light, a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind.

**GIO §14** Giorgione, a live flame in those old shadowy times, has been reduced almost to a name.

**CON §2** This at least of flame-like our life has, that it is but the concurrence of forces.

**CON §3** In the inward world the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring.

**CON §5** To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame is success in life.

**C73 §2** In 1873 the sentence is the same.

**C73 §3** In 1873, as in 1893, the flame is more eager and devouring.

**C73 §6** In 1873, without the comma: "this hard gem-like flame".

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater's *Plato and Platonism* (1893) speaks of "the Heraclitean fire" in its chapter on the doctrine of motion.[564]

## Pater's sources

The Conclusion's epigraph is Heraclitus's saying that all things move on (CON §1; see πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει).

## Later readings

The English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, whom Pater had coached at Oxford in 1866, called a late sonnet "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection" (1888). In it nature's bonfire burns on and man's mark is gone, until the Resurrection makes him "immortal diamond".[565] The poem can be read as a Christian answer to the

[564] Walter Pater, *Plato and Platonism* (London, 1893), chapter I, "Plato and the Doctrine of Motion"; Library Edition (London, 1910), p. 26.

[565] Gerard Manley Hopkins, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection" (1888), in *Poems*, ed. Robert Bridges (London, 1918).

Conclusion: the flame consumes, but a gem is promised that does not burn away.

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Concurrence; Hard, gem-like flame; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; New body; Whirlpool.

## Flexible life

*flexible life*; *flexible*, *inflexibilities*

Attested: *flexible life* (ROB §10); *flexible* (BEL §8); *inflexibilities* (FRE §33). Life that bends and yields, from the Latin *flectere*, to bend. Pater's sentence closes the tenth paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "In this way he combines the utmost amount of passion and intensity with the sense of a yielding and flexible life: he gets not vitality merely, but a wonderful force, of expression" (ROB §10). The phrase answers the essay's account of sculpture's weight. Stone is stiff, and the sculptor's task is to relieve "its stiffness, its heaviness, and death" (ROB §6; see Etherealise); Michelangelo's incompleteness, on Pater's account, makes the stone seem to yield, and passion carved in it does not set hard (see Caricature; Incompleteness). "Yielding and flexible" are qualities of living flesh and also of a temper, and the paragraph has just said that the incompleteness "fell in with his peculiar temper and mode of living, his disappointments and hesitations" (ROB §10). The adjective's other use is of style: Du Bellay's prose is "perfectly transparent, flexible, and chaste" (BEL §8). The student of the Renaissance, unlike the student of the Reformation, "is not beset at every turn by the inflexibilities and antagonisms of some well-recognised controversy" (FRE §33).

## See also

Caricature; Etherealise; Incompleteness; Vitality.

## Flickering

*flickering*

Attested: *flickering* (CON §3; C73 §3). To flicker is to move to and fro with quick small movements, as a flame does in a draught or a bird's wings before it settles: an Old English word, *flicorian*, to flutter. The Conclusion uses it of impressions, in the sentence that shuts the mind in its own room. "And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impressions, unstable, flickering, inconsistent, which burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them, it contracts still further: the whole scope of

observation is dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind" (CON §3; see Observation; Solidity). The three adjectives grow worse. "Unstable" says that impressions do not stay; "flickering" that they waver while they last; "inconsistent" that they do not agree with one another. The image of the flame runs under the sentence, for impressions "burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them" (see Flame-like). A flickering light is also a poor one to see by, and the next words follow: the world so lit contracts to "the narrow chamber of the individual mind", and in the sentence after, experience is ringed round by a wall (CON §3; see Wall of personality). The 1873 text had "impressions unstable, flickering, inconsistent" without the comma, and "dwarfed to the narrow chamber" (C73 §3).

## See also

Flame-like; Observation; Solidity; Wall of personality.

# Focus

*The point where rays meet and burn: the place the Conclusion asks us to be always present at · The Renaissance*

*focus*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The point at which rays of light, gathered by a lens or mirror, meet; from the Latin *focus*, a hearth.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?" (CON §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §4.

## Meaning

*Focus* in Latin is the hearth, the fireplace of a house and the centre of its life. The German astronomer Johannes Kepler took it into the geometry of the conic sections in 1604, in his book on optics, for the points of an ellipse, a parabola or a hyperbola, naming them after the burning-point at which a mirror of that curve gathers the sun's rays and kindles.[566] The word thus keeps its fire: the focus is where light becomes heat. From there it passed to the lens, and to common speech, for any centre where things meet.

[566] Johannes Kepler, *Ad Vitellionem paralipomena, quibus astronomiae pars optica traditur* (Frankfurt, 1604).

## Use in the book

The word comes twice, and both times its burning is in view. In the Winckelmann essay the artist who would realise a situation must "define, in a chill and empty atmosphere, the focus where rays, in themselves pale and impotent, unite and begin to burn" (WIN §36; see Realise; Refraction). The rays are pale and impotent apart; at the focus they kindle. The artist does not make the light but finds the point where it gathers.

In the Conclusion the focus is a place to live. Pater has asked how, in the "counted number of pulses" given to us, we may see all that is to be seen by the finest senses (CON §4; see Pulsation). "How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?" (CON §4; see Vital forces). The question has two parts, and they pull against each other. To pass swiftly from point to point is to move; to be present always at the focus is to stay. The answer is in the figure. A focus is not a fixed place but the point where things happen to meet, and in a world of perpetual motion it moves with them. To be always at the focus is to move as the focus moves.

The next sentence gives the answer in the image of fire that the focus already holds: success in life is to burn always "with this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The burning-glass makes a flame at its focus, and the life that is present at the focus of its forces burns. The Latin hearth and the optician's point of fire are joined in the sentence, and the Winckelmann essay's artist, who finds the focus of a situation, becomes the model for every life.

The figure can also be read against the book's account of the critic. The Preface's critic disengages the "virtue" of each work and notes it "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Virtue); the Conclusion's person can be read as gathering the forces of each moment as a lens gathers rays, and the book's last pages as putting the critic's method into the language of optics.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "focus" occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §36** To realise a situation is to define the focus where rays, in themselves pale and impotent, unite and begin to burn.

**CON §4** How shall we be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

**C73 §5** In 1873: "How can we pass most swiftly from point to point".

## See also

Energy of conception; Hard, gem-like flame; Pulsation; Realise; Refraction; Virtue; Vital forces.

## Fuse

*fused*, *fusing*

Attested: *fused* (PRE §5); *fusing* (PRE §5). To melt by heat, and so to join into one substance. The imagination is the heat: few artists leave us "only what the heat of their imagination has wholly fused and transformed" (PRE §5), and Wordsworth's faculty works "sometimes fusing and transforming entire compositions, like the Stanzas on Resolution and Independence" (PRE §5; see Active principle; Chemist). What is fused is transformed throughout, as against what is only crystallised in part. The verb does not recur after the Preface; its ideal, matter wholly transformed, may be seen returning in the School of Giorgione's "perfect identification of matter and form" (GIO §10; see Condition of music).

### See also

Active principle; Chemist; Condition of music; Crystallise; Débris; Transmute.

## Gold thread

*Pater's figure for Venetian light, woven through flesh, landscape and wall as through a cloth · The Renaissance*

*gold thread*, *gold threads*; *gold dust*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Thread of gold, woven into cloth for richness; in Pater a figure for light drawn through the fabric of a picture.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Only, in Italy all natural things are as it were woven through and through with gold thread, even the cypress revealing it among the folds of its blackness. And 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" (GIO §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note on the Lace-girl at GIO §2 says that "His point is the shared effect of light across dress, flesh and air".

**A place to read.** GIO §24, with GIO §§2, 6.

### Meaning

Gold thread, a fine strip of gold or gilt silver wound on a silk core, was woven into the brocades of Venice and the East. It catches light wherever the cloth moves, and in a brocade it runs through the weave itself. Pater makes it the figure for a light that pervades a picture as the thread pervades a

brocade: present everywhere, now visible and now hidden, binding the whole.

## Use in the book

The figure appears three times in the Giorgione essay, each time a little larger. In the second paragraph it defines colouring: "the colouring—that weaving of light, as of just perceptible gold threads, through the dress, the flesh, the atmosphere, in Titian's Lace-girl" (GIO §2; see Colouring). The threads are "just perceptible", and they run through three unlike things, cloth, skin and air, making them one fabric. In the sixth it is a stroke of weather that makes a common scene into a picture: "this sudden inweaving of gold thread through the texture of the haystack, and the poplars, and the grass, gives the scene artistic qualities, that it is like a picture" (GIO §6; see Informing expression). The light comes suddenly and passes, and while it lasts the haystack is art.

In the twenty-fourth paragraph the figure becomes a description of Italy and of a school. "Only, in Italy all natural things are as it were woven through and through with gold thread, even the cypress revealing it among the folds of its blackness. And 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" (GIO §24). The thread runs from nature into painting. In Italy the landscape itself is woven with gold, and the painters, seeming to work with gold dust, spin it from flesh to wall. "Spinning" makes the painter a weaver, and the picture a fabric continuous with the world it shows. The darkest thing, the cypress, reveals the gold "among the folds of its blackness", so that even shadow is shot with light.

The image can be read as the essay's doctrine in a single figure. A thread woven through a cloth is not a subject laid on a ground; it is part of the fabric, and the fabric cannot be unwoven without losing it. So with Venetian light, which belongs equally to the flesh, the landscape and the wall, and which makes "that balance, that modulated unison of landscape and persons", in which "neither personage nor scenery is ever a mere pretext for the other" (GIO §24; see Human image). The gold of the Byzantine mosaics, where Venetian painting began, can be read as having become light (GIO §12; see Byzantine decoration).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "gold thread", "gold threads" or "gold dust" occurs, in the order of the book.

**GIO §2** Colouring is a weaving of light, as of just perceptible gold threads, through dress, flesh and atmosphere.

**GIO §6** A sudden inweaving of gold thread through haystack, poplars and grass gives a scene artistic qualities.

**GIO §24** In Italy all things are woven with gold thread; the Venetian painters work with gold dust, spinning it through flesh and walls.

## See also

Byzantine decoration; Colouring; Empyrean; Human image; Informing expression; Liquid air.

# Hard, gem-like flame

*A flame with the brightness and hardness of a jewel: the Conclusion's image for a life of constant intensity, and the book's most famous phrase · The Renaissance*

*this hard, gem-like flame*; *gem*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A flame that is hard and bright as a gem: intense, clear and steady while it burns.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §5 says that the flame "concentrates two qualities Pater has just set in motion: the brilliance of an intense impression and the constant change of the forces sustaining it".

**A place to read.** CON §5.

## Meaning

The phrase joins two things that do not go together. A flame is soft, moving and consumed; a gem is hard, still and lasting. A gem's brilliance is called its fire, so that the two words meet in the common speech of jewellers. Pater's compound keeps the contradiction. The flame is to have the gem's hardness, its edge and clarity, while remaining a flame, which is to say a process that must be fed. "Hard" could also mean keen and exact, as of a hard outline; the book's "hard realism" (ROB §6; see Hard realism) is by contrast a fault of sculpture, "a one-sided presentment of mere form".

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the fifth paragraph of the Conclusion. The fourth has asked how we may be present always "at the focus" (CON §4; see Focus), and the answer comes as a definition: "To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life" (CON §5). The demonstrative "this" can be read as referring back. The flame is the one the Conclusion has been describing since its second paragraph, the flame-like concurrence of forces that our life already is (CON §2; see Flame-like), and the flame of the inward world, "more eager and devouring" (CON §3). The

sentence does not ask us to become a flame but to burn as the flame we are, and to burn always.

The two adjectives correct the danger in the image. A flame that is eager and devouring may burn out or burn wild; a hard, gem-like one burns clear and does not waver. The phrase can be read as joining the two demands of the Conclusion, intensity and discrimination. The flame gives intensity: to burn is to be wholly consumed in the present. The gem gives discrimination: a gem has facets and edges, and its fire is light divided and sent back sharp. The sentence that follows supports the reading: "in a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits", and only "the roughness of the eye" makes two things seem alike (CON §5; see Habit; Roughness of the eye). The hard flame sees the difference between things, as a cut stone throws back each colour apart.

The second infinitive, "to maintain this ecstasy", asks for a paradox like the hard flame (see Ecstasy). "Success in life" is a plain phrase, and Pater uses it with a deliberate plainness, as if to say that this, and not the success of the world, is what the phrase should mean.

The gem appears once elsewhere in the book, in the Preface, where the critic speaks of the virtues of things "as we say, in speaking of a herb, a wine, a gem" (PRE §3; see Virtue). The gem there has a virtue, a special power of affecting us. The Conclusion's gem-like flame can be read as the critic himself become such a thing, a nature with a virtue of its own, kept bright by the attention that the Preface asked of him.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "gem-like flame" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of the gem's virtue and the paragraphs of the Conclusion's flame, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** We speak of the virtues of things as we say, in speaking of a herb, a wine, a gem.

**CON §2** Our life is flame-like, a concurrence of forces renewed from moment to moment.

**CON §3** In the inward world the flame is more eager and devouring.

**CON §5** To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life.

**C73 §6** In 1873, without the comma: "this hard gem-like flame".

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater's note of 1888 says that he had dealt more fully with the Conclusion's thoughts in *Marius the Epicurean* (CON §1; see πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει). In *Marius* the hero's Cyrenaic creed is not a pursuit of pleasure, and its practical ideal is a general completeness of life (see Fruit of experience).

## Later readings

W. H. Mallock's satire *The New Republic* (1877) made Pater, as Mr Rose, the spokesman of a life lived for the sake of its moments (see Art for its own sake). The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, once Pater's pupil, ended his sonnet on the Heraclitean fire with man made "immortal diamond" (see Flame-like), which can be read as a gem that no fire consumes.

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Art for its own sake; Ecstasy; Flame-like; Focus; Fruit of experience; Habit; Hard realism; Roughness of the eye; Virtue; Vision and ecstasy.

# Hidden virtues

*The secret powers of plants and stones, over which Leonardo brooded in the manner of the older students of nature · The Renaissance*
*hidden virtues*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The secret powers that the old natural philosophy gave to herbs, stones and stars, known by their effects and not by any visible cause.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "He brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals, the lines traced by the stars as they moved in the sky" (LEO §9).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; its Key Words entry on Virtue says that "The *Preface* uses the word in the sense in which a plant or a wine has a virtue".

**A place to read.** LEO §9.

## Meaning

"Virtue" here is the old word for power or efficacy, from the Latin *virtus*, strength (see Virtue). The herbals and lapidaries of the middle ages listed the virtues of plants and stones: this herb against fever, that gem against poison. Such powers were "hidden", or in the schoolmen's Latin "occult", because they could not be explained by the manifest qualities of hot and cold, wet and dry, but only known by what they did, as the lodestone draws iron. The new science of the seventeenth century made the occult quality a joke, and Molière's candidate for the doctorate explains that opium puts men to sleep because it has a dormitive virtue, and the doctors applaud.[567]

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the sentence that tells how Leonardo, discontented with the old slight manner, "plunged, then, into the study of nature" (LEO §9; see Disgust). "And in doing this he followed the manner of the older

[567] Molière, *Le Malade imaginaire* (1673), third interlude.

students; he brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals, the lines traced by the stars as they moved in the sky", and over the correspondences between the orders of living things (LEO §9; see Correspondence). The sentence places Leonardo's science in the past. He studied nature after "the manner of the older students", the herbalists, the astrologers and the natural philosophers, not in the manner of the modern experimenter, and his verb is "brooded", the verb of contemplation rather than of measurement (see Brooding spirit of life). The sentence ends with the image of the seer: "for years he seemed to those about him as one listening to a voice, silent for other men" (LEO §9).

The hidden virtues return under other names. Four paragraphs later Leonardo's philosophy is "clairvoyant of occult gifts" in the reed at the brook-side and the star that comes once in a century (LEO §13; see Clairvoyance; Occult gifts): occult gifts can be read as hidden virtues, and the reed and the star are the plants and the stars of the ninth paragraph. In the twenty-third paragraph the women of the drawings make one aware of nature's subtler forces, "all that is magnetic in it" (LEO §23; see Magnetic), and magnetism was the old model of a hidden virtue, a power known only by its effect. The essay can be read as following the hidden virtue from the herbal to the face: Leonardo sought it in plants and crystals and found it in the persons he drew.

The word "virtue" also ties the passage to the Preface. There the objects of æsthetic criticism "possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues or qualities" (PRE §2), and the critic's work is to distinguish "the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair personality in life or in a book, produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure" (PRE §3; see Virtue). On this reading the critic of the Preface is a student of hidden virtues, as Leonardo was. The difference is in the object. Leonardo brooded over the virtues of nature in order to paint; the critic broods over the virtues of paintings in order to name them.

## Places to read

The phrase occurs once.

**LEO §9** In the manner of the older students Leonardo brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals.

## Pater's sources

The older students whose manner Pater gives Leonardo had a theorist in Pico, whose *Oration* praises natural magic as the art that draws into the light the powers hidden in the recesses of the world.[568] The Leonardo essay names that tradition in its own words a paragraph later, among "all those feats for

[568] Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio* (1486), sentences 249–250 in the numbering of the Latin Library text.

the performance of which natural magic professed to have the key" (LEO §10; see Natural magic).

## See also

Brooding spirit of life; Clairvoyance; Correspondence; Disgust; Magnetic; Natural magic; Occult gifts; Virtue.

### Homo minister et interpres naturæ

*Homo minister et interpres naturæ*

Attested: *HOMO MINISTER ET INTERPRES NATURÆ* (LEO §1), the motto that stands as the first paragraph of the Leonardo essay. The note at LEO §1 translates it "The human being is the servant and interpreter of nature" and names its source in Bacon's *Novum Organum*. Bacon's aphorism runs: "Man, who serves and interprets nature, does and understands only so much as he has noticed of nature's order, in the things themselves or by the mind; past that he knows nothing and can do nothing."[569] Pater shortens and rearranges it into a motto (see Interpreter of nature). *Minister*, the lesser one, is the servant, as *magister* is the master. The essay supplies the master: Nature, "the true mistress of higher intelligences" (LEO §9; see The true mistress of higher intelligences). It supplies the interpreting as well, in the correspondences between the orders of living things, "through which, to eyes opened, they interpret each other" (LEO §9; see Correspondence). The motto is Bacon's sober doctrine of a science that goes no further than it has observed, and the essay's Leonardo follows "the manner of the older students" whom Bacon attacked (LEO §9; see Hidden virtues). The epigraph can be taken two ways: as naming Leonardo the interpreter of nature in Bacon's sense (see Interpreter of nature), or as an irony, since the essay's Leonardo serves and interprets nature by divination rather than by method (see Divination).

## See also

Correspondence; Divination; Hidden virtues; Interpreter of nature; Subtilitas naturae; The true mistress of higher intelligences.

### Infinite spaces

*infinite spaces*; *infinitely*

Attested: *infinite spaces* (PIC §10), twice; *infinitely* in five further paragraphs (GIO §21; BEL §8; WIN §48; CON §3; C73 §4). Space without bound, as modern astronomy conceives it. Against Pico's closed world Pater sets "our own conception of nature, with its unlimited space, its

[569] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* (1620), book I, aphorism 1.

innumerable suns, and the earth but a mote in the beam; how different the strange new awe, or superstition, with which it fills our minds! 'The silence of those infinite spaces,' says Pascal, contemplating a starlight night, 'the silence of those infinite spaces terrifies me:'—Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m'effraie" (PIC §10; see Firmament; Logos). Pascal left the sentence as a single fragment of his *Pensées*.[570] Pater's English drops the French *éternel*, eternal, and his "contemplating a starlight night" sets a scene the fragment does not give. The awe is "new", and Pater lets it stand as "awe, or superstition". In the Conclusion the infinite enters the other way, as time "infinitely divisible" (CON §3).

## See also

Firmament; Logos.

# Intellectual light

*Pater's figure for Hellenism: a culture whose pre-eminent gift is light, best seen by those who come to it out of darkness · The Renaissance*
*intellectual light*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Light as a figure for understanding: the clearness of a mind that sees things plainly.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Hellenism is "the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light" (WIN §14).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** WIN §14, the first six sentences.

## Meaning

Light has been the figure of knowledge since the Greeks. In Plato's *Republic* the good is to the mind what the sun is to the eye, the source by which things are seen and known;[571] in Christian writing God is light, and the highest heaven of Dante's Paradise is "intellectual light, full of love".[572] Pater does not cite either, and his phrase uses the figure in a narrower and more modern way. Intellectual light is not illumination from above but a quality of a culture, its clearness, set beside the colour of one age and the heat of another.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the fourteenth paragraph, at Winckelmann's arrival in Rome, and Pater introduces it with Dante. "Dante, passing from the

[570] Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, fragment 201 in Lafuma's numbering, 206 in Brunschvicg's.

[571] Plato, *Republic* VI, 507d–509b.

[572] Dante, *Paradiso* XXX.40: *luce intellettüal, piena d'amore*.

darkness of the Inferno, is filled with a sharp and joyful sense of light, which makes him deal with it, in the opening of the Purgatorio, in a wonderfully touching and penetrative way" (WIN §14). Then the claim: Hellenism, "the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light", has always been best conceived by those who came to it out of a sombre world (WIN §14; see Hellenism). The same sentence ranks the ages by their gifts: modern culture has more colour, the medieval spirit more heat and profundity, but Hellenism is "pre-eminent for light" (WIN §14). "So it had been in the ages of the Renaissance" (WIN §14), and so it was for Winckelmann, coming out of "the tarnished intellectual world of Germany" (WIN §3; see Hellenic spirit).

The comparison gives the figure its law. Light is felt most by those who have been in the dark, as Dante feels the sky of Purgatory after Hell; the Hellenic spirit is understood best not by those born into it but by its converts from gloom. The essay is built on the same contrast. The supreme Hellenic culture is an "edge of light" across the gloom of the pagan sentiment (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities); sculpture's "white light, purged from the angry, bloodlike stains of action and passion" reveals the godship in man (WIN §34; see Godship); the adorante's "white light" takes no colour from any one-sided experience (WIN §40; see Adorante). The light of Greek art is white because it is undivided, as the light of the modern world is coloured because it is broken.

The forty-ninth paragraph turns the figure on the modern reader. After naming the marks of Hellenic culture (WIN §49; see Centrality), it asks: "Is such culture a lost art? The local, accidental colouring of its own age has passed from it; and the greatness that is dead looks greater when every link with what is slight and vulgar has been severed. We can only see it at all in the reflected, refined light which a great education creates for us. Can we bring down that ideal into the gaudy, perplexed light of modern life?" (WIN §49). The Greek light reaches us only reflected, through study, and the question is whether it can survive the "gaudy, perplexed" light of the present, the colour that the fourteenth paragraph gave to modern culture now seen as glare. The essay's answer, in its last pages, is that it can, but only through a mind that has passed through the whole of modern culture (WIN §§50–51; see Im Ganzen).

The figure can be read as Pater's sharpest correction of a sensuous picture of Greece. Pater gives the colour to the moderns and keeps for the Greeks the colourless clearness of a mind that sees. His Hellenism is less a sensuous paradise than an intellectual climate, and its light can be read as the light of the Conclusion's "hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with five of the paragraphs in which the essay figures Greek culture or its art as light, in the order of the book.

**WIN §14** Hellenism is the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light, best conceived by those who come to it out of gloom, as Dante comes out of the Inferno.

**WIN §23** The supreme products of art form a series of elevated points, each lit by a strange light from a society remote from ours.

**WIN §26** Hellenic culture is a sharp edge of light across the gloom of the pagan sentiment.

**WIN §34** Sculpture's white light reveals the tranquil godship in man.

**WIN §40** The adorante's white light takes no colour from any one-sided experience.

**WIN §49** We see Hellenic culture only in the reflected, refined light of a great education; can it be brought into the gaudy, perplexed light of modern life?

## See also

Adorante; Centrality; Chthonian divinities; Conscious tradition; Godship; Hard, gem-like flame; Hellenic spirit; Hellenism; Im Ganzen.

# Interpreter of nature

*Man's office in Pico's world, and Bacon's phrase · The Renaissance interpreter of nature*; *interpres naturæ*

## At a Glance

**The word.** An interpreter of nature is one who reads the natural world and explains it, as an interpreter turns one language into another.

**In *The Renaissance*.** In the midst of Pico's universe "is placed man, nodus et vinculum mundi, the bond or copula of the world, and the 'interpreter of nature': that famous expression of Bacon's really belongs to Pico" (PIC §9). The Leonardo essay takes Bacon's Latin for its epigraph, "HOMO MINISTER ET INTERPRES NATURÆ" (LEO §1).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §1 translates the epigraph, "The human being is the servant and interpreter of nature", and names its source in Bacon's *Novum Organum*; the note at PIC §9 renders *nodus et vinculum mundi* "the knot and bond of the world".

**A place to read.** PIC §9, with LEO §1.

## Meaning

The Latin *interpres* was a go-between: an agent between two parties, a translator, an expounder of omens and dreams. To call man the interpreter of nature is to make him the one creature who can read the world, standing between the things he reads and the mind to which he explains them. The phrase is old, and by Pater's day it was famous as the opening of the *Novum Organum* (1620) of the English philosopher Francis Bacon.

## Use in the book

Pater puts the phrase in quotation marks and makes a claim about it. Man stands at the centre of Pico's world, "the bond or copula of the world, and the 'interpreter of nature': that famous expression of Bacon's really belongs to Pico" (PIC §9; see Copula; Nodus et vinculum mundi). Bacon's first aphorism reads "Homo, naturae minister et interpres", "Man, nature's attendant and interpreter", who "achieves and comprehends only so much as he has noticed of nature's order, in the things themselves or in the mind".[573] Pater's correction of priority is right in date, Pico writing more than a hundred and thirty years before Bacon.

It is less sure about ownership. In the Oration Pico gives the phrase as one of the praises of man that "afferuntur a multis", "are put forward by many": that he is the go-between of creatures, the familiar of the beings above him and king of those below, "sensuum perspicacia, rationis indagine, intelligentiae lumine, naturae interpretem", "by the keenness of his senses, the searching of his reason and the light of his understanding, the interpreter of nature", and, "as the Persians say", the bond of the world. He then sets all these aside as "great, but not the chief" reasons for man's dignity (see Dignity of human nature).[574] By Pico's own account the expression was not his but one of the praises of man that many repeated; Pater's word for the companion passage is "A commonplace of the schools!" (PIC §10; see Tritum est in scholis).

The two interpreters differ. Pico's man interprets nature because he contains it: he is a little world in which every grade of being is found (PIC §9; see Little world), and his place at the centre of an ordered universe gives him the office. Bacon's man interprets nature by observing it, and his office has no cosmology behind it. Pater's essay can be read as using the phrase to show what Pico and the modern world share, and then, in the next paragraph, what divides them: the small, bounded world that made Pico's interpreter possible is "this childish dream" beside the unlimited space of modern astronomy (PIC §10; see Infinite spaces; Logos).

Pater gives Bacon's own Latin as the epigraph of the Leonardo essay (LEO §1), and Leonardo, who brooded over the correspondences between

[573] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* (London, 1620), book I, aphorism 1: "tantum facit et intelligit quantum de naturae ordine re vel mente observaverit".

[574] Pico, *Oratio* (1486), sentences 3–4 in the numbering of the Latin Library text.

the orders of living things, through which, "to eyes opened, they interpret each other" (LEO §9; see Correspondence), can be read as the book's interpreter of nature in Bacon's sense. Elsewhere the book's interpreters mostly read art. The artists of a peculiar quality "must be interpreted to" general culture "by those who have felt their charm strongly" (BOT §10; see General culture), and Winckelmann was "Destined to assert and interpret the charm of the Hellenic spirit" (WIN §3). The critic of the Preface can be read as an interpreter in the first sense of the Latin, a go-between, standing between the work and its reader.

## Places to read

The paragraphs in which the phrase occurs, in English or in Bacon's Latin, with the paragraphs in which a critic, a scholar or nature itself interprets, in the order of the book.

**PIC §9** Man is the bond or copula of the world and the interpreter of nature; the expression, Pater says, belongs to Pico rather than Bacon.

**BOT §10** Painters with a peculiar quality of pleasure must be interpreted to general culture by those who have felt their charm.

**LEO §1** The essay's epigraph is Bacon's *Homo minister et interpres naturæ*, man the servant and interpreter of nature.

**LEO §9** Through the correspondences between the orders of living things, they interpret each other.

**WIN §3** Winckelmann was destined to assert and interpret the charm of the Hellenic spirit.

## In this edition

The note at LEO §1 translates the epigraph "The human being is the servant and interpreter of nature", says that "The opening aphorism of Francis Bacon's Novum Organum calls the human being nature's servant and interpreter", and adds that "Pater will characterize Leonardo's artistic curiosity as an inquiry into natural processes". The note at PIC §9 renders *nodus et vinculum mundi* "the knot and bond of the world" and says that "Pater's 'bond or copula' has the sense of a connecting link".

## See also

Copula; Correspondence; Dignity of human nature; General culture; Infinite spaces; Little world; Logos; Nodus et vinculum mundi; Tritum est in scholis.

## Life in natural things

*life in natural things*; *natural things*

Attested: *life in natural things* (PRE §5); *natural things* (BOT §8; MIC §§1, 2; GIO §24). The sense that nature is alive, the mark of Wordsworth's poetry. In Wordsworth "we trace the action of his unique, incommunicable faculty, that strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things, and of man's life as a part of nature" (PRE §5; see Active principle; Incommunicable faculty). The other places measure artists by the same phrase. Colour is "no mere delightful quality of natural things" (BOT §8; see Imaginative colouring); Michelangelo recovers "a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things" (MIC §1), yet "The world of natural things has almost no existence for him" (MIC §2); in Italy "all natural things are as it were woven through and through with gold thread" (GIO §24; see Gold thread).

### See also

Active principle; Gold thread; Imaginative colouring; Incommunicable faculty; Local influences.

## Lifted horizon

*a lifted horizon*

Attested: *a lifted horizon* (CON §5; C73 §6); *horizon*, *horizons* (GIO §24; WIN §14). The horizon is the circle that bounds sight, from the Greek *horizōn*, bounding, and it rises as the eye rises: from a hill the line of earth and sky lifts and the world widens. Pater uses the image in the sentence that lists what may be grasped in a world that melts: "While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend" (CON §5). Knowledge can be read as valued here for the view it opens, not for the truth it holds, and the freedom it gives lasts "for a moment" only, like the other things in the list. The horizon of the Winckelmann essay is a promise of the same kind: the first tokens of the new German literature, "with its broad horizons, its boundless intellectual promise", lie before Winckelmann (WIN §14; see Hellenism). In a Venetian landscape the one peak of blue "above the horizon" is the sensible warrant of the coolness the scene needs (GIO §24). The 1873 text had "catch at" for "grasp at" and "strange flowers" for "strange colours" (C73 §6; see Strange flowers).

## See also

Colour; Hellenism; Quickened, multiplied consciousness; Strange flowers.

## Liquid air

*liquid air*

Attested: *liquid air* (GIO §16). Pater uses the phrase of a picture that criticism had taken from Giorgione, the Holy Family in the Louvre, which the "new Vasari" gave to Pellegrino da San Daniele: "Such shortcoming however will hardly diminish the spectator's enjoyment of a singular charm of liquid air, with which the whole picture seems instinct, filling the eyes and lips, the very garments, of its sacred personages, with some wind-searched brightness and energy; of which fine air the blue peak, clearly defined in the distance, is, as it were, the visible pledge" (GIO §16; see Wind-searched). "Liquid" is clear, flowing and transparent, as light or a voice can be liquid; the air of the picture is like clear water, and it fills the figures as water fills a vessel. The sentence answers the critics without disputing them. Whoever painted it, the picture has the charm Pater looks for, and the charm is atmospheric: an air "instinct" in the whole, in eyes, lips and garments alike. The "blue peak" is its pledge, and the image returns in the twenty-fourth paragraph, where "the one peak of rich blue above the horizon" remains "but as the sensible warrant of that due coolness which is all we need ask here of the Alps" (GIO §24; see Gold thread). The air of Giorgione's school is "literally empyrean" (GIO §23; see Empyrean); the liquid air of the Louvre picture is the same purity, and it can be read as part of the Giorgionesque whatever the hand.

## See also

Empyrean; Giorgionesque; Gold thread; Wind-searched.

## Little world

*Man as a world in small, containing every grade of being · The Renaissance*

*little world*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The little world, or microcosm, is man conceived as a small copy of the universe, holding within himself every order of created being.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is a commonplace of the schools that man is a little world, in which we may discern a body mingled of earthy elements, and ethereal breath, and the vegetable life of plants, and the senses of the

lower animals, and reason, and the intelligence of angels, and a likeness to God" (PIC §9).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §9 translates the Latin, "It is a commonplace in the schools that the human being is a smaller world", and says that its "ascending inventory runs from bodily elements to the likeness of God".

**A place to read.** PIC §§9–10.

## Meaning

"Little world" is the English for the Greek *mikros kosmos*, the Latin *minor mundus*. The thought is ancient. The philosopher Democritus of Abdera, in the fifth century BC, is reported to have called man a small cosmos, and Aristotle, arguing about the origin of motion, calls an animal "a small world" beside the great one.[575] Through the Neoplatonists and the Christian writers it became a commonplace of the Middle Ages: the great world and the little answer to each other part for part. The phrase was common in English poetry. In Shakespeare's *King Lear* a Gentleman reports that the old king on the heath "Strives in his little world of man to outscorn / The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain", the storm in the great world answered by the storm in the little.[576]

## Use in the book

Pater gives Pico's Latin, "Tritum est in scholis, he says, esse hominem minorem mundum", and then the English quoted above (PIC §9; see Tritum est in scholis). The list climbs the scale of being: the elements, the heavens, the plants, the beasts, man, the angels, God. Each has its share in man, and so man is the whole world in small (see Ethereal breath; Vegetable life; Angelic mind; Likeness to God). Pater's English renders *minorem mundum*, "smaller world", as "little world", and in the next breath calls the idea "A commonplace of the schools!" (PIC §10).

The little world depends on the great one, and the great one, in Pico's picture, is itself small, "like a painted toy" (PIC §10; see Firmament; Logos). Man can be its copy because it is the kind of thing that can be copied: finite, ordered, with the earth at its centre (PIC §9; see Centre of the universe). The essay can be read as setting the two worlds side by side and letting the modern conception break them both. Against "this childish dream" stands the modern world of unlimited space and innumerable suns (PIC §10; see Infinite spaces). An infinite world has no copy, and the little world loses the original it was modelled on.

Yet the theory, "false as its basis was", had its use, giving man a dignity that was supposed to be his by natural right (PIC §10; see Dignity of human

[575] Democritus, fragment B34 Diels–Kranz; Aristotle, *Physics* VIII.2, 252b26.

[576] Shakespeare, *King Lear* 3.1.10–11 (Riverside numbering); the lines are in the Quarto only.

nature; Natural right). The little world can be read as a false cosmology put to a true use.

The phrase returns once, in a new sense. Of a poem by Browning, Pater exclaims at the "cobweb of allusions" needed to make its moment of passion felt: "on how fine a needle's point that little world of passion is balanced!" (WIN §36; see Discriminate). The little world is now made by an artist, a world of feeling held together in one situation. The microcosm of the schools has become the world of a poem.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with the paragraph in which Pater calls it a commonplace, in the order of the book.

**PIC §9** It is a commonplace of the schools that man is a little world, containing elements, ethereal breath, plant and animal life, reason, the intelligence of angels and a likeness to God.

**PIC §10** A commonplace of the schools; for Pico the world itself is a limited place, like a painted toy.

**WIN §36** On how fine a needle's point the little world of passion in Browning's poem is balanced.

## Pater's sources

The Latin Pater quotes comes from the second proem of the Heptaplus. Pico first adds to the three worlds that antiquity imagined, the angelic, the celestial and the sublunary, a fourth, in which all things are found that are in the other three, and that world is man; the commonplace of the schools follows as its support.[577] Pater quotes the commonplace and leaves out the claim it supports.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §9 gives the Latin in English, "It is a commonplace in the schools that the human being is a smaller world, in whom we can discern a body compounded of the elements, celestial spirit, the vegetative soul of plants, the senses of animals, reason, angelic intellect, and the likeness of God", and says that the passage "provides the detail behind Pater's account of human beings as a little world".

## See also

Angelic mind; Centre of the universe; Dignity of human nature; Discriminate; Ethereal breath; Firmament; Infinite spaces; Likeness to God; Logos; Natural right; Tritum est in scholis; Vegetable life.

[577] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), second proem.

## Local influences

*local influences*

Attested: *local influences* (PRE §5). The influences of a particular place on those who live in it. Wordsworth's sense of man's life as a part of nature draws "strength and colour and character from local influences, from the hills and streams, and from natural sights and sounds" (PRE §5; see Life in natural things). The influences are listed at once, the hills and streams of one region, so that the phrase names a poetry of place. Elsewhere Pater uses "local" of what is accidental to an age or a region: "local colour" (PIC §5; see Local colour), the "local, accidental colouring" that has passed from Greek culture (WIN §49).

### See also

Influence; Life in natural things; Local colour.

## Magic web

*Pater's image for modern necessity: not a power outside us to be fought, but a network of law woven through us, like the magnetic forces of physics · The Renaissance*

*a magic web*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A web woven by enchantment; in Pater, the net of natural law in which the modern mind finds itself caught.

**In *The Renaissance*.** For us necessity is "a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §53 says that Pater ends by asking how art can show "a kind of freedom in the way a person meets conditions beyond their power to alter".

**A place to read.** WIN §53.

### Meaning

A web is a woven fabric, and the word carries both the weaver's cloth and the spider's net. A magic web is woven by enchantment and holds by a power that cannot be seen. The phrase can be read as joining the old image of fate as a thread spun by the Fates of Greek myth to a new one from physics, and the joining is the point of the phrase: the fate of the moderns is no longer a person but a field of force.

### Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay, in the account of what the modern spirit faces. Necessity is no longer a

"mythological personage" outside us (WIN §53; see Necessity). "It is rather a magic web woven through and through us, like that magnetic system of which modern science speaks, penetrating us with a network, subtler than our subtlest nerves, yet bearing in it the central forces of the world" (WIN §53). The sentence moves from inside to out. The web is woven through us, subtler than our nerves, yet the same threads carry "the central forces of the world": the most intimate and the most universal are one fabric. Pater does not name the science, but the physics of his decade had made the magnetic field a picture of a world crossed by invisible lines of force, and the Scottish physicist James Clerk Maxwell's paper on the electromagnetic field appeared two years before the essay.[578]

The image governs the rest of the paragraph. Men and women are caught "in these bewildering toils" (WIN §53; see Freedom), and in the romances of Goethe and Hugo "this entanglement, this network of law, becomes the tragic situation" (WIN §53; see Dénouement). The web cannot be cut, for natural laws "we shall never modify" (WIN §53; see Freedom), but it can be met with a nobler or less noble attitude, and in that attitude lies the modern equivalent of freedom.

The phrase can be read as the bridge to the Conclusion that follows. The Conclusion begins with the same science: the body is a combination of elements that the forces of nature are always weaving and dissolving, and the outline of face and limb is "but an image of ours", a design in a web (CON §2; see Web), and the self is a "strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving" (CON §3; see Weaving and unweaving). The magic web of necessity at the end of the Winckelmann essay and the web of the self at the beginning of the Conclusion are the same fabric, seen first as constraint and then as flux. Pater's answer to both is the same: not escape, but a quality of attention that makes something fine of what the web brings.

The word "magic" keeps a trace of the older world even in the scientific image. Necessity is no longer a mythological person, but it is still an enchantment, and the essay can be read as unwilling to let the modern account of law lose all its strangeness. The Leonardo essay had already found in "all that is magnetic" in nature the subtle forces to which his women seem sensitive (LEO §23; see Magnetic).

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**WIN §53** For us necessity is a magic web woven through and through us, like the magnetic system of modern science.

[578] James Clerk Maxwell, "A Dynamical Theory of the Electromagnetic Field", *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* 155 (1865).

## See also

Dénouement; Freedom; Magnetic; Natural law; Necessity; Perpetual life; Sense of fate; Weaving and unweaving; Web.

## Magnetic

*magnetic*

Attested: *magnetic* (LEO §23; WIN §53). The word comes from the Greek *Magnētis lithos*, the stone of Magnesia, the lodestone that draws iron. Two newer lives had joined the old one: the "animal magnetism" of the mesmerists, since the 1770s a fluid supposed to pass between bodies and to work on the nerves, and, in Pater's own century, the magnetism of the physicists, whose lines of force filled space unseen. Pater uses the adjective twice, and both uses join the new physics to the nerves. Leonardo's women are the clairvoyants through whom "one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature, and the modes of their action, all that is magnetic in it" (LEO §23; see Clairvoyance; Chain of secret influences). The last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay turns to the modern idea of necessity, which is no longer a fate outside us but a web woven through us, "like that magnetic system of which modern science speaks" (WIN §53; see Magic web). The two passages can be read together. The magnetic forces that Leonardo's women seem to feel and pass on are those the close of the Winckelmann essay finds woven through every life.

## See also

Chain of secret influences; Clairvoyance; Magic web; Spiritual.

## Memnon waiting for the day

*a Memnon waiting for the day*

Attested: *a Memnon waiting for the day* (WIN §32). In Greek myth Memnon was the son of Eos, the Dawn, and king of the Ethiopians, killed by Achilles at Troy. The Greeks gave his name to one of the two colossal seated statues at Egyptian Thebes, which in fact represent the pharaoh Amenhotep III; after an earthquake the northern colossus was heard to make a sound at sunrise, and visitors took it for Memnon greeting his mother. The geographer Strabo heard the sound and doubted its cause.[579] Hegel, in his lectures on aesthetics, made the speaking statue a figure for the Egyptian spirit, which can be stirred to sound only by the light that strikes it from outside; in the part on architecture he counts the Memnon statues, set in rows before the temples, among Egypt's buildings rather than its

[579] Strabo, *Geography* XVII.1.46.

sculpture.[580] Pater takes up "Hegel's beautiful comparison": the art of Egypt is "a Memnon waiting for the day", the day of the humanistic spirit with its power of speech (WIN §32; see Humanistic spirit). The note at WIN §32 says that Hegel makes the story "a figure for Egyptian architecture awaiting an art with the power of speech". It can be read as fitting the whole series of the arts in the essay: architecture can express the mind of the artist only "by vague hint or symbol" (WIN §32; see Architectural effect), sculpture speaks him plainly, and the voice of the statue at sunrise is the moment between.

## See also

Architectural effect; Greek spirit; Humanistic spirit.

# Microscope of thought

*Philosophy as an instrument for seeing small things: Victor Hugo's saying, which the Conclusion quotes in French in 1873 and in English in 1893 · The Renaissance*

*the microscope of thought*; *la microscope de la pensée*; *microscopic*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A microscope is an instrument for seeing what is too small for the eye, from the Greek *mikros*, small, and *skopein*, to look.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Philosophy is the microscope of thought" (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §6 renders the French "Philosophy is the microscope of thought", and says that the 1873 printing has *la microscope*, "although the noun is masculine in standard French"; the note at CON §5 says that the instrument metaphor "gives a use for theory consistent with the Preface".

**A place to read.** CON §5.

## Meaning

The compound microscope was made in the Netherlands about 1600, and the English natural philosopher Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1665) showed the English public what it saw: the cells of cork, the eye of a fly, the point of a needle blunt and ragged under the lens. Its revelation was that the smooth and simple are complex when looked at closely enough. A philosophy that is a microscope, on this image, does not tell us what the world is; it shows us more of what is already before us.

[580] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), part II, section 1, "Die symbolische Kunstform", chapter 1; part III, section 1, chapter 1.

## Use in the book

The sentence stands in the Conclusion's fifth paragraph, between the defence of theory and its limit. Theories and ideas, as points of view and "instruments of criticism", "may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded" (CON §5; see Instruments of criticism). Then the saying, in quotation marks: "Philosophy is the microscope of thought." Then the limit: any theory that asks the sacrifice of part of this experience, for an interest we cannot enter, an abstract theory not our own or a convention, "has no real claim upon us" (CON §5; see Conventional orthodoxy). The microscope gives the instrument its image. What theory is good for is magnification: it brings into view what would "pass unregarded", the small particulars of experience that the naked eye of habit misses (see Habit). It is not a telescope, for seeing what is far off, nor a map, for seeing the whole. It is turned on what is near.

The saying is Victor Hugo's, from the fifth part of *Les Misérables* (1862), where the social observer is told to enter the sewers of Paris, since they form part of his laboratory: "Philosophy is the microscope of thought. Everything would flee it, but nothing escapes it."[581] Pater quotes only the first sentence, but the second is in the spirit of his paragraph. Nothing is too small or too low for the attention he asks, and the microscope's virtue is that nothing escapes it.

The 1873 text gave the saying in French, "La philosophie, c'est la microscope de la pensée" (C73 §6), with the wrong gender of the noun. Neither text names Hugo, who is named in the next paragraph for another saying (CON §6; C73 §7; see Condamnés). The revision put it into English and into quotation marks. The change can be read as one of many by which Pater in the revision made the Conclusion less a display of reading and more an argument.

The image has a precedent in the book's account of Leonardo, who sought to satisfy "a microscopic sense of finish" by nature's "finesse, or delicacy of operation, that *subtilitas naturae* which Bacon notices" (LEO §17; see Finesse). Leonardo's eye was a microscope; the Conclusion asks philosophy to be one. And the Preface's method is a microscope's method: to look at each work closely enough to see what is special to it, its "virtue" (PRE §3; see Virtue), where the rough eye sees only a likeness to other works.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the saying occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of Leonardo's microscopic sense, in the order of the book.

**LEO §17** Leonardo sought to satisfy a microscopic sense of finish by nature's finesse, or delicacy of operation.

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[581] Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (Paris, 1862), Part V, "Jean Valjean", Book II, chapter 2: *La philosophie est le microscope de la pensée. Tout veut la fuir, mais rien ne lui échappe.*

**CON §5** Philosophy is the microscope of thought.

**C73 §6** In 1873, in French: "La philosophie, c'est la microscope de la pensée".

## See also

Condamnés; Conventional orthodoxy; Finesse; Habit; Instruments of criticism; Virtue.

### Mid-stream

*the race of the mid-stream*

Attested: *the race of the mid-stream* (CON §3); *the race of the midstream* (C73 §3); *stream*, *streams* (PRE §5; LEO §18; GIO §24; CON §3; C73 §4). The middle of a river is where the current is fastest and plainest, and a race is a strong current, as in a mill-race. Pater uses the image to set the mind against the body. In the inward world of thought and feeling "the whirlpool is still more rapid". "There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye, the gradual fading of colour from the wall—movements of the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest—but the race of the mid-stream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought" (CON §3; see Apparent rest; Whirlpool). The changes of the outward world are like the shore-side water, slow enough to seem still; the mind is the middle, where the flow cannot be mistaken. What it carries is "a drift of momentary acts", and "drift" is a word for what a current bears, foam, wood, weed. The stream comes back at the end of the paragraph, where what is real in our life fines itself down "to such a tremulous wisp constantly re-forming itself on the stream" (CON §3; see Tremulous wisp). In *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) Pater gave the image to the followers of Heraclitus, for whom things "pass away like a devouring flame, or like the race of water in the mid-stream".[582]

## See also

Apparent rest; Recoil; Tremulous wisp; Whirlpool.

### Motion of great waters

*One of the two ideas that touched Leonardo in childhood, and the water that runs through all his landscapes · The Renaissance*

*motion of great waters*; *moving water*

[582] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

## At a Glance

**The word.** The movement of water in great masses: rivers, floods and the sea.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Two ideas were especially confirmed in him, as reflexes of things that had touched his brain in childhood beyond the depth of other impressions—the smiling of women and the motion of great waters" (LEO §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at LEO §18 on the Virgin of the Rocks speaks of its "rocky enclosure, vegetation and distant water".

**A place to read.** LEO §10, with LEO §18.

## Meaning

"Great waters" has a biblical ring: in the King James Version the seafarers of Psalm 107 "do business in great waters" (Psalm 107:23). Pater's phrase keeps the grandeur and adds motion. Leonardo's own notebooks are full of water, its eddies, currents and floods, and the drawings of his last years include a series of deluges, now in the Royal Collection at Windsor;[583] the essay does not name them, but its phrase fits the man who made them.

## Use in the book

The tenth paragraph of the Leonardo essay ends on the pair. After the years of study, "Two ideas were especially confirmed in him, as reflexes of things that had touched his brain in childhood beyond the depth of other impressions—the smiling of women and the motion of great waters" (LEO §10; see Impression; Passing of a smile). "Reflexes" are reflections, images thrown back by the mind; "confirmed" makes them fixed ideas, as the interfusion of beauty and terror of the next paragraph is "so fixed that for the rest of his life it never left him" (LEO §11; see Interfusion of beauty and terror). The pairing is unexpected, a woman's smile and a flood, and the essay returns to both until, in La Gioconda, they meet.

The waters return in the eighteenth paragraph, where Pater follows them across the pictures as if they were one country. Leonardo's landscapes have "all the solemn effects of moving water. You may follow it springing from its distant source among the rocks on the heath of the Madonna of the Balances, passing, as a little fall, into the treacherous calm of the Madonna of the Lake, as a goodly river next, below the cliffs of the Madonna of the Rocks, washing the white walls of its distant villages, stealing out in a network of divided streams in La Gioconda to the seashore of the Saint Anne—that delicate place, where the wind passes like the point of some fine etcher over the surface, and the untorn shells are lying thick upon the sand, and the tops of the rocks, to which the waves never rise, are green with grass,

[583] Leonardo da Vinci, drawings of a deluge, about 1517–18, Royal Collection, Windsor Castle.

grown fine as hair" (LEO §18). The sentence makes the pictures one river, from spring to fall to river to delta to shore, and its own movement follows the water. The last image is of stillness: the waves "never rise" to the tops of the rocks. The great waters end in a delicate place, and the wind moves over it like the fine point of an artist.

The science and the painting meet in the shells. The same essay credits Leonardo with knowing "that the sea had once covered the mountains which contain shells" (LEO §17; see Rapid intuition). The "untorn shells" of the Saint Anne's shore can be read as the observer's knowledge put into the painter's landscape.

The two ideas of childhood meet in La Gioconda. The smile plays on her face, and the water runs behind her in its "network of divided streams" (LEO §18). The second paragraph about her opens with "The presence that rose, thus so strangely beside the waters", and makes her one who "has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life). The masterpiece, in this light, is where the two reflexes of the tenth paragraph become one image.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "great waters" or "moving water" occurs, in the order of the book.

**LEO §10** The smiling of women and the motion of great waters touched Leonardo in childhood beyond the depth of other impressions.

**LEO §18** All the solemn effects of moving water run through Leonardo's landscapes, from the heath of the Madonna of the Balances to the seashore of the Saint Anne.

## See also

Double sight; Impression; Interfusion of beauty and terror; Mixed lights; Passing of a smile; Perpetual life; Rapid intuition; Unfathomable smile; Veil of sight.

# Natural elements

*natural elements*; *elements*

Attested: *natural elements* (CON §2; C73 §2); *elements* (CON §2, three times; C73 §2, three times; for the word elsewhere see Element). The elements were once four, earth, water, air and fire, and the chemists of the eighteenth century replaced them with the simple substances that their analysis could not divide further. The Conclusion takes the chemists' sense, and uses it to resolve a moment of pleasure. "What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science

gives their names? But those elements, phosphorus and lime and delicate fibres, are present not in the human body alone: we detect them in places most remote from it" (CON §2; see Physical life). The list is a physiologist's, phosphorus of the nerves, lime of the bones, the fibres of muscle and tissue. The elements of the body are the elements of the world, and the paragraph goes on to show the forces that move them extending beyond us, rusting iron and ripening corn (CON §2; see Rust and ripen), and the elements themselves broadcast far out "on every side of us" (CON §2; see Violets from the grave). The Dutch physiologist Jacob Moleschott had compressed the materialism of the 1850s into a phrase, "No thought without phosphorus".[584] Pater's phosphorus does not make the mind a product of matter; it makes the body a passing combination, as the mind will prove to be in the next paragraph. The Preface had spoken of the critic who notes a virtue "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Chemist), and the Conclusion's elements are those of the same chemistry turned on the critic's own body (see Element).

## See also

Chemist; Element; Elementary forces; Physical life; Rust and ripen; Violets from the grave.

# Natural magic

*The old art that promised command over nature's hidden powers, and claimed the key to Leonardo's impossible feats · The Renaissance*

*natural magic*; *magic*; *magician*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The art of working wonders by the hidden powers of nature itself, without the help of spirits.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The perforation of mountains and the raising of buildings were "all those feats for the performance of which natural magic professed to have the key" (LEO §10).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §10, with LEO §13.

## Meaning

The writers of the Renaissance distinguished two kinds of magic. One called on demons and was forbidden; the other, natural magic, used the secret sympathies and powers of things, the virtue of the magnet, the force of the burning-glass, the properties of plants and stones, and claimed to be the highest part of natural philosophy (see Hidden virtues). Pico praised it

[584] Jacob Moleschott, *Lehre der Nahrungsmittel. Für das Volk* (Erlangen, 1850): *Ohne Phosphor kein Gedanke.*

in his *Oration*, and the Neapolitan natural philosopher Giambattista della Porta's *Natural Magic* (four books, 1558; enlarged to twenty in 1589) gathered under the name a mixture of optics, magnetism, distilling and conjuring tricks.[585] By Pater's day the phrase belonged chiefly to the history of science, or to the popular science of illusions, as in the Scottish physicist David Brewster's *Letters on Natural Magic* (1832).

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the list of Leonardo's impossible projects. Leonardo "was smitten with a love of the impossible", the perforation of mountains, the turning of rivers, the raising of great buildings in the air, "all those feats for the performance of which natural magic professed to have the key" (LEO §10; see Love of the impossible). The key is "professed", claimed and not proved. The next sentence weighs two ways of reading the projects: "Later writers, indeed, see in these efforts an anticipation of modern mechanics; in him they were rather dreams, thrown off by the overwrought and labouring brain" (LEO §10). Pater sets natural magic, not modern mechanics, beside them: the projects belong to the old promise of power over nature, and in Leonardo they were dreams of that power.

The thirteenth paragraph gives the impression this made. Over his crucibles "he seemed to them rather the sorcerer or the magician, possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge, living in a world of which he alone possessed the key" (LEO §13; see Alchemy). The key returns: natural magic "professed to have the key", and Leonardo "alone possessed the key" to his world. The magician is what the age saw, and the essay keeps the word for the work as well. Of La Gioconda Pater asks, "was it in four years and by renewed labour never really completed, or in four months and as by stroke of magic, that the image was projected?" (LEO §30). The question is left open, and the magic is the painter's.

Elsewhere in the book "magic" belongs to art and to the senses. Heine's Apollo sang "with such magic" that the women wept (PIC §2; see Ambrosia); the colouring of great pictures has "the magic conditions of light and hue in the atmosphere of Titian's Lace-girl" (GIO §2); no character, however unlovely, "can resist their magic", the magic of painting and poetry (WIN §36). And the book's last pages give the word to the modern world. Necessity is "a magic web woven through and through us, like that magnetic system of which modern science speaks" (WIN §53; see Magic web), and under analysis the world of objects falls apart, "the cohesive force seems suspended like some trick of magic" (CON §3).

The uses can be read as a history of the word. Natural magic promised power over nature and failed; Leonardo inherited the promise and turned it

[585] Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio* (1486); Giambattista della Porta, *Magiae naturalis libri IV* (Naples, 1558).

into art; and in Pater's own century science describes a world whose forces are as hidden, and as binding, as any the magicians claimed.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "magic" or "magician" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** In Heine's tale the god sang with such magic that the women wept.

**LEO §10** Natural magic professed to have the key to the feats Leonardo loved.

**LEO §13** To those around him Leonardo seemed the sorcerer or the magician, possessed of a hidden knowledge.

**LEO §30** La Gioconda was projected, perhaps, in four months and as by stroke of magic; Pater's own note finds in Vasari some further magic of crimson in the lips and cheeks.

**GIO §2** Colouring has the magic conditions of light and hue in the atmosphere of Titian's Lace-girl.

**WIN §36** No character, however unlovely, can resist the magic of painting and poetry.

**WIN §53** Necessity is a magic web woven through and through us, like the magnetic system of modern science.

**CON §3** Under reflexion the cohesive force of objects seems suspended like some trick of magic.

**C73 §3** The 1873 text has "the cohesive force is suspended like a trick of magic".

## See also

Alchemy; Ambrosia; Fascination; Hidden virtues; Love of the impossible; Magic web; Magnetic; Modern spirit; Occult gifts.

# Nodus et vinculum mundi

*Man as the knot that ties the orders of the world · The Renaissance nodus et vinculum mundi*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Latin, "the knot and bond of the world": man as the link in which all the orders of being, from the elements to the angels, are tied together.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "And in the midst of all is placed man, nodus et vinculum mundi, the bond or copula of the world, and the 'interpreter of nature'" (PIC §9).

**In this edition.** The note at PIC §9 translates the phrase "the knot and bond of the world", and says that it "expresses a microcosmic view in which the human being gathers together features of different levels of creation".

**A place to read.** PIC §9.

## Meaning

*Nodus* is a knot; *vinculum*, from *vincire*, to bind, is a band, a fetter, any tie. Together they make man the place where the world is fastened, as a knot holds two ropes. The image belongs to the Platonic picture of a graded universe, in which each order of being must be joined to the next, and something in the middle must join the highest to the lowest. In that picture the middle is the soul, and in man the soul and the body meet.

## Use in the book

Pater gives the Latin, then his English, and then a phrase in quotation marks, all in one breath in the sentence quoted above, and he takes that last phrase from Bacon to give it back to Pico (PIC §9; see Copula; Interpreter of nature). Pater's sentence and the next give man four titles in all: he is also "in the midst" of a universe whose centre is the earth (PIC §9; see Centre of the universe), and a "little world" (PIC §9; see Little world). The four can be read as one claim made four ways. Man is central, he binds, he interprets, he contains; and each title depends on his place.

Pater's English has two words for the two Latin nouns, one plain, "bond", one technical, "copula". The second carries the image from rope to grammar and logic, where the copula is the little word that joins subject and predicate. Man can be read as the *is* of the world's sentence. The essay will not let the image stand. It is "A commonplace of the schools!" (PIC §10; see Tritum est in scholis), founded on "a misconception of the place in nature both of the earth and of man" (PIC §9), and the knot holds only so long as the world it ties is the small, closed world of the painted fresco (PIC §10; see Logos). The phrase is given its dignity and then its date.

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which the phrase occurs.

**PIC §9** In the midst of all is placed man, nodus et vinculum mundi, the bond or copula of the world, and the interpreter of nature.

## Pater's sources

Pater's Latin is not the Oration's, which reports, among sayings it calls great but not the greatest, that man is, "as the Persians say", *mundi copulam*, the bond of the world (see Copula). Ficino comes closer: in the *Platonic Theology* the rational soul is the centre of nature and the middle of all things, *nodusque et copula mundi*, the knot and bond of the world, the

middle term that holds the higher and lower orders together.[586] Pater's *nodus et vinculum* can be read as Ficino's knot with a plainer word for the bond.

## In this edition

The note at PIC §9 translates the phrase "the knot and bond of the world", says that "Pater's 'bond or copula' has the sense of a connecting link", and that the phrase "expresses a microcosmic view in which the human being gathers together features of different levels of creation".

## See also

Centre of the universe; Copula; Interpreter of nature; Little world; Logos; Tritum est in scholis.

### Occult gifts

*occult gifts*

Attested: *occult gifts* (LEO §13). "Occult", from the Latin *occultus*, hidden, was the schoolmen's word for the powers of things that could be known only by their effects (see Hidden virtues). Pater uses the phrase in his account of what Leonardo asked of philosophy, that it should be "clairvoyant of occult gifts in common or uncommon things, in the reed at the brook-side, or the star which draws near to us but once in a century" (LEO §13; see Clairvoyance). "Gifts" is the word's warmth: the powers of things are given to them, as talents are given to persons. The two examples set the humblest beside the rarest, the reed at the brook-side and the star, a comet perhaps, that draws near but once in a century, and claim that both have their gifts for the eye that can see them. The essay's use is the old one, near to the natural philosophy of Leonardo's age.

## See also

Clairvoyance; Divination; Hidden virtues; Natural magic.

### Park scenery

*park scenery*; *park-like*

Attested: *park scenery* (GIO §24); *park-like* (GIO §17). An English park, in the sense Pater's readers knew, was the landscaped ground of a country house, laid out in the eighteenth century with lawns, clumps of trees and gentle rises to look natural and pleasing at once. Pater uses the English term for the landscape of Giorgione's school: "Its scenery is such as in England we call 'park scenery,' with some elusive refinement felt about the rustic

[586] Marsilio Ficino, *Theologia Platonica* (Florence, 1482), book III, chapter 2.

buildings, the choice grass, the grouped trees, the undulations deftly economised for graceful effect" (GIO §24). The landscape is nature arranged, and "deftly economised" gives the arrangement to an art: the painter, like the landscape gardener, spends his rises and hollows with care. "The harsher details of the mountains recede to a harmonious distance", leaving only "the one peak of rich blue above the horizon" (GIO §24; see Liquid air). The phrase had been prepared in the life of Giorgione, whose childhood was spent at Castelfranco, "where the last crags of the Venetian Alps break down romantically, with something of park-like grace, to the plain" (GIO §17). The reading this invites is that the painter's country already looked like his pictures. A landscape that descends from crags to a park is the Venetian landscape of the essay's sixth paragraph, its hard Alpine matter kept only as "abstracted elements" (GIO §6; see Abstracted elements).

## See also

Abstracted elements; Gold thread; Liquid air; Modulated unison.

# Perpetual motion

*Motion that never stops: the Conclusion's name for the life of the body, and Pater's later name for the doctrine of Heraclitus · The Renaissance*

*a perpetual motion*; *motion*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Motion without end; in mechanics, the motion of an imagined machine that would run for ever without being supplied.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them" (CON §2), of the natural elements of which the body is made.

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** CON §2.

## Meaning

The *perpetuum mobile* was the dream of mechanicians from the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century, a wheel or a fountain that would keep moving with no new force, and the physics of Pater's day had shown it impossible: no machine gives out more work than it takes in. Pater's phrase keeps the words and changes the claim. The body is a perpetual motion not because it runs without fuel but because it never stops changing; its motion is perpetual as the river's is, renewed from outside, never at rest.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the second paragraph of the Conclusion. The body has been resolved into natural elements, and the elements have been found

far beyond it (CON §2; see Natural elements). "Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them—the passage of the blood, the waste and repairing of the lenses of the eye", and of the brain, changed by every ray of light and sound, processes that science reduces to "more elementary forces" (CON §2; see Elementary forces). The examples are chosen to be unseen. We do not feel the blood pass or the lens of the eye wear and mend itself; we do not feel the brain change under each ray of light. The perpetual motion is below the threshold of sense, and the clear outline of the body, which seems to stay, is only "an image of ours" laid over it (CON §2; see Web).

The phrase prepares the next paragraph, where the motion becomes visible. The mind is a whirlpool "still more rapid", the race of the mid-stream (CON §3; see Whirlpool; Mid-stream), and its impressions are "in perpetual flight" (CON §3; see Perpetual flight). The adjective "perpetual" runs through the Conclusion with a changed meaning: the "perpetual outline of face and limb" is an illusion (CON §2), and the only thing perpetual is change, ending in "that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves" (CON §3; see Weaving and unweaving). The Leonardo essay had used the word for permanence, in "the fancy of a perpetual life" summed up in La Gioconda's face (LEO §31; see Perpetual life). The Conclusion turns it to flux.

Motion in the earlier essays is what gives life to form. All sculptured work tends to "a hard realism", "that solid material frame which only motion can relieve" (ROB §6; see Hard realism); Giorgione reproduces "instantaneous motion" (GIO §20); the Greek statue is in motion, "but it is a motion ever kept in reserve" (WIN §39; see Repose), and Winckelmann compares the transitions of its surface to a quiet sea which we understand to be moving and yet take as an image of repose (WIN §40). The Greek art that Pater most admired is motion held still, and the Conclusion can be read as releasing it. In the Winckelmann essay the sea is in motion and looks at rest; in the Conclusion the body looks at rest and is in perpetual motion.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "perpetual motion" occurs, with four paragraphs on motion in sculpture and painting, in the order of the book.

**ROB §6** All sculptured work tends to a hard realism, that solid material frame which only motion can relieve.

**GIO §20** Giorgione reproduces instantaneous motion, the lacing-on of armour, with the head bent back so stately.

**WIN §39** The forms of Greek sculpture are in motion, but a motion ever kept in reserve.

**WIN §40** Winckelmann compares the transitions of Greek form to a quiet sea, which though in motion we regard as an image of repose.

**CON §2** Our physical life is a perpetual motion of natural elements.

**C73 §2** In 1873 the eye has "the wasting and repairing" of its lenses, and the brain is modified "by every ray of light and sound".

## Elsewhere in Pater

The phrase became Pater's name for the doctrine of Heraclitus. *Plato and Platonism* (1893) gives the philosophy of the Ephesian as perpetual motion, "alike in things and in men's thoughts about them", and quotes the same words of the *Cratylus* that stand at the head of the Conclusion.[587] In *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) the young Marius, "recognising in perpetual motion the law of nature", identifies his own way of life with it, "throwing himself into the stream".[588]

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Elementary forces; Hard realism; Midstream; Natural elements; Perpetual flight; Perpetual life; Repose; Weaving and unweaving; Web; Whirlpool.

# Phœnix

*phœnix*

Attested: *phœnix* (MIC §14). The fabulous bird of Arabia that lives five hundred years and then, in the version the later poets made canonical, burns itself on a nest of spices and rises young again from its ashes. Herodotus heard of it at Heliopolis in Egypt, and Ovid tells of its rebirth; Christian writers made it an emblem of the resurrection.[589] Pater uses the word in his list of the images of Michelangelo's poems, where among the fire images there is "once or twice the phœnix" (MIC §14; see Refining fire). The phoenix belongs among the fire images because its rebirth comes through burning. In one of Michelangelo's sonnets the bird appears beside the smith and the goldsmith: as iron is shaped and gold refined only by fire, so the phoenix is not renewed unless it first burns, and the poet hopes to rise from his own burning.[590] The image can be read as the Platonic lover's version of resurrection: not the body rising, as in Dante (see Resurrection of the body), but the self consumed and renewed by love's fire.

## See also

Refining fire; Resurrection of the body.

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[587] Walter Pater, *Plato and Platonism* (London, 1893), chapter I, "Plato and the Doctrine of Motion"; Library Edition (London, 1910), p. 15.

[588] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

[589] Herodotus II.73; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* XV.391–407; 1 Clement 25–26.

[590] Michelangelo, sonnet "Sol pur col foco il fabbro il ferro stende" (Girardi 62).

## Plague-pit

*an ancient plague-pit*; *plague*

Attested: *plague-pit* (WIN §47); *plague* (MIC §19; GIO §17). A plague-pit is a pit dug for the mass burial of the dead in time of plague. Pater uses it for the view of the Renaissance taken by its enemies: "When the actual relics of the antique were restored to the world, in the view of the Christian ascetic it was as if an ancient plague-pit had been opened" (WIN §47), and the world, on that view, took the contagion (WIN §47; see Contagion). The image is a horror: the ancient statues dug from the earth are corpses, and their beauty an infection. The essay gives it to the ascetic and then reverses it. The relics are the life of the senses, the contagion a recovery, and the same paragraph finds that the medieval spirit had itself kept the thread of art's traditions so that the mind might awake "with eyes refreshed, to those ancient, ideal forms" (WIN §47; see Christian asceticism). The book's two literal plagues are both Italian: Boccaccio's storytellers have taken refuge in a country-house "from the danger of death by plague" (MIC §19), and Giorgione, in Vasari's story, caught the plague from the woman he loved (GIO §17). The figure can be read beside the essay's earlier account of the finding of ancient art at the Renaissance, "in the midst of a frozen world", as the rising of "the buried fire" (WIN §9; see Buried fire): what the ascetic called a grave the lover of art called a hearth.

### See also

Buried fire; Christian asceticism; Contagion; Reliquary.

## Powers or forces

*Works of art as sources of energy · The Renaissance*
*powers or forces*; *force*, *forces*

### At a Glance

**The word.** In physics a force is what changes the motion or state of a body; a power is a capacity to act. Pater pairs them as names for what a work of art exerts.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The objects of æsthetic criticism "are indeed receptacles of so many powers or forces" (PRE §2), and the critic regards them "as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations" (PRE §3). The word "forces" runs through the book to the Conclusion, where life itself is a "concurrence" of forces (CON §2; see Concurrence).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** PRE §§2–3 with CON §2.

## Meaning

"Force" is the Latin *fortis*, strong, through the French; "power", the Latin *posse*, to be able. The physical science of Pater's age made "force" one of its central words. The doctrine of the correlation of forces, set out in England in the physicist William Robert Grove's *On the Correlation of Physical Forces* (1846), taught that heat, light, electricity, magnetism, chemical affinity and motion are correlative, each able to produce or pass into the others. To call a picture a force brings it, at least in figure, under that language.

## Use in the book

The Preface uses the doubled phrase twice. "The objects with which æsthetic criticism deals—music, poetry, artistic and accomplished forms of human life—are indeed receptacles of so many powers or forces: they possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues or qualities" (PRE §2; see Receptacle; Virtue). And the critic regards them "as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations" (PRE §3; see Æsthetic criticism; Pleasurable sensation). The works are not described by what they are but by what they do; they hold forces as receptacles, and act as forces on the one who meets them. "This influence he feels, and wishes to explain" (PRE §3; see Influence).

The language returns in the essays where the effect of a person or an art is in question. Michelangelo and Leonardo have done work that "has become a force in general culture" (BOT §10; see General culture). "Curiosity and the desire of beauty—these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius" (LEO §16; see Elementary forces); his women make one "aware of the subtler forces of nature, and the modes of their action" (LEO §23). The arts, passing into one another's condition, "reciprocally ... lend each other new forces" (GIO §3). In the Winckelmann essay, the spiritual forces of the past live within later culture "with an absorbed, underground life" (WIN §22; see Conscious tradition).

In the Conclusion the language becomes literal and turns on the self. Our physical life is "a perpetual motion" of natural elements reduced by science to "more elementary forces" (CON §2; see Elementary forces); their action "rusts iron and ripens corn" (CON §2; see Rust and ripen); and our life is flame-like in being a "concurrence" of forces (CON §2; see Concurrence). The Conclusion asks how we shall "be present always at the focus" (CON §4; see Focus), and says that not to discriminate in those about us "some tragic dividing of forces on their ways" is "to sleep before evening" (CON §5). The Preface treated works of art as forces; the Conclusion treats persons so, and can be read as drawing the consequence that the critic, too, is a passing concurrence of forces.

## Places to read

The two places of the phrase "powers or forces", and a selection of the passages where "force" or "forces" names the active power of a work, a mind or nature, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** The objects of æsthetic criticism are receptacles of so many powers or forces.

**PRE §3** The critic regards all objects as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations.

**BOT §10** The work of the great painters has become a force in general culture.

**LEO §16** Curiosity and the desire of beauty are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius.

**LEO §23** Leonardo's women make one aware of the subtler forces of nature and their action.

**GIO §3** The arts lend each other new forces.

**WIN §22** The spiritual forces of the past live within later culture with an underground life.

**CON §2** Science reduces our physical life to elementary forces; our life is the concurrence of forces parting on their ways.

**CON §4** How shall we be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

**CON §5** Not to discriminate in those about us some tragic dividing of forces on their ways is to sleep before evening.

## See also

Æsthetic criticism; Concurrence; Conscious tradition; Elementary forces; Focus; General culture; Influence; Pleasurable sensation; Receptacle; Rust and ripen; Tragic dividing of forces; Virtue; Vital forces.

# Presence of water

*The well, the pool and the pouring of water in Giorgione's school, a subject as characteristic as music and almost as suggestive · The Renaissance presence of water*; *water*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Water present in a picture as a quiet participant, a well, a pool, a pitcher poured.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "But when people are happy in this thirsty land water will not be far off; and in the school of Giorgione, the presence of water—the well, or marble-rimmed pool, the drawing or pouring of water, as the woman pours it from a pitcher with her jewelled hand in the Fête

Champêtre, listening, perhaps, to the cool sound as it falls, blent with the music of the pipes—is as characteristic, and almost as suggestive, as that of music itself" (GIO §23).

**In this edition.** The note on the Fête Champêtre at GIO §16 says: "Look for the correspondence between the woman's vessel and the musician's pipe."

**A place to read.** GIO §23.

## Meaning

"Presence" is the word for a person's being there, the felt company of another, and the essay uses it so of the figures in Venetian landscape, "the presence of their men and women" (GIO §6), and of the movable picture, "like an animated presence" (GIO §12; see Animated presence). "Presence of water" gives water the same standing. It is not an object in the picture but a companion in it, felt by the figures and by the landscape.

## Use in the book

The phrase opens the twenty-third paragraph, which follows the paragraphs on music and play. "But when people are happy in this thirsty land water will not be far off" (GIO §23). The sentence ranks water next to music: its presence is "as characteristic, and almost as suggestive, as that of music itself". The instances are domestic and quiet, the well, the marble-rimmed pool, the pitcher, and the chief of them joins water to music directly: the woman of the Fête Champêtre pours "listening, perhaps, to the cool sound as it falls, blent with the music of the pipes" (GIO §23; see Listening). Water in Giorgione's school is a sound as well as a sight, and the picture is to be heard.

The next sentence lets the landscape share the pleasure. "And the landscape feels, and is glad of it also—a landscape full of clearness, of the effects of water, of fresh rain newly passed through the air, and collected into the grassy channels" (GIO §23). The landscape "feels". John Ruskin had named, as the "pathetic fallacy", the habit of giving feeling to things that cannot feel, and held it the mark of a mind overcome by emotion;[591] Pater's sentence can be read as committing it deliberately, as the painter does, so that the whole scene takes part in the happiness of its people. The paragraph ends in the air, which "seems as vivid as the people who breathe it, and literally empyrean" (GIO §23; see Empyrean): water, rain and air together make the clearness that is the school's element.

The essay has prepared the subject from the beginning of its list of the school's pleasures. The music of Giorgione's school is heard "at the pool-side while people fish, or mingled with the sound of the pitcher in the well, or heard across running water" (GIO §21; see Listening); life is a listening "to the sound of water, to time as it flies" (GIO §22). The water of the

[591] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. 3 (1856), part 4, chapter 12, "Of the Pathetic Fallacy".

Leonardo essay is different, "all the solemn effects of moving water", the reef and the river followed from its source to the sea (LEO §18; see Motion of great waters), studied as a force of nature. The two can be read as the book's two waters: Leonardo's is the water of science and of strangeness, Giorgione's the water of a hot afternoon, the same that the Conclusion remembers in "the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat" (CON §2).

## Places to read

Every paragraph of the Giorgione essay in which "water" occurs, with LEO §18 and CON §2, in the order of the book.

**LEO §18** Leonardo's landscapes show all the solemn effects of moving water.

**GIO §16** The Finding of Moses, with its jewel-like pools of water, is given up perhaps to Bellini.

**GIO §20** A conjunction of mirrors, polished armour and still water shows all the sides of a solid image at once.

**GIO §21** Music is heard at the pool-side, with the pitcher in the well, or across running water.

**GIO §22** Life is a sort of listening, to music, to the sound of water, to time as it flies.

**GIO §23** In the school of Giorgione the presence of water is as characteristic as that of music itself.

**CON §2** The moment of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat.

## See also

Animated presence; Empyrean; Liquid air; Listening; Motion of great waters; Play.

# Rapid intuition

*rapid intuition*

Attested: *rapid intuition* (LEO §17). Intuition is knowledge got by direct sight rather than by reasoning (see Intuition). Pater's phrase sums up Leonardo's science as reported by others: "His observations and experiments fill thirteen volumes of manuscript; and those who can judge describe him as anticipating long before, by rapid intuition, the later ideas of science. He explained the obscure light of the unilluminated part of the moon, knew that the sea had once covered the mountains which contain shells, and of the gathering of the equatorial waters above the polar" (LEO §17; see Modern spirit). The ashen light of the dark part of the moon is sunlight reflected from the earth, and the shells on the mountains are the

fossils of an ancient sea; both explanations are in Leonardo's notes.[592] "Those who can judge" is Pater's deference to the specialists, and "rapid" can be read as placing the intuition with the "instant of vision" of the science of that age (LEO §13; see Divination). In the Winckelmann essay intuition is the mark of Winckelmann's genius too (WIN §§9, 19; see Intuition).

## See also

Divination; Intuition; Modern spirit; Motion of great waters; Realisation.

## Refining fire

*refining fire*

Attested: *refining fire* (MIC §14). The fire in which gold is purified, the dross burned away. The image is biblical: in Malachi the Lord comes as the fire of one who refines and purifies silver, and in the First Letter of Peter faith is tried as gold is tried by fire.[593] Pater uses it in his list of the images of Michelangelo's poems: "In Michelangelo's poems, frost and fire are almost the only images—the refining fire of the goldsmith; once or twice the phœnix; ice melting at the fire; fire struck from the rock which it afterwards consumes" (MIC §14; see Phœnix). The list makes a point about style: where Dante's story is "a piece of figured work" (MIC §14; see Figured style), Michelangelo's poems have only the elements. Each image is of change by fire: gold purified, a bird reborn, ice melted, a spark that consumes the stone it came from. The last can be read as the strongest, love struck from the hard rock of the poet's nature and then consuming it. The refining fire can be read as the Platonic ascent in a goldsmith's figure: love burns away the body's dross and leaves the pure soul (see Forma universale). In one sonnet Michelangelo sets the goldsmith's fire beside the phoenix (see Phœnix).

## See also

Figured style; Forma universale; Phœnix.

## Resultant combination

*ten thousand resultant combinations*

Attested: *ten thousand resultant combinations* (CON §2); *ten thousand resulting combinations* (C73 §2). In mechanics a resultant is the single force

[592] Leonardo da Vinci, the notebook now called the Codex Leicester (about 1506–1510), on the light of the moon and on the shells found in the mountains.

[593] Malachi 3:2–3; 1 Peter 1:7.

that has the same effect as several acting together, found by the rule of the parallelogram; a resultant combination is what several forces produce between them. Pater uses the word at the climax of his account of the body: "Far out on every side of us those elements are broadcast, driven in many currents; and birth and gesture and death and the springing of violets from the grave are but a few out of ten thousand resultant combinations" (CON §2; see Violets from the grave). The list puts the greatest events of a life beside the smallest and beside a flower, and says that all are results of the same forces. "Ten thousand" is the number of a multitude; the Leonardo essay had used it for "the fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life), and the Conclusion's phrase can be read as an echo that turns the many lives of La Gioconda into the many products of matter. The revision made the participle technical: the 1873 "resulting combinations" became "resultant", the physicists' adjective, and "driven by many forces" became "driven in many currents" (C73 §2).

## See also

Concurrence; Natural elements; Perpetual life; Violets from the grave.

# Return to nature

*The other half of the fifteenth century's movement, represented by Leonardo: nature as the painter's model and the student's book · The Renaissance*

*return to nature*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A going back to nature, rather than to models or rules, as the source of art and knowledge.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Raphael represents the return to antiquity, and Leonardo the return to nature. In this return to nature, he was seeking to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises" (LEO §17).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at LEO §17 renders *subtilitas naturae* "The subtlety of nature" and says that "Pater invokes Bacon's contention that nature works with a subtlety that exceeds human senses and reasoning".

**A place to read.** LEO §§9, 17–18.

## Meaning

"Nature" is the Latin *natura*, from *nasci*, to be born: what things are by birth, and the whole order of things born. A return to nature is a recurring cry in the history of art. Every age that finds its models worn out turns from them to observation, and the cry is heard in Pater's own century as loudly as

in the fifteenth. In the introduction to his volume on the Renaissance (1855) Michelet had said that the Middle Ages had no argument in their favour but their extreme duration and their "obstinate resistance to the return of nature" (*résistance obstinée au retour de la nature*).[594] Ruskin, in the closing chapter of the first volume of *Modern Painters* (1843), told young painters to "go to nature in all singleness of heart", rejecting nothing and selecting nothing.[595] Pater's return to nature is of another kind. It is not a rule of fidelity; it is a curiosity, and it seeks in nature what is most hidden.

## Use in the book

The phrase belongs to the seventeenth paragraph of the Leonardo essay, where the movement of the fifteenth century is divided into "a return to antiquity, and a return to nature" (LEO §17; see Return to antiquity; Modern spirit). The next sentence gives the return its motive: Leonardo "was seeking to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises", and a microscopic sense of finish by her finesse (LEO §17; see Finesse; Subtilitas naturae). Nature is "her", a person, and what Leonardo seeks from her is not a model but surprise and fineness. The rest of the paragraph is his science: the men of science he knew, the thirteen volumes of manuscript, the intuitions about the moon and the shells in the mountains (LEO §17; see Rapid intuition).

The essay had prepared this turn eight paragraphs earlier. His early work in Verrocchio's manner left him with "some seed of discontent", and he plunged into the study of nature (LEO §9; see The true mistress of higher intelligences). But the study he plunged into was not Ruskin's. He followed "the manner of the older students", brooding over "the hidden virtues of plants and crystals" and the lines of the stars (LEO §9; see Hidden virtues). Pater's Leonardo returns to nature by the old road of the magicians and the astrologers as well as by the new road of experiment, and the essay never separates them. The same sentence ends with "that subtilitas naturae which Bacon notices" (LEO §17), and Bacon's subtlety of nature is the warning that nature outruns the senses, as the essay's epigraph, Bacon's motto, had made man the servant and interpreter of nature (LEO §1; see Homo minister et interpres naturæ); the paragraph's first sentence had named the "modern spirit" and "its appeal to experience" (LEO §17).

The return ends in art. "He who thus penetrated into the most secret parts of nature preferred always the more to the less remote" (LEO §18; see Mixed lights), and the landscape he painted is "not of dreams or of fancy, but of places far withdrawn" (LEO §18; see Veil of sight). The return to nature, in this essay, is a return to nature's secrets, and its fruit is a landscape stranger than any dream. It can be set against what Leonardo had been before, "the cheerful, objective painter" through whose soul, "as through

[594] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France*, vol. 7, *Renaissance* (1855), introduction, §2.

[595] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. 1 (1843), part 2, section 6, chapter 3, §21.

clear glass", the bright figures of Florentine life passed to the wall (LEO §10; see Objective painter). That painting was fidelity to the surface; Leonardo's return goes below it, and Pater counts the cost where curiosity comes in conflict with the desire of beauty and takes him too far below the outside of things (LEO §20; see Desire of beauty).

The Du Bellay essay calls the feeling modern: "The feeling for landscape is often described as a modern one" (BEL §22; see Sentiment of ruins). Leonardo, in whom "first appears the taste for what is bizarre or recherché in landscape" (LEO §18; see Bizarre), stands at its beginning.

## Places to read

LEO §17, where the phrase occurs, with the paragraphs on Leonardo's turn to nature (LEO §§9–10) and on what it gave and cost his art (LEO §§18, 20), in the order of the book.

**LEO §9** Nature was the true mistress of higher intelligences, and Leonardo plunged into the study of nature in the manner of the older students.

**LEO §10** He was no longer the cheerful, objective painter.

**LEO §17** Leonardo represents the return to nature, seeking to satisfy his curiosity by her perpetual surprises.

**LEO §18** He penetrated into the most secret parts of nature and preferred the more to the less remote.

**LEO §20** His curiosity tended to make him go too far below the outside of things.

## See also

Bizarre; Desire of beauty; Finesse; Hidden virtues; Homo minister et interpres naturæ; Mixed lights; Modern spirit; Objective painter; Rapid intuition; Return to antiquity; Sentiment of ruins; Subtilitas naturae; The true mistress of higher intelligences; Veil of sight.

# Rust and ripen

*it rusts iron and ripens corn*

Attested: *it rusts iron and ripens corn* (CON §2; C73 §2). The phrase gives two examples of the same forces at work outside us. "Like the elements of which we are composed, the action of these forces extends beyond us: it rusts iron and ripens corn" (CON §2; see Elementary forces). The edition's note says that "corn" here means grain, and that the pairing makes clear that the physical processes Pater invokes "are shared by bodies, growing things, and inanimate matter". The two verbs, alliterating, name opposite results, a decay and a fulfilment, and say that one action produces both. Rust is the slow combining of iron with the air, and ripening the work of the sun's heat

in the grain. The sentence can be read as the Conclusion's whole doctrine of nature in six words. Nothing in nature intends decay or growth; the same forces rust and ripen, as the same forces make and unmake us. The 1873 text had a semicolon where 1893 has a colon (C73 §2).

## See also

Elementary forces; Natural elements; Physical life; Violets from the grave.

# Science

*Knowledge, from the craftsman's mastery of his art to the modern laws of nature · The Renaissance*

*science*; *scientific*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Knowledge, especially systematic knowledge; in the older sense, the knowledge proper to any art or craft; in the modern sense, the study of nature by observation and experiment.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Luca wished "to unite its science, its exquisite and expressive system of low relief, to the homely art of pottery" (ROB §12).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §12, with LEO §§17, 21 and CON §2.

## Meaning

The Latin *scientia* is knowledge, from *scire*, to know. For most of its history in English, "science" meant any body of knowledge reduced to principles: grammar, music and fencing were sciences, and a craftsman had the science of his craft. In the nineteenth century the word narrowed to the natural sciences, and a "man of science" came to mean a chemist or physiologist. Pater's uses span the change, and the della Robbia essay keeps the older sense.

## Use in the book

The word's use in the della Robbia essay is the older one. Luca, after his works in marble, wished "to unite its science, its exquisite and expressive system of low relief, to the homely art of pottery" (ROB §12; see Homely art; Low relief). The "science" of sculpture is its system, the knowledge of how to carve so that shadow draws and the form stays light; it can be learned and carried from one material to another. The Winckelmann essay uses the word the same way of the Laocoön, "with all that patient science through which it has triumphed over an almost unmanageable subject" (WIN §39).

The Leonardo essay holds both senses at once. The science of Leonardo's age "was all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas" (LEO §13); Leonardo was "in intimate relations with men of science", the mathematician Luca Pacioli and the anatomist Marcantonio della Torre, and he is described as "anticipating long before, by rapid intuition, the later ideas of science" (LEO §17). The essay then names the danger: Goethe "reminds one how great for the artist may be the danger of over-much science" (LEO §21), and Leonardo's difference from "the German" is that "with all that curious science", the German "would have thought nothing more was needed" (LEO §21). Science serves art when it becomes part of the vision, and harms it when it takes the vision's place.

The modern sense rules the Conclusion. Our physical life is "a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names", and its processes are those "which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces" (CON §2). The Winckelmann essay's last page borrows from modern science its image for modern necessity: natural law is "a magic web woven through and through us, like that magnetic system of which modern science speaks" (WIN §53; see Magic web). The same modern science, Pater notes, has reduced Giorgione almost to a name (GIO §14).

The word can be read as tracing the book's two faces. The craftsman's science, Luca's or the Laocoön sculptor's, is knowledge that serves making and is never in tension with feeling; Luca's life had "no excitement except what belongs to the trial of new artistic processes" (ROB §12; see Frugality), the life of an experimenter. The modern science of the Conclusion dissolves the world into elements, and art is asked to give back what analysis takes away. The della Robbia essay, in its quiet way, remembers a time when the two were one.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "science" or "scientific" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §15** A later age would conceive a scientific reconciliation; the Renaissance did not ask curiously of science.

**ROB §12** Luca united the science of low relief to the homely art of pottery.

**LEO §13** The science of Leonardo's age was all divination.

**LEO §17** Leonardo was in intimate relations with men of science and anticipated its later ideas.

**LEO §21** Goethe shows the danger for the artist of over-much science.

**GIO §2** Pictorial qualities must delight the sense before they carry whatever poetry or science lies beyond.

**GIO §14** The accomplished science of the subject has reduced Giorgione almost to a name.

**BEL §9** Some thought that science could be adequately discussed only in the dead languages.

**WIN §19** Columbus, to whom Winckelmann has been compared, came nearer to nature though his science was often at fault.

**WIN §39** The Laocoön triumphs by patient science over an almost unmanageable subject.

**WIN §53** Natural law is like the magnetic system of which modern science speaks.

**CON §2** Science names the elements of our physical life and reduces its processes to elementary forces.

**C73 §2** In 1873, the same two uses, in slightly different wording.

## See also

Frugality; Homely art; Low relief; Magic web; Positive knowledge; Scientific reconciliation.

## Siderealise

*siderealised*

Attested: *siderealised* (WIN §6). The word is formed from *sidereal*, of the stars, from the Latin *sidus*, *sideris*, a star or constellation: to siderealise is to raise to the stars, as the gods of Greek myth set heroes among the constellations. It is rare in English, and Pater uses it once, of the German literature of Goethe's age. Teaching at Seehausen, Winckelmann fell under the charm of Voltaire, which gave him a regard for French literature that contrasted "with his contempt for the literary products of Germany" (WIN §6). Then the reversal: "German literature transformed, siderealised, as we see it in Goethe, reckons Winckelmann among its initiators" (WIN §6). The two participles make a story of metamorphosis. A literature that Winckelmann despised is changed, and then raised into the heavens as a constellation, and among its makers is the man who despised it. The next sentence keeps the irony: Germany at that time offered nothing in which Winckelmann "could have anticipated Iphigenie" (WIN §6; see Classical tradition), the play in which Goethe made a German classic out of Greek matter. The star-word can be read as one of the essay's images of light, beside Hellenism "pre-eminent for light" (WIN §14; see Hellenism); and the literature it raises is the one Winckelmann prepared when he set "the eternal outline" of the genuine antique against Voltaire's flimsier classicism (WIN §6; see Artificial classicism).

## See also

Artificial classicism; Classical tradition; Hellenism; Intellectual light.

## Simples

*simples*

Attested: *simples* (FRE §24). Medicinal herbs, each used alone; a "simple" was a medicine of one ingredient, as against a compound. Nicolette, whom the shepherds take for a fay, "has the knowledge of simples, the healing and beautifying qualities of leaves and flowers" (FRE §24; see Fay). Pater glosses the old word himself. The tale shows the knowledge at work: when Aucassin puts his shoulder out of joint, she sets it with her hands and binds flowers, fresh grass and green leaves on it with a strip of her shift,[596] the "skilful touch" that Pater says heals his "sprained shoulder" (FRE §24). The herbalist's lore can be read as one more mark of her strangeness (see Fay; Overwrought delicacy).

## See also

Fay; Overwrought delicacy.

## Solitary prisoner

*a solitary prisoner*

Attested: *as a solitary prisoner* (CON §3; C73 §3). The image closes the Conclusion's account of the mind walled in. Experience, reduced to impressions, is ringed round for each of us by "that thick wall of personality" (CON §3; see Wall of personality). "Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world" (CON §3; see Intellectual isolation; Impression). The figure is of a prison in which every cell is single, and the prisoner keeps a dream as one keeps a treasure or a secret. The Preface had begun with the critic's question, "What is this song or picture ... to me?" (PRE §2; see Impression), and the Conclusion follows the question to its end: each mind has only its own answer, and cannot share it. The image may recall Plato's cave, where prisoners chained from childhood take shadows for things,[597] but Plato's prisoners sit together and see the same shadows, and they can be led out. Pater's are alone, and what is outside them they "can only conjecture to be without" (CON §3). Among the other prisoners of the book are the two lads whose friendship had made their prison sweet (FRE §9), Nicolette in her painted chamber and Aucassin

[596] *Aucassin et Nicolette*, section 26, in the unique manuscript, Paris, BnF fr. 2168.

[597] Plato, *Republic* VII, 514a–516a.

"put in prison" (FRE §§24–25), Ludovico Sforza in the dungeons of Loches (LEO §28), and the Queen of Scots, who read Ronsard in "her northern prison" (BEL §13): in each the prison can be read as a place where a dream is kept.

## See also

Impression; Intellectual isolation; Wall of personality.

# Sublime

*To purify by raising, as the chemist sublimes a solid into vapour: Pater's verb for the rise of Greek religion into art · The Renaissance*
*sublimes*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To sublime is to raise to a higher state; in chemistry, to turn a solid by heat into vapour, which settles again purified.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Greek religion "sublimes itself" through the Dorian worship of Apollo, and out of it arises Greek art (WIN §26).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** WIN §26.

## Meaning

The verb is the chemist's before it is the moralist's. The Latin *sublimare*, to raise, from *sublimis*, lofty, named in the alchemists' Latin the operation in which a substance is heated in a closed vessel until it rises as vapour and settles on the cool upper part, leaving its impurities below; the product was a "sublimate". From the laboratory the verb passed to the spirit. In Milton's *Paradise Lost* the angel Raphael tells Adam that the fruits of the earth, "by gradual scale sublimed", rise to vital, animal and intellectual spirits.[598] The noun *the sublime* had another history. It came, through the French version (1674) of the poet and critic Nicolas Boileau, from the Greek treatise *On the Sublime* ascribed to Longinus, and in the eighteenth century, with Edmund Burke's *Enquiry* (1757) and Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (1790), it became the name for the vast and terrible, set against the beautiful.[599] Pater uses only the verb, in a setting that can be read as the chemist's.

[598] John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667; 2nd ed. 1674), Book V, lines 479–485.

[599] Nicolas Boileau, *Traité du sublime ou du merveilleux dans le discours, traduit du grec de Longin* (Paris, 1674); Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, 1757); Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Berlin, 1790), §§23–29.

## Use in the book

The verb comes near the end of the twenty-sixth paragraph, where Pater has shown the darker side of Greek religion: its mendicants and mournful mysteries (WIN §26; see Addolorata), and "the vertiginous prophetess at the very centre" of it (WIN §26; see Chthonian divinities). The supreme Hellenic culture is "a sharp edge of light across this gloom" (WIN §26). Two sentences follow that can be read as a single chemical process. First the wine: the "fiery, stupefying wine" becomes "clear and exhilarating" in a happier climate (WIN §26). Then the vessel and its fire: "The Dorian worship of Apollo, rational, chastened, debonair, with his unbroken daylight, always opposed to the sad Chthonian divinities, is the aspiring element, by force and spring of which Greek religion sublimes itself" (WIN §26). Apollo is the heat that drives the volatile part upward, and the earth-gods are the residue left below. What rises and settles purified is art, which arises out of Greek religion "under happy conditions" (WIN §26).

The figure belongs to a chemistry of the spirit that runs through the essay. Architecture's spiritualities lurk about it "as volatile effects, to be gathered from it by reflexion" (WIN §32; see Volatile effect); in sculpture the same spirit "takes up the whole given material" (WIN §33; see Spiritual). The spiritualist watches the sensuous elements escape from his conceptions as "the dyed garment bleaches in the keener air", while the artist steeps his thought "into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). The Preface had made the critic one who notes a virtue "as a chemist notes some natural element" (PRE §3; see Chemist), and had spoken of Wordsworth's genius, which leaves a crystal here and there in a matter "it does not wholly search through and transmute" (PRE §5; see Transmute); Leonardo waits for the moment of well-being, in which "the alchemy complete", a cloudy mysticism is refined to a graceful mystery (LEO §21; see Alchemy); and the Conclusion quotes the saying of Novalis that to philosophise is *dephlegmatisiren*, a distiller's verb (CON §4; see Dephlegmatisiren). In each of these the spirit is a substance that can be raised, purified, lost into the air or fixed in matter.

The verb can be read as saying something exact about Greek art that the noun would have obscured. G. W. F. Hegel's lectures on aesthetics placed the sublime before the classical, in the art of the East and the poetry of the Hebrews, where the idea overwhelms every shape that tries to hold it.[600] Pater's own account of the East says the same: its many-headed gods are "at best overcharged symbols" (WIN §27; see Symbol). Greek religion, sublimed, does not rise into the sublime. It rises into the finite image, the form that holds its meaning whole (see Finite image). The process the chemist calls sublimation produces, in Pater's history, not the vast but the clear, and its product is beauty.

[600] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, ed. H. G. Hotho (Berlin, 1835–38), Part II, section 1, chapter 2, "Die Symbolik der Erhabenheit".

## Places to read

The one paragraph in which "sublimes" occurs, with the paragraphs on the critic as chemist, Wordsworth's crystal, the alchemy of Leonardo's moment of well-being, the volatile spirit of architecture, the dyed garment and Novalis's dephlegmatising, in the order of the book.

**PRE §3** The critic disengages the virtue of a work and notes it, as a chemist notes some natural element.

**PRE §5** Wordsworth's genius deposits a crystal in a matter it does not wholly search through and transmute.

**LEO §21** In the moment of well-being the alchemy is complete, and a cloudy mysticism is refined to a graceful mystery.

**WIN §26** The Dorian worship of Apollo is the aspiring element, by force and spring of which Greek religion sublimes itself.

**WIN §32** The spiritualities of architecture lurk about it as volatile effects, to be gathered from it by reflexion.

**WIN §33** That spirituality which lurks about architecture as a volatile effect, in sculpture takes up the whole given material.

**WIN §43** The spiritualist watches the escape of the sensuous elements as the dyed garment bleaches; the artist steeps his thought in the fire of colour.

**CON §4** To philosophise, says Novalis, is to dephlegmatise, to vivify.

**C73 §5** To philosophise, says Novalis, is to dephlegmatise, to vivify.

## Later readings

Sigmund Freud made the chemist's word a term of psychoanalysis. In the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) he called "sublimation", *Sublimierung*, the diversion of sexual drives to other and higher aims, among them the making of art.[601] Freud's sublimation and Pater's describe the same movement in different matter, the one in a drive, the other in a religion.

## See also

ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις; Addolorata; Alchemy; Chemist; Chthonian divinities; Debonair; Dephlegmatisiren; Finite image; Spiritual; Spiritualise; Symbol; Symbolism; Transmute; Vivify; Volatile effect.

# Subtilitas naturae

*subtilitas naturae*

Attested: *subtilitas naturae* (LEO §17). The Latin is "the subtlety of nature", and the note at LEO §17 renders it so and says that "Pater invokes

[601] Sigmund Freud, *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* (Leipzig and Vienna, 1905).

Bacon's contention that nature works with a subtlety that exceeds human senses and reasoning". Pater names the source in the sentence: Leonardo in his return to nature sought to satisfy "a microscopic sense of finish by her finesse, or delicacy of operation, that subtilitas naturae which Bacon notices" (LEO §17; see Finesse; Return to nature). The phrase is a refrain of the first book of Bacon's *Novum Organum* (1620). "The subtlety of nature surpasses by many degrees the subtlety of the senses and the intellect", runs the tenth aphorism (*subtilitas naturae subtilitatem sensus et intellectus multis partibus superat*), and the twenty-fourth sets it against the subtlety of argument.[602] For Bacon the phrase is a reproof: nature is finer than our reasonings, so we must go to her slowly, by experiment. Pater's sentence turns the reproof into a pleasure. For Leonardo nature's subtlety is what matches his own "microscopic sense of finish", and the excess that humbles the philosopher delights the artist.

## See also

Finesse; Homo minister et interpres naturæ; Return to nature.

## Super-celestial

*super-celestial*

Attested: *super-celestial* (PIC §13), twice; *celestial* (BEL §7). Above the heavens: the world beyond the stars, where in Pico's scheme the angels dwell. The angels' fire belongs to "the super-celestial world", and "the super-celestial fire loves" (PIC §13; see Elementary fire; Seraphic intelligence). Pico's Latin has *supercaelestis* for the fire that loves, and *ultramundanus*, "beyond the world", for the angels' region.[603] The idea has a Platonic origin: in the *Phaedrus* Socrates speaks of "the place beyond the heavens", where true being dwells, which no poet has worthily sung.[604] Pico's three worlds, in Pater's English terrestrial, celestial and super-celestial, place that region at the top of a ladder of correspondences (see Correspondence; Terrestrial world). The super-celestial world is the angelic life "in the world beyond the stars" (PIC §13); Pater's English takes Pico's compound from the fire and gives it to the world.

## See also

Correspondence; Elementary fire; Seraphic intelligence; Terrestrial world.

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[602] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* (1620), book I, aphorisms 10 and 24.

[603] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), second proem.

[604] Plato, *Phaedrus* 247c.

*Experience pictured as a swarm, many, small and moving: the 1873 image that the revision made a group · The Renaissance*
*a swarm of impressions*; *swarm*; *swarming*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A moving multitude of small living things, as of bees: the 1873 figure for experience reduced to impressions.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Experience, already reduced to a swarm of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality" (C73 §3).

**In this edition.** The note at C73 §3 says that the 1893 version calls this a "group of impressions", and that "swarm" makes the sensations "more visibly active and unstable before Pater describes them as being in perpetual flight".

**A place to read.** C73 §3.

## Meaning

A swarm is first the bees that leave the hive with their queen to found another, a crowd that has no fixed outline and yet holds together as it moves; the word goes back to the Old English *swearm*, which already meant both a swarm of bees and a crowd, and is used of any multitude of small creatures in motion. Put to impressions, it gives them life, number and restlessness. A group is a set of things placed together; a swarm is a set of things that place themselves, and do not stay.

## Use in the book

The word comes twice before the Conclusion, both times of what the imagination crowds with life. Michelangelo penetrates us with a feeling of the power we associate with "all the warmth and fulness of the world, the sense of which brings into one's thoughts a swarm of birds and flowers and insects" (MIC §5; see Brooding spirit of life), and in the Leonardo essay the "swarming fancies" of the grotesque unite in the Medusa of the Uffizi (LEO §12; see Fascination of corruption). In each the swarm can be read as the fullness of nature before it takes a single shape.

The Conclusion of 1873 uses the word for the opposite movement. Reflection has dissipated each object; it "is loosed into a group of impressions,—colour, odour, texture,—in the mind of the observer" (C73 §3; see Reflexion); and a few lines later experience is "already reduced to a swarm of impressions" (C73 §3). The group has become a swarm, as if analysis had set its parts loose and they had begun to move of themselves. The swarm is then ringed round by the wall of personality (C73 §3; see Wall of personality), and the figure can be read as a hive: a crowd of living

impressions in a closed place, each mind keeping its own. In the next paragraph the impressions are "in perpetual flight" (C73 §4; see Perpetual flight).

The revised text has "group of impressions" in both places (CON §3), so that the second use repeats the first. The revision can be read as making the passage quieter and more exact: the impressions are counted together rather than seen in motion, and the motion is left to the flight that follows. What is lost is the hint that impressions have a life of their own.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "swarm" or "swarming" occurs, with the revised sentence, in the order of the book.

**MIC §5** Michelangelo penetrates us with a feeling of the world's warmth and fulness, the sense of which brings into one's thoughts a swarm of birds and flowers and insects.

**LEO §12** Leonardo's swarming fancies unite in the Medusa.

**CON §3** Experience, already reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round by the wall of personality.

**C73 §3** In 1873 experience is "already reduced to a swarm of impressions".

## Later readings

William James's *Principles of Psychology* (1890) has a figure of the same kind, for experience before analysis rather than after it. It gives the infant's first world as "one great blooming, buzzing confusion", out of which attention and discrimination make things.[605] The two figures can be read as opposites: James's confusion is where knowledge begins, Pater's swarm where analysis ends.

## See also

Brooding spirit of life; Fascination of corruption; Impression; Perpetual flight; Reflexion; Self-reflexion; Wall of personality.

# Terrestrial world

*the terrestrial world*

Attested: *the terrestrial world* (PIC §13). The world of earth, below the heavens; in the old cosmology, the region beneath the moon, made of the four elements and subject to change, as against the unchanging heavens. Every object in "the terrestrial world" is an analogue of a higher reality in the starry heavens, and that of a law of the angelic life beyond the stars (PIC

[605] William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols. (New York, 1890), vol. I, chapter XIII, "Discrimination and Comparison", p. 488.

§13; see Analogue; Correspondence). The terrestrial world is the bottom of Pico's three storeys, under the celestial and the super-celestial (see Super-celestial). It is the world of "elementary fire" that burns (see Elementary fire). The scheme comes from Aristotle, who divided the cosmos at the moon: below it the elements, generation and decay; above it the ether and the eternal motion of the stars.[606] Pico gives each lower thing a meaning above it; Pater, in his earlier image of Pico's universe as "a painted toy" (PIC §10; see Logos), gives the whole scheme its date.

## See also

Analogue; Correspondence; Elementary fire; Logos; Super-celestial.

## The true mistress of higher intelligences

*the true mistress of higher intelligences*; *true mistress*

Attested: *the true mistress of higher intelligences* (LEO §9); *true mistress* (MIC §15). "Mistress" is the Old French *maistresse*, the feminine of *maistre*, master: a woman who rules, a teacher, and a woman loved. Pater gives the phrase in quotation marks, as a saying, at the turn of the Leonardo essay toward nature, when Leonardo's discontent has told him that his art needs "more of the meaning of nature and purpose of humanity" (LEO §9; see Disgust): "Nature was 'the true mistress of higher intelligences.' He plunged, then, into the study of nature" (LEO §9; see Return to nature). In Leonardo's own notes the title of mistress goes both to experience, which he will cite against the authors others allege as the mistress of their masters, and to nature: painters who take any guide but nature, "mistress of masters" (*maestra de' maestri*), weary themselves in vain.[607] Pater's phrase keeps the title for nature and limits her pupils to "higher intelligences", those able to learn from her directly. The English word keeps two of its senses here. Nature is the teacher, and the next sentence makes the study a passion, "He plunged". The Michelangelo essay uses the same two words of a darker love: "his true mistress is death" (MIC §15; see Death in its distinction).

## See also

Death in its distinction; Disgust; Homo minister et interpres naturæ; Return to nature.

## Toils

*toils*

[606] Aristotle, *Meteorologica* I.2–3; *De caelo* I.2–3.

[607] Leonardo da Vinci, notes in the Codex Atlanticus, in J. P. Richter, *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci* (London, 1883), §§11 and 660.

Attested: *toils* (WIN §53). The word here is not the plural of *toil*, labour, but the hunter's word for nets, from the French *toile*, cloth, and the Latin *tela*, a web: a beast "in the toils" is caught in the nets set round it. Pater uses it in the essay's last paragraph, which describes the modern sense of natural law. For us necessity is no longer a mythological personage with whom we can do battle, but "a magic web woven through and through us", penetrating us with a network subtler than our subtlest nerves (WIN §53; see Magic web; Necessity). Then the question for art: whether it can represent men and women "in these bewildering toils" so as to give the spirit at least an equivalent for the sense of freedom (WIN §53; see Freedom). The word completes the figure of the web: the network that runs through us is also a net in which we are caught. The paragraph answers the question with the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo, in which "this entanglement, this network of law, becomes the tragic situation" (WIN §53; see Dénouement), and its last sentence asks who, if he saw through all, would fret against the chain of circumstance (WIN §53; see Chain of circumstance): the freedom left is in seeing through the toils, not in breaking them.

## See also

Chain of circumstance; Dénouement; Freedom; Magic web; Necessity; Situation.

## Transmute

*transmute*; *transmutation*, *transmutations*

Attested: *transmute* (PRE §5; LEO §21); *transmutation* (LEO §20); *transmutations* (LEO §21). To change one substance into another, the alchemist's word for turning base metal into gold. Wordsworth's faculty deposits a crystal here and there "in a matter it does not wholly search through and transmute" (PRE §5; see Chemist). In the Leonardo essay the word becomes the name of his problem: his problem was "the transmutation of ideas into images" (LEO §20; see Transmutation of ideas into images), a problem Goethe solved in places and not in others (LEO §21; see Spell-word).

## See also

Alchemy; Chemist; Crystallise; Fuse; Spell-word; Transmutation of ideas into images.

## Tremulous wisp

*a tremulous wisp*

Attested: *a tremulous wisp constantly re-forming itself on the stream* (CON §3); *reforming* (C73 §4). A wisp is a small twist or handful, of straw, hair or smoke, and a tremulous one trembles in the air or on the water; the will-o'-the-wisp was a handful of burning straw before it was a marsh-light. The phrase gives the last stage of the Conclusion's analysis, when every impression has been divided by time to a moment that is gone as we try to grasp it (CON §3; see Divisibility). "To such a tremulous wisp constantly re-forming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it, a relic more or less fleeting, of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down" (CON §3; see Fine down). The image is of a fleck of foam or mist on a current, which keeps its shape only by being made again at every instant, as the flame of the paragraph before is renewed from moment to moment (CON §2; see Flame-like). It is not nothing. The sentence allows the wisp "a sense in it", a relic of the moments before it, and so a kind of continuity, but a continuity of memory, "more or less fleeting", and not of substance (see Relic). The stream can be read as the river that follows the epigraph's saying in Plato (CON §1; see πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει) and as the stream of the mid-stream (CON §3; see Mid-stream). What is left of the self, at the end of the analysis, is a shape on the water.

## See also

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Divisibility; Fine down; Flame-like; Mid-stream; Relic.

## Tritum est in scholis

*Tritum est in scholis*; *a commonplace of the schools*

Attested: *Tritum est in scholis* (PIC §9); *a commonplace of the schools* (PIC §§9, 10); *commonplace* also at WIN §51. Latin, "It is worn in the schools": the Latin *tritus* is rubbed, worn smooth by use, from *terere*, to rub. Pater quotes the Latin of Pico's sentence on man as a little world and gives it in English: "It is a commonplace of the schools that man is a little world" (PIC §9; see Little world). The next paragraph begins with the word turned into a judgement: "A commonplace of the schools! But perhaps it had some new significance and authority, when men heard one like Pico reiterate it" (PIC §10; see Dignity of human nature). Pater's Latin differs slightly from the Heptaplus, where Pico writes *Tritum in scholis verbum est*, "It is a worn saying in the schools", and where the commonplace supports Pico's own claim that man is a fourth world.[608] Pico called his own source trite; Pater takes him at his word, and then allows the trite thing its new authority.

[608] Pico, *Heptaplus* (1489), second proem.

## See also

Dignity of human nature; Little world.

## Unsinged hands

*unsinged hands*

Attested: *unsinged hands* (WIN §43). To be singed is to be lightly burned, at the surface; unsinged hands have touched fire and come away unmarked. Pater uses the phrase at the end of the forty-third paragraph, on the pagan manner of dealing with the sensuous side of art. Christian asceticism, discrediting the slightest touch of sense, has from time to time sharpened the antagonism of the artistic life to it, and it has sometimes seemed hard to pursue that life "without something of conscious disavowal of a spiritual world"; this imparts to artistic interests "a kind of intoxication" (WIN §43; see Intoxication). Winckelmann is free of it: he fingers the pagan marbles "with unsinged hands" (WIN §43; see Christian asceticism), with no sense of shame or loss. The fire is the one the paragraph has already lit, in which the artist steeps his thought "into the fire of colour" (WIN §43; see Spiritualise). Others who handle the marbles are burned, by guilt or by its defiance; Winckelmann is not (see Christian asceticism). The phrase can be read as recalling the three young men of the Book of Daniel, whose hair, in the English Bible, the fire of the furnace had not singed;[609] but Winckelmann's safety is not a miracle of faith. It is the absence of any "sense of want, or corruption, or shame" (WIN §43; see Heiterkeit).

## See also

Buried fire; Christian asceticism; Heiterkeit; Intoxication; Sensuousness; Spiritualise.

## Vegetable life

*the vegetable life of plants*; *vegetable*

Attested: *the vegetable life of plants* (PIC §9); *vegetable* in three further paragraphs (MIC §2; WIN §§24, 28). The life of growth and nourishment that plants have and that man shares with them; Pater's English for Pico's *plantarum anima vegetalis*, "the vegetative soul of plants", in the edition's note. In Aristotle's account of the soul every living thing has the nutritive power, plants have only that, animals add sense, and man adds reason;[610] Pico's little world of man contains all three, "the vegetable life of plants, and the senses of the lower animals, and reason" (PIC §9; see Little world).

[609] Daniel 3:27 in the King James Version ("nor was an hair of their head singed"); 3:94 in the Vulgate.

[610] Aristotle, *De anima* II.2–3.

Pater's word "vegetable" keeps the Latin root *vegere*, to quicken. Elsewhere the word marks the lowest kind of life. Michelangelo's backgrounds show only blank ranges of rock and "dim vegetable forms as blank as they" (MIC §2); a universal pagan sentiment, older than the Greek religion, has lingered into the Christian world "like some persistent vegetable growth" (WIN §24); and oriental thought confuses humanity with "the fantastic, indeterminate life of the animal and vegetable world" (WIN §28).

## See also

Little world.

# Veil of sight

*The medium through which things reach Leonardo, as in the light of eclipse, rain at daybreak, or deep water · The Renaissance*

*veil of sight*; *veil*, *veiled*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A veil that is also a way of seeing: the medium through which the world reaches the eye.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Through Leonardo's strange veil of sight things reach him so; in no ordinary night or day, but as in faint light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak, or through deep water" (LEO §18).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** LEO §18.

## Meaning

A veil, the Latin *velum*, a cloth or sail, hides and also shows: it covers a face or a sanctuary and lets the shape show through. In the tabernacle a veil divides the holy place from the most holy (Exodus 26:33), and Paul makes the veil over Moses' face a figure for a mind that cannot see (2 Corinthians 3:13–16). Pater's veil of sight belongs to the eye. It is not drawn over the world but is the eye's own medium, and things reach Leonardo through it as light reaches us through water.

## Use in the book

Pater explains the landscape by the painter's sight. The paragraph has described the rocks and waters of the backgrounds, from "the heath of the Madonna of the Balances" to "the seashore of the Saint Anne" (LEO §18; see Motion of great waters), and it has insisted that these are real "places far withdrawn", and hours chosen "with a miracle of finesse" (LEO §18; see Finesse). The last sentence gives the cause: "Through Leonardo's strange veil of sight things reach him so; in no ordinary night or day, but as in faint

light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak, or through deep water" (LEO §18).

The three likenesses are three media, each a rare light: the half-light of an eclipse, the light of a short rain at dawn, the light that reaches the bottom of deep water. They can be read as the "mixed lights" the paragraph began with, the "peculiar atmosphere" built about things (LEO §18; see Mixed lights), and each is an hour "selected from a thousand". The veil does not distort what it transmits; it chooses it. The places are real, the hours are real, and the strangeness lies in the selection and in the medium. The sentence can be read as Pater's account of the painter's subjectivity: the world is given, the veil is Leonardo's own. It answers the image of what Leonardo had been, "the cheerful, objective painter", through whose soul, "as through clear glass", the bright figures of the city passed to the wall (LEO §10; see Objective painter). Glass is clear; a veil is not. Leonardo's sight adds to what it passes on. The Winckelmann essay makes the figure general: all artistic genius generates around itself "an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction" (WIN §36; see Refraction).

"Veil" has two other uses in the book that bear on this one. The opening paragraph of the Botticelli essay says that Botticelli painted religious incidents "with an under-current of original sentiment, which touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject" (BOT §1; see Ostensible subject). There the subject is the veil, and the sentiment comes through it; in the Leonardo essay the veil is the painter's, and the world comes through it. In both the veil is the condition of what is seen, not an obstacle to it. The Conclusion's darker figure is a wall rather than a veil: experience is ringed round by "that thick wall of personality" (CON §3; see Wall of personality). Leonardo's veil is that wall become translucent, a solitude that lets the world through, changed.

The figure can be set beside the sonnet of Shelley that begins "Lift not the painted veil which those who live / Call Life",[611] where the veil hides a truth of fear and hope behind its colours. Shelley's veil is to be left down because what lies behind it is terrible. Pater's is not to be lifted because there is nothing to see without it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "veil" or "veiled" occurs, in the order of the book; "unveiled" and "unveils" (PIC §15; MIC §8; LEO §11; WIN §34) are given under Unveiled human form.

**BOT §1** The original sentiment touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject.

**MIC §18** The Italian sculptors had early given the Creation of Man a pregnancy of expression that seems to give it many veiled meanings.

[611] Percy Bysshe Shelley, sonnet "Lift not the painted veil" (written 1818, published 1824).

**LEO §18** Through Leonardo's strange veil of sight things reach him as in faint light of eclipse or through deep water.

**BEL §1** The Gothic donjon of Gaillon is veiled faintly by Italian traceries.

**WIN §52** Goethe's culture did not remain behind the veil.

## See also

Double sight; Finesse; Impression; Mixed lights; Motion of great waters; Novel impression; Objective painter; Ostensible subject; Refraction; Unveiled human form; Wall of personality.

## Violets from the grave

*the springing of violets from the grave*

Attested: *the springing of violets from the grave* (CON §2; C73 §2); *violets* (LEO §18). The phrase comes in the list of the "ten thousand resultant combinations" of natural elements, beside "birth and gesture and death" (CON §2; see Resultant combination). Among the paragraph's images of physiology and physics it is a poet's, and it is old. The Roman satirist Persius asked in mockery whether violets would not now spring from a praised poet's tomb and fortunate ashes;[612] in *Hamlet* Laertes, at Ophelia's grave, prays "from her fair and unpolluted flesh / May violets spring!";[613] and Alfred Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1850) hopes that "from his ashes may be made / The violet of his native land".[614] In each the flower is a consolation, a sign that the dead live on in beauty. Pater keeps the image and drops the consolation. The violets are one combination among ten thousand, beside birth and gesture, and their springing from the grave is the plainest instance of the paragraph's claim that the elements of the body pass out into the world. The Leonardo essay mentions a leaf of the painter's sketches dotted all over with studies of violets and the wild rose (LEO §18).

## See also

Natural elements; Resultant combination; Rust and ripen.

## Vital forces

*vital forces*

Attested: *vital forces* (CON §4; C73 §5); *vital* (WIN §§18, 21, 22, 34). In the physiology of the early nineteenth century "vital force" was the name

[612] Persius, *Satires* I.38–40.

[613] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act V, scene 1.

[614] Alfred Tennyson, *In Memoriam A. H. H.* (London, 1850), section XVIII.

for a power thought to belong to living things alone and to set them apart from the laws of chemistry; the chemists who made organic compounds in the laboratory, and the physiologists of Pater's youth, were taken to have shown that no such force was needed. Pater's plural takes the phrase in a looser sense, the forces that make up a life. Pater asks how we may be present always "at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy" (CON §4; see Focus). The question joins the physics of the second paragraph, where life is a "concurrence" of forces (CON §2; see Concurrence), to an ethic of intensity: where most forces meet, life is most alive. In the Winckelmann essay "vital" means essential and alive at once: an "impartial, vital, inborn instinct for beauty" (WIN §18), a "vital, unchangeable relationship" (WIN §21), the individuality, "a mobile, a vital, individuality", that the Greek sculptors gave their creations (WIN §34; see Individuality).

## See also

Concurrence; Energy of conception; Focus; Individuality; Powers or forces.

## Vitality

*vitality*; *vital*

Attested: *vitality* (PIC §§5, 16; ROB §10; WIN §10); *vital* (WIN §§18, 21, 22, 34; CON §4; C73 §5). The power of living, from the Latin *vita*, life; the force that keeps a thing alive. In the della Robbia essay vitality is the lesser thing: Michelangelo gets "not vitality merely, but a wonderful force, of expression" (ROB §10; see Flexible life). Vitality is life; expression is life with meaning. The Pico essay makes vitality the humanist's faith: the age believed "that nothing which had ever interested the human mind could wholly lose its vitality" (PIC §5), and "the essence of humanism" is the same belief (PIC §16; see Humanism). Winckelmann plucked out the lesser interests "which in most men are the waste part of nature, and drain away their vitality" (WIN §10). The adjective names what is essential and alive: a "vital, inborn instinct for beauty in art" (WIN §18), a "vital, unchangeable relationship" (WIN §21), the Greeks' gift to their creations of "a mobile, a vital, individuality" (WIN §34; see Individuality), and the Conclusion's focus "where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy" (CON §4).

## See also

Flexible life; Humanism; Individuality; Pulsation.

## Vivify

*vivifies*; *vivificiren*

Attested: *vivifies* (PIC §13); *vivificiren* (CON §4; C73 §5). To give life to, from the Latin *vivificare*. The middle of Pico's three fires is the life-giver: "the heavenly fire vivifies" (PIC §13; see Elementary fire). The heavenly fire is the sun, which makes things grow. The Conclusion borrows the word in German from Novalis, for whom to philosophise is *dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren*, to dispel sluggishness and to bring to life (CON §4; see Philosophiren). The two uses can be read as the book's distance from Pico in one word. In Pico it is the sun that vivifies, as a level in the cosmos; in the Conclusion it is philosophy, which rouses the human spirit "to a life of constant and eager observation" (CON §4). The power that gives life has moved from the heavens into the mind.

### See also

Elementary fire; Philosophiren.

## Wall of personality

*The boundary of the self through which nothing passes: the Conclusion's image for the isolation of each mind · The Renaissance*

*that thick wall of personality*; *personality*

### At a Glance

**The word.** Personality is what makes a person one and not another; a wall of personality is that distinctness felt as a barrier.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Experience is "ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without" (CON §3).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §3 says that personality "here means the boundary of an individual point of view", and that "It names the condition under which every impression must be received and distinguished".

**A place to read.** CON §3.

### Meaning

*Persona* was the mask of the Roman actor, through which the voice sounded, and the theologians used it for the distinct persons of the Trinity; "personality" meant from the fourteenth century the quality of being a person, and from the end of the eighteenth the distinct character of one. In Pater's day it carried the sense of what is most one's own, and the Preface uses it of the "engaging personality" whose impression the critic asks after.

A wall of personality is the same distinctness seen from inside, as what shuts one in.

## Use in the book

The sentence comes at the point where the Conclusion's analysis turns from the dissolving of objects to the isolation of the subject. Reflexion has loosed each object into impressions, and the scope of observation has been "dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind" (CON §3; see Flickering). "Experience, already reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without" (CON §3). The next sentence draws the consequence: each mind keeps "as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world" (CON §3; see Solitary prisoner).

The sentence makes three claims. The wall is thick: not a membrane but a fortification. No real voice has ever passed it, in either direction: we neither hear others nor are heard, and the words "real voice" concede that voices seem to pass, as the world seems solid. And what is outside can only be conjectured: even its existence is an inference. The last claim is the boldest. The second paragraph had shown the body to be a combination of elements that extend beyond it; the third shows the mind to be a room whose outside it cannot see. The physics and the psychology end in the same place, a self that is a passing figure with nothing certain beyond it.

The word "personality" runs through the book in a warmer sense, and the Conclusion's use reverses it. The Preface asks of "this engaging personality presented in life or in a book" what it is to me (PRE §2; see Engaging personality), and names among the critic's objects "a fair personality in life or in a book" (PRE §3). Leonardo "plunged also into human personality" and became a painter of portraits (LEO §19; see Human personality). To Goethe the type of completeness came in Winckelmann "not as in a book or a theory, but more importunately, because in a passionate life, in a personality" (WIN §50; see Importunate). In each of these personality is what one meets and is moved by. In the Conclusion it is what keeps one from meeting anything, and the book can be read as holding both: the personality of another is the most moving thing the critic knows, and his own is the wall that keeps him from knowing it.

The sentence can be read as solipsism, and the Conclusion does not answer the charge directly. Its answer is practical. The wall cannot be broken, but within it attention can be sharpened, and the fifth paragraph asks that we discriminate "every moment some passionate attitude in those about us" (CON §5; see Discriminate), which is to attend to others as closely as a mind so walled can.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "wall of personality" occurs, with its 1873 text and four paragraphs in which personality is what the critic, the painter and Goethe meet, in the order of the book.

**PRE §2** The critic asks what this song or picture, this engaging personality, is to him.

**PRE §3** A fair personality in life or in a book produces a special impression of beauty or pleasure.

**LEO §19** Leonardo plunged also into human personality, and became above all a painter of portraits.

**WIN §50** In Winckelmann the type of completeness came to Goethe more importunately, because in a passionate life, in a personality.

**CON §3** Experience is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality.

**C73 §3** In 1873 experience is "already reduced to a swarm of impressions".

## Later readings

The image was given its most famous philosophical form by the Oxford idealist F. H. Bradley, for whom each person's experience "falls within my own circle, a circle closed on the outside".[615] T. S. Eliot quoted Bradley's sentence in his notes to *The Waste Land* (1922), beside Dante's prisoner Ugolino.[616]

## See also

Discriminate; Engaging personality; Flickering; Human personality; Importunate; Impression; Intellectual isolation; Solitary prisoner; Swarm of impressions.

# Weaving and unweaving

*A web made and unmade at once: the last words of the Conclusion's analysis, its image for the self · The Renaissance*

*weaving and unweaving*; *weaving*, *weave*

## At a Glance

**The word.** To weave is to make cloth by crossing threads; to unweave is to undo it thread by thread.

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[615] F. H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality: A Metaphysical Essay* (London, 1893), in the passage that T. S. Eliot cites as p. 346.

[616] T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (New York, 1922), note to line 411.

**In *The Renaissance*.** It is with the passage and dissolution of impressions "that analysis leaves off—that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves" (CON §3).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §2 says that the "weaving and unweaving" of consciousness "applies the same image to the inward life" as the design in a web of the paragraph before.

**A place to read.** CON §3.

## Meaning

Weaving is one of the oldest images for making and for fate: the Fates spin and cut the thread of life, and in Latin a text and a web are one word (*textus*, from *texere*, to weave). Unweaving is rarer, and its most famous instance is Penelope's in the *Odyssey*, who wove a shroud for Laertes by day and unwove it by torchlight at night, so that for three years it was not finished, until a maid betrayed her and she was made to complete it.[617] Her web is a work kept in being by being undone.

## Use in the book

The phrase ends the third paragraph of the Conclusion and the analysis it has carried out. "It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off—that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves" (CON §3; see Analysis; Dissolution). The sentence names the same thing three times, and each name changes it. "The passage and dissolution of impressions" is the analyst's: impressions pass and dissolve. "That continual vanishing away" is the mourner's: the stress falls on loss. "That strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves" is the artist's: the loss is also a making. The self is not only unwoven; it is woven, and in the same motion.

The image takes up the web of the paragraph before, where the outline of face and limb is "a design in a web" (CON §2; see Web). There the web was the body's, and its threads ran out into the world; here the weaving is "of ourselves", and it is the mind's. The edition's note makes the connection. The two images can be read as one figure in two tenses. The body is a design already in a web; the self is a weaving still going on.

The adjectives carry the paragraph's argument. "Strange" admits that the description is not how we feel ourselves. "Perpetual" uses the word that the Conclusion has turned from permanence to flux (see Perpetual motion). And "continual", said of the vanishing away, says that there is no moment at which it rests and a finished self can be seen. Penelope kept her web unfinished by her will, until she was found out; ours, on this account, is never finished, because that is what a self is.

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[617] Homer, *Odyssey* II.93–110; XIX.137–156; XXIV.128–146.

The book's other weavings are of art, of the mind's fancies and, at the end of the Winckelmann essay, of necessity, "a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53; see Magic web). The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century, in the Pico essay, is a "madhouse-cell" of the human mind, into which we may peep "and see it at work weaving strange fancies" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation); the Italian sculptors wove the Creation of Man, which had haunted the mind of the middle age, into a hundred carved ornaments of capital or doorway (MIC §18); the Venetian painters' colour is a "weaving of light, as of just perceptible gold threads" through the picture (GIO §2; see Gold thread). The Conclusion's weaving is of the same kind. It is what the mind does, as the Venetian painter weaves light, and the self it makes is a texture, the word that names, in the same paragraph, one of the three impressions into which the object dissolves (CON §3; see Texture).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "weave", "weaving", "inweaving" or "interweaving" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §5** The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century is a madhouse-cell in which we see the human mind at work weaving strange fancies.

**MIC §18** The sculptors wove the Creation of Man into a hundred carved ornaments of capital or doorway.

**GIO §2** Colouring is that weaving of light, as of just perceptible gold threads, through the dress, the flesh, the atmosphere, in Titian's Lace-girl.

**GIO §6** A sudden inweaving of gold thread through the texture of the haystack gives the scene artistic qualities, that it is like a picture.

**BEL §16** The poets of the Pleiad weave into their verses their trite reflexions on the vanity of life.

**BEL §17** Their houses show a fantastic interweaving of thin, reed-like lines.

**CON §3** Analysis leaves off with that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

**C73 §4** In 1873: "that strange perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Analysis; Dissolution; Gold thread; Magic web; Perpetual motion; Texture; Web.

# Web

*A woven fabric whose threads run out beyond the design: the Conclusion's figure for the body, and the book's figure for what holds and entangles · The Renaissance*

*a design in a web*; *web*, *webs*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A woven fabric, and so any network of crossing threads; also the spider's net.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them—a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it" (CON §2).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §2 says that "The image of a design in a web distinguishes a recognizable bodily outline from the processes that compose it".

**A place to read.** CON §2.

## Meaning

The Old English *webb* is the woven cloth, from the verb to weave; the spider's web is named after it. A design in a web is a pattern woven into a fabric: the figure on a tapestry, which is not a separate thing laid on the cloth but a way of crossing the same threads that make the ground. Its edges are where the colours change, not where the threads stop.

## Use in the book

The sentence comes near the end of the Conclusion's account of the body. The elements of which we are made are broadcast far out on every side of us, and birth, gesture, death and the violets on the grave are a few of their ten thousand combinations (CON §2; see Resultant combination). "That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them—a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it" (CON §2). The figure is exact. A face is a pattern in the weave of the world, and the threads that make it run on into the ground around; the outline that seems to enclose it is ours, a grouping we make, not a boundary in the stuff. The words "clear" and "perpetual" are given to the outline only to be withdrawn. It looks clear and lasting; it is an image.

The web of the Conclusion is the last of the book's webs, and the others prepare it. The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century has "its strange web of imagery, its quaint conceits" (PIC §5; see Allegorical interpretation). La Gioconda, in her many lives, "trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants" (LEO §31; see Perpetual life). And the Winckelmann essay, in the paragraph just before the Conclusion, makes the web the image of natural law: necessity is "a magic web woven through and

through us", like the magnetic system of modern science, a network "subtler than our subtlest nerves, yet bearing in it the central forces of the world" (WIN §53; see Magic web). The two webs face each other across the end of one essay and the start of the next. In the Winckelmann essay the web is woven through us; in the Conclusion we are a design in it. The first is law, which entangles; the second is the body, which is made of the same threads as the world.

The image leads to the next paragraph's "weaving and unweaving of ourselves" (CON §3; see Weaving and unweaving). A design in a web is still; a weaving is a process. The Conclusion moves from the one to the other as it moves from the body to the mind: the body is a figure already woven, the self a figure being woven and unwoven at once.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "web" or "webs" occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §5** The allegorical interpretation of the fifteenth century has its strange web of imagery.

**LEO §31** La Gioconda, who has been dead many times, trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants.

**WIN §53** Necessity is a magic web, woven through us like the magnetic system of modern science.

**CON §2** The outline of face and limb is a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it.

**C73 §2** In 1873: "That clear perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours under which we group them".

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Magic web; Perpetual life; Resultant combination; Toils; Weaving and unweaving.

# Whirlpool

*the whirlpool*

Attested: *the whirlpool* (CON §3; C73 §3). A whirlpool is water turning on itself, an eddy that draws in what comes near it and keeps its shape while the water passes through. The Conclusion uses it to pass from the body to the mind: "Or if we begin with the inward world of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring" (CON §3). The definite article and the comparative can be read as referring back: the body was by implication already a whirlpool, a perpetual motion of elements whose form stays while its matter changes (CON §2; see Perpetual motion), and the mind is the same, faster. The two images, water and fire,

are the elements of Heraclitus's flux, and the sentence gives both at once (see Flame-like; *πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει*). The vortex was also a figure of the ancient atomists, and in the *Clouds* of the Athenian comic poet Aristophanes the old man who has been to Socrates' school announces that Vortex is king, having driven out Zeus.[618] Pater's whirlpool rules nothing; it is a description of how a mind feels from inside, where nothing stays long enough to be held. The Winckelmann essay, which the Conclusion follows, had ended in the same world of law, met not by escape but by an attitude of mind (WIN §53; see Freedom).

## See also

*πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει*; Apparent rest; Flame-like; Freedom; Midstream; Perpetual motion.

## Wind-searched

*wind-searched*

Attested: *wind-searched* (GIO §16). To search, from the Old French *cerchier*, from the Latin *circare*, to go round, is to go through a thing thoroughly, and wind searches what it blows through, every fold and corner. Pater's compound is the most vivid word in his account of the Holy Family that the critics took from Giorgione: its "singular charm of liquid air" fills "the eyes and lips, the very garments, of its sacred personages, with some wind-searched brightness and energy" (GIO §16; see Liquid air). The air has been through everything and left it clean and quick. The figure can be read as a counterpart to the essay's other air. In the school of Giorgione the air "seems as vivid as the people who breathe it, and literally empyrean" (GIO §23; see Empyrean), purified by fire; in the Louvre picture it is purified by wind. Both are images of a medium so clear that nothing in the picture is dulled by it, and "energy" says again what "vivid" says there: the air is not only pure but alive.

## See also

Empyrean; Liquid air; Pictorial charm.

## Winnow

*winnow*; *winnowers*

Attested: *winnow*, *winnowers* (BEL §23). To winnow is to toss threshed grain in a current of air, so that the light chaff blows away and the heavy grain falls back; the English word comes from the Old English *windwian*, from *wind*. The note at BEL §24 explains it: "Winnowing separates grain

[618] Diogenes Laertius IX.31 (Leucippus) and IX.45 (Democritus); Aristophanes, *Clouds* 828.

from chaff with moving air." In the Bible winnowing is a figure of judgement: in the Gospels the one who comes after John the Baptist holds his winnowing-fan in his hand, to gather the wheat into his barn and burn the chaff.[619] Pater's winnowing has none of that. Du Bellay's song is sung by men at their work, and asks only for gentle winds (BEL §23; see Vanneur); the winnower's last stanza is a plea for air in the heat, *A mon blé que je vanne / A la chaleur du jour*, "at the wheat I winnow / in the heat of the day", as the note at BEL §24 renders it (BEL §27; see Doulce haleine). The book's Preface gives the critic what can be read as a winnower's task, to disengage the virtue of a work "from the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination" (PRE §5; see Disengage), and the last pages of the essay on Du Bellay can be read as doing just that, setting aside the school's fashions to keep one poem.

## See also

Disengage; Doulce haleine; Vanneur; Winnowing-fan.

# Winnowing-fan

*The basket or shovel with which grain is tossed in the wind: one of the trivial things that the essay's last light transfigures · The Renaissance*

*winnowing-fan*; *fans*; *fan-painting*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The broad shallow basket or shovel with which threshed grain is thrown into the wind, so that the chaff blows away.

**In *The Renaissance*.** A sudden light transfigures "some trivial thing", among them "a winnowing-fan" (BEL §28).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §24 says of the winnower's song that "The worker offers flowers for the breeze that will help him labor in the heat."

**A place to read.** BEL §§23–28.

## Meaning

The Latin for the winnowing-basket was *vannus*, and from it come the French *van* and *vanner* and, through Old English *fann*, the English "fan": the fan was a farm tool before it was a lady's. The basket was shaken or the grain thrown up from a shovel, and the wind did the rest. In Greek and Roman religion the winnowing-basket, the Greek *liknon*, was sacred to Dionysus and carried in his mysteries, and Virgil, listing the farmer's tools, includes "the mystic winnowing-basket of Iacchus".[620]

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[619] Matthew 3:12; Luke 3:17.

[620] Virgil, *Georgics* I.166: *mystica vannus Iacchi*.

## Use in the book

The fan comes into the essay through the poem. Du Bellay's winnower sings at his work, *A mon blé que je vanne*, "at the wheat I winnow", as the note at BEL §24 renders it (BEL §27; see Vanneur), and in the last paragraph Pater turns the song back into the scene it implies. The poem's sweetness is not to be got by crushing (BEL §28; see Pure effect), and then: "One seems to hear the measured motion of the fans, with a child's pleasure on coming across the incident for the first time, in one of those great barns of Du Bellay's own country, La Beauce, the granary of France" (BEL §28). The sentence hears before it sees. The fans are known by their "measured motion", the rhythm of the work, and the essay that gave the Pleiad an ambition to make French verse scan (BEL §15) ends with a measure no one composed (see Scansion). The listener has "a child's pleasure" in meeting the thing "for the first time", and the freshness of the first time is the condition of the pleasure. La Beauce, the corn plain between Chartres and Orléans, lies nearer Ronsard's Vendômois than Du Bellay's Anjou; Pater's "Du Bellay's own country" is the Pleiad's country of the eighteenth paragraph, where La Beauce's "vast rolling fields seem to anticipate the great western sea itself" (BEL §18; see Physiognomy).

The next sentence names the fan among the things a light can change. "A sudden light transfigures some trivial thing, a weather-vane, a windmill, a winnowing-fan, the dust in the barn door" (BEL §28). The list can be read as having one subject. Each of its things belongs to the wind: the vane is turned by it, the windmill driven by it, the fan makes use of it, the dust is blown by it, and the poem they illustrate is a song to the winds. "Transfigures" is a word from the Gospels, where Christ's face shone on the mountain,[621] and the essay gives it to a barn: the light makes a trivial thing glorious for a moment and is gone. The thing vanishes "because it was pure effect", and leaves behind it a relish and a longing (BEL §28; see Pure effect; Relish). The winnowing-fan is among the essay's last objects, and the book's essay on French poetry ends on the things of a farm in a sudden light.

The book's other fan is the Japanese one. In the Giorgione essay the coming of poetry into painting is traced "by fine gradations upwards", from "Japanese fan-painting", where "we get, first, only abstract colour", to Titian (GIO §2; see Abstract colour). The two fans can be read as marking the two ends of the book's scale: the fan as a surface for pure decoration, and the fan as a thing of use that a moment of light makes beautiful.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which a fan, winnowing or a winnower is named, in the order of the book.

**GIO §2** The coming of poetry into painting is traced upwards from Japanese fan-painting, where we get, first, only abstract colour.

[621] Matthew 17:2.

**BEL §23** Du Bellay's poem is a song which the winnowers are supposed to sing as they winnow the corn.

**BEL §24** The poem's title: from a winnower of wheat to the winds.

**BEL §27** The winnower toils in the heat of the day at the wheat he winnows.

**BEL §28** One seems to hear the measured motion of the fans, and a sudden light transfigures a winnowing-fan.

## See also

Abstract colour; Physiognomy; Pure effect; Relish; Scansion; Vanneur; Winnow.

# Time, flux and the moment

## ὀψιμαθεῖς

*ὀψιμαθεῖς*; *come into the world and into Italy too late*

Attested: *ὀψιμαθεῖς*; *come into the world and into Italy too late* (WIN §13). The Greek word, which the edition's note renders "late learners", is from *opse*, late, and *manthanein*, to learn. It named a figure of fun: the Greek philosopher Theophrastus (about 371–287 BC), Aristotle's successor, gave one of his *Characters* to "the late learner", an old man who takes up at sixty the lessons and games of the young.[622] Winckelmann used it of himself in his first months in Rome, in French, which Pater says he often chose "as the vehicle of strong feeling": "I am one of those whom the Greeks call ὀψιμαθεῖς.—I have come into the world and into Italy too late" (WIN §13). He was in his late thirties; two paragraphs earlier Pater has noted that "his hair is turning grey, and he has not yet reached the south" (WIN §11). The word can be read as the essay's motto for every modern Hellenist. Winckelmann came too late to the Rome he had longed for; Goethe too, after many aspirations, "visited Italy" more than thirty years later (WIN §13); and the whole of modern Hellenism comes after the Greeks. The essay turns the complaint into a power. The late learner, in the nineteenth paragraph, learns as if remembering, "with a certain power of anticipating its results" (WIN §19; see φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Reminiscence), and his lateness can be read as a condition of his insight, since Hellenism is best conceived by those who have "crept into it" out of an intellectual world in which the sombre elements predominate (WIN §14; see Hellenism).

[622] Theophrastus, *Characters* 27, "The Late Learner" (*opsimathia*).

## See also

φιλοσοφήσας πότε μέτ' ἔρωτος; Hellenism; Reminiscence.

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει

*"All things move on and nothing stays": Heraclitus's saying as Plato reports it, the epigraph of the Conclusion · The Renaissance*

*Λέγει που Ἡράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει*; *Heraclitus says somewhere that everything moves on and nothing stays*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Greek, "all things move on and nothing stays", from *chōrein*, to give way or go on, and *menein*, to stay.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Conclusion begins with the Greek sentence alone: "Λέγει που Ἡράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει" (CON §1).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §1 renders the Greek "Heraclitus says somewhere that everything moves on and nothing stays", gives the source as Plato's *Cratylus* 402a, and says that Socrates "follows it with the image of a river one cannot enter twice"; the note at C73 §1 adds that the line "is a report in Plato of what Heraclitus says".

**A place to read.** CON §1.

## Meaning

The sentence is Socrates' in Plato's *Cratylus*, in the etymologies of the names of the gods: "Heraclitus says somewhere that all things move on and nothing stays, and likening the things that are to the flow of a river he says that you could not step twice into the same river".[623] The words are a report, not a quotation; "somewhere", *pou*, marks it as a saying recalled. Heraclitus wrote about 500 BC, and the fragments of his book that later writers quote speak of rivers in which other and other waters flow upon those who step into them.[624] The tag "all things flow", *panta rhei*, by which the doctrine is now known, appears in that form only in the commentators of late antiquity, though Plato's Socrates already speaks of all things flowing (*Cratylus* 439d; *Theaetetus* 182c). Pater takes Plato's sentence, which is the oldest report of the doctrine in a single line.

## Use in the book

The epigraph stands alone above the Conclusion, untranslated in Pater's text, and the first English sentence gives its sense in modern terms: to regard all things "as inconstant modes or fashions" has become "the tendency of

[623] Plato, *Cratylus* 402a: *λέγει που Ἡράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει, καὶ ποταμοῦ ῥοῇ ἀπεικάζων τὰ ὄντα λέγει ὡς δὶς ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν ποταμὸν οὐκ ἂν ἐμβαίης.*

[624] Heraclitus, fragments B12 (Arius Didymus in Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* XV.20.2) and B91 (Plutarch, *On the E at Delphi* 392b) Diels-Kranz.

modern thought" (CON §2; see Inconstant modes or fashions). The Greek names an ancient doctrine and the English a modern tendency, and their juxtaposition says that the modern mind has come round again to what Heraclitus taught.

The river of the *Cratylus* runs through the Conclusion, though Pater does not quote it. The outward world is like the water of the shore-side, which flows "though in apparent rest"; the inward world is "the race of the mid-stream" (CON §3; see Apparent rest; Mid-stream); what is left of the self is "a tremulous wisp constantly re-forming itself on the stream" (CON §3; see Tremulous wisp). The other element of Heraclitus, fire, is the Conclusion's other image: life is "flame-like" (CON §2; see Flame-like), the mind's flame is "more eager and devouring" (CON §3), and success is to burn "with this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). Heraclitus, named in the epigraph, can thus be read as supplying the two images that the Conclusion develops, the river and the fire.

The choice of Plato's sentence rather than a fragment of Heraclitus is telling. Plato reports the flux and argues against it: at the end of the *Cratylus* Socrates sets against it the beautiful itself, always such as it is, and argues that if all things passed nothing could be known, though he leaves the question open; in the *Theaetetus* the doctrine that all things move is shown to leave knowledge, and even speech, no hold.[625] Pater quotes the doctrine and omits the refutation. The Conclusion can be read as taking the side of the philosopher whom Plato opposed, with the knowledge that Plato opposed him: it accepts that knowledge of fixed things is impossible, and builds its ethic on the moment instead.

The epigraph was kept unchanged in every edition that printed the Conclusion. Pater's note of 1888, attached to the Conclusion's title, says that he had omitted the essay from the second edition "as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall", and restored it "with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning" (CON §1). The Greek sentence, like several of the Conclusion's sentences, came through the omission and the restoration unchanged.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the saying occurs, with its 1873 text, in the order of the book.

**CON §1** Λέγει που Ἡράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει.

**C73 §1** The epigraph of 1873, the same.

## Elsewhere in Pater

Pater returned to the sentence twenty years later. *Plato and Platonism* (1893), his lectures on Plato, opens with "Plato and the Doctrine of

[625] Plato, *Cratylus* 439c–440d; *Theaetetus* 179d–183c.

Motion", which treats the philosophy of Heraclitus as a doctrine of perpetual motion (see Perpetual motion), quotes the same words of the *Cratylus*, and gives the river: "No one has ever passed twice over the same stream".[626] There the doctrine is placed in history, as the challenge to which Plato's philosophy of rest was the answer, and Pater's sympathy can be read as divided between the two.

## See also

Apparent rest; Flame-like; Hard, gem-like flame; Inconstant modes or fashions; Mid-stream; Perpetual motion; Tremulous wisp; Whirlpool.

# Bien-être

*The happy moment of well-being for which Leonardo waited, the moment of invention · The Renaissance*
*bien-être*

## At a Glance

**The word.** French for "well-being": a state of ease in body and mind.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "But Leonardo will never work till the happy moment comes—that moment of bien-être, which to imaginative men is the moment of invention" (LEO §21).

**In this edition.** The note at LEO §21 translates the word "Well-being" and calls it "an interval of ease or well-being that allows invention to occur".

**A place to read.** LEO §21.

## Meaning

The French noun joins *bien*, well, and *être*, to be. In French it meant comfort, the ease of a life well provided for, and the feeling of health; English borrowed it for a sense of physical and mental contentment. It is a modest word, and its modesty is to the point. Where an older criticism would have spoken of inspiration, a power that comes from outside, *bien-être* names a state of the person: the moment when body and mind are at ease together.

## Use in the book

The word comes at the turn of the essay's argument about science and art (LEO §21). Goethe has just been named as a warning, an artist who "did not invariably find the spell-word" and in the second part of *Faust* "presents us with a mass of science which has almost no artistic character at all" (LEO §21; see Spell-word). Leonardo is spared that fate by a discipline of waiting: he "will never work till the happy moment comes—that moment of bien-

[626] Walter Pater, *Plato and Platonism* (London, 1893), chapter I, "Plato and the Doctrine of Motion"; Library Edition (London, 1910), pp. 15–16.

être, which to imaginative men is the moment of invention. On this he waits with a perfect patience; other moments are but a preparation, or after-taste of it" (LEO §21; see After-thought; Invention).

The paragraph makes the moment a matter of judgement. "Few men distinguish between them as jealously as he. Hence, so many flaws even in the choicest work" (LEO §21): other artists work through all their moments alike, and their best work bears the marks of the worse ones. "But for Leonardo the distinction is absolute, and, in the moment of bien-être, the alchemy complete: the idea is stricken into colour and imagery: a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery, and painting pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul" (LEO §21; see Alchemy; Refined and graceful mystery). The moment is when the essay's chief problem is solved. The previous paragraph had named it, "the transmutation of ideas into images" (LEO §20; see Transmutation of ideas into images), and had described the long delay that comes before the solution, which gives him "an air of weariness and ennui" (LEO §20; see Ennui). *Bien-être* is the opposite state, the ease in which the struggle between curiosity and the desire of beauty is for a moment at rest (see Desire of beauty).

The anecdotes of the Last Supper show the same waiting (LEO §26; see Invention).

The word can be read beside the book's other moments. The Conclusion values the instant in which "some form grows perfect in hand or face" (CON §4) and asks for a life lived at the height of such moments, burning always "with this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The Giorgione essay finds in its school "exquisite pauses in time, in which, arrested thus, we seem to be spectators of all the fulness of existence" (GIO §20). Leonardo's *bien-être* is the artist's form of the same doctrine. The Conclusion's moment is one of receiving, and Giorgione's is one painted; Leonardo's is the moment in which a painting can be made. On this reading the essay finds in his waiting a discipline that the Conclusion asks of every life: to know the best moments from the rest, and to give oneself to them.

## Places to read

The word occurs twice, in one paragraph.

**LEO §21** Leonardo will never work till the moment of bien-être, the moment of invention, comes; in it the alchemy is complete, and the idea is stricken into colour and imagery.

## See also

After-thought; Alchemy; Desire of beauty; Ennui; Hard, gem-like flame; Invention; Refined and graceful mystery; Spell-word; Transmutation of ideas into images.

*The shortness of life and of each experience in it, felt as awful and made the ground of the Conclusion's urgency · The Renaissance*
*brevity*; *brief*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Shortness, especially of time, from the Latin *brevitas*.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "With this sense of the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity", we shall hardly have time to make theories (CON §5).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §5.

## Meaning

*Brevis* is short, in space or time, and *brevitas* was the rhetoricians' word for concision as well as the moralists' word for the shortness of life. The first of the *Aphorisms* of the Greek physician Hippocrates sets the two kinds of time against each other: "Life is short, the art long", and the Roman philosopher Seneca's *On the Shortness of Life* answered that life is long enough if it is well used, and short only for those who waste it.[627] The Conclusion takes the shortness as given and draws Seneca's conclusion with a different idea of use.

## Use in the book

The word comes once, in the sentence that closes the account of attention in the fifth paragraph of the Conclusion. "With this sense of the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity", gathering all we are into one effort to see and touch, "we shall hardly have time to make theories" (CON §5; see Sight and touch). The two nouns are set side by side, splendour and brevity, and each makes the other. Experience can be read as splendid because it is brief, and its brevity is awful, a word that keeps its old sense of awe, because it is splendid. The consequence is practical: there is no time for theories. The "desperate effort" is the only fitting response to a sense of brevity strong enough, and theory is set aside not because it is false but because it is slow.

The sense of brevity governs the whole Conclusion. Every moment some form grows perfect, and some mood is real "for that moment only" (CON §4; see Moment); "A counted number of pulses only is given to us" (CON §4; see Pulsation); we live "on this short day of frost and sun" (CON §5; see Short day of frost and sun); "we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more" (CON §6; see Interval). The book ends in a world

[627] Hippocrates, *Aphorisms* I.1: *ὁ βίος βραχύς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρή*; Seneca, *De brevitate vitae* 1.1–4.

where everything is short, and its ethic is the ethic of a short time: to fill the interval, since it cannot be lengthened.

The earlier essays prepare the mood in their portraits of brief lives and brief moments. Pico's "own brief existence flamed itself away" (PIC §14; see Flame-like). Through Leonardo's strange veil of sight things reach him as in faint light of eclipse, "or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak" (LEO §18; see Veil of sight), and his drawings include a slave "in some brief interval of rest" (LEO §22). The Giorgione essay finds in the highest sort of dramatic poetry "some brief and wholly concrete moment—into which, however, all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have condensed themselves", and such ideal instants the school of Giorgione selects (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). In each of these brevity is not a lack but a concentration, and the Conclusion's "awful brevity" is the same concentration felt by the one who lives it.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "brevity" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraphs of the brief life and the brief moment, in the order of the book.

**PIC §14** Pico's own brief existence flamed itself away.

**LEO §18** Through Leonardo's veil of sight things reach him as in faint light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain.

**LEO §22** Among Leonardo's drawings is a slave sitting uneasily, in some brief interval of rest.

**GIO §20** The highest dramatic poetry presents some brief and wholly concrete moment, and such ideal instants the school of Giorgione selects.

**CON §5** We live with the sense of the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity.

**C73 §6** In 1873 the sentence is the same.

## See also

Condamnés; Flame-like; Ideal instant; Interval; Moment; Pulsation; Short day of frost and sun; Sight and touch; Veil of sight.

# Caducity

*caducity*

Attested: *caducity* (BEL §17). Caducity is the quality of what falls or is ready to fall, frailty, perishableness, the infirmity of age; from the Latin *caducus*, falling, from *cadere*, to fall, the source of the botanists' *caducous*, of parts, especially of the flower, that fall early. Pater uses it of the Pleiad's charm, "a certain tenuity and caducity, as for those who can bear nothing vehement or strong" (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise; Tenuity), a poetry

for princes weary of love, of pleasure or of action. The same paragraph has fancied in the school "a certain premature agedness" (BEL §17), and caducity is the word of that agedness: a poetry with the frailty of the old, falling as leaves fall at the end of a season. The essay's first paragraph had called the French Renaissance the middle age's "last fleeting splendour and temperate Saint Martin's summer" (BEL §1; see Saint Martin's summer), and caducity is, as it were, the same autumn seen in a single poem.

## See also

Bonhomie; Ephemeral; Saint Martin's summer; Tenuity; Une fadeur exquise.

## Chain of circumstance

*the chain of circumstance*; *chain*

Attested: *chain of circumstance* (WIN §53); *chain*, *chains* (MIC §8; LEO §23). A chain of circumstance is a series of events linked as cause and effect, each binding the next. Pater uses the phrase in the last sentence of the Winckelmann essay, the last of the studies before the Conclusion. After the modern romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo, in which "this entanglement, this network of law, becomes the tragic situation", and noble men and women "work out for themselves a supreme dénouement" (WIN §53; see Dénouement), he asks: "Who, if he saw through all, would fret against the chain of circumstance which endows one at the end with those great experiences?" (WIN §53). The question turns the chain from a constraint into a gift. Circumstance binds, as natural law binds, and the paragraph has said that natural laws "we shall never modify" (WIN §53; see Freedom); but the same chain leads to the great experiences, and one who saw the whole would not wish it broken. The question is rhetorical and not quite certain. "If he saw through all" is a large condition, and the essay ends by asking rather than asserting. The book's other chains are of bondage and of influence: Michelangelo's captive youths "feel the chains like scalding water on their proud and delicate flesh" (MIC §8), and Leonardo's strange figures, receptacles of powers unfelt by others, pass them on to us "in a chain of secret influences" (LEO §23; see Daughters of Herodias).

## See also

Daughters of Herodias; Dénouement; Freedom; Sense of fate.

## Condamnés

*condamnés*

Attested: *condamnés* (CON §6; C73 §7). The French word for the condemned, those sentenced to death, which Pater takes from Victor Hugo: "we are all condamnés, as Victor Hugo says" (CON §6; see Indefinite reprieve). The edition's notes render the word "condemned"; the note on the 1873 text says that it belongs to "the prison vocabulary" of Hugo's novel *Le Dernier Jour d'un condamné* (1829), the journal of a man waiting to be guillotined. Hugo's prisoner had found the thought in some book and could not be consoled by it (see Indefinite reprieve).[628] Pater quotes the sentence in French after the English, and makes Hugo's prisoner the figure of every reader. The word follows the story of Rousseau, who believed himself smitten by mortal disease and asked how to make the most of the interval that remained (CON §6; see Literary sense), and it makes his case universal. What happened to Rousseau as a fear is the condition of all. The word turns the Conclusion's physics into a sentence passed: the forces that part "sooner or later on their ways" (CON §2; see Concurrence) are an execution deferred. The 1873 text gave only the French, without the English gloss (C73 §7).

## See also

Concurrence; Indefinite reprieve; Interval; Literary sense.

## Dispossession

*dispossession*

Attested: *dispossession* (WIN §45). Dispossession is the loss of what one holds, being turned out of one's house or throne. Pater uses the word for the dread that troubles even the Olympian gods. Greek religion is conscious "of the fall of earlier divine dynasties. Hyperion gives way to Apollo, Oceanus to Poseidon. Around the feet of that tranquil Olympian family still crowd the weary shadows of an earlier, more formless, divine world. The placid minds even of Olympian gods are troubled with thoughts of a limit to duration, of inevitable decay, of dispossession" (WIN §45). The passage finds time in the timeless. The Olympians replaced the Titans, and they know that they in turn may be replaced; their calm is the calm of those who remember a revolution. Pater does not name it, but Keats's *Hyperion* (1820) had told the same story of the Titans' fall and the coming of Apollo, with the old gods sitting in grief round their dethroned king;[629] Pater's "weary shadows" can be read as Keats's Titans seen from the Olympians' side. The passage is part of the essay's argument that Winckelmann missed "a sort of preparation for the romantic temper" within the Greek ideal itself (WIN §45), and its last image makes the dispossession complete: the

[628] Victor Hugo, *Le Dernier Jour d'un condamné* (Paris, 1829), chapter III.

[629] John Keats, *Hyperion: A Fragment* (1820), books I–III.

abstracted gods seem already to feel "that bleak air, in which, like Helen of Troy, they wander as the spectres of the middle age" (WIN §45; see Spectral).

## See also

Chthonian divinities; Spectral.

# Dissolution

*The loosing of a thing into its parts until it is gone: the Conclusion's last word for what becomes of impressions, and of the self · The Renaissance*

*dissolution*; *dissipated*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A loosing apart, the breaking up of a whole into its parts, and so an ending; from the Latin *dissolvere*.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off" (CON §3).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §3.

## Meaning

*Dissolvere* is to unloose, from *solvere*, to free or untie: the chemist dissolves a salt in water, the law dissolves a marriage or a parliament, and death dissolves the body. St Paul spoke of the body as an earthly house to be "dissolved" (2 Corinthians 5:1, in the King James Version), and the word kept in English the gravity of a last end. Pater uses it beside "passage", so that the dissolution of impressions is both their passing away and their being loosed into something else.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the last sentence of the Conclusion's third paragraph, where analysis "leaves off". The paragraph has followed the dissolving of the world through three stages. First objects: "when reflexion begins to play upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence", and each is "loosed into a group of impressions" (CON §3; see Reflexion; Cohesive force). Then impressions: they are "in perpetual flight", limited by time and infinitely divisible as time is, until all that is actual in each is a single moment "gone while we try to apprehend it" (CON §3; see Divisibility). Then the self: with "the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations", analysis leaves off, and what remains is "that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves" (CON §3; see Weaving and unweaving).

The verbs and nouns of the paragraph are a family: dissipated, loosed, dwarfed, dwindles, fines down, dissolution, vanishing. Each takes something away, and "dissolution" is the last of them, the word for the end of the series. But it stands with "passage", and the sentence goes on to "weaving" as well as "unweaving". The dissolution of impressions is also their passage into the next impression, and the self that is unwoven is woven at the same time. The word marks the point at which analysis can go no further, and the Conclusion's next paragraph turns from what is lost to what is to be done with what passes.

The fifth paragraph returns to the image in plainer words: "While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion" (CON §5; see Lifted horizon). Melting is dissolution felt in the body, the ground giving way, and the sentence draws from it not despair but a licence to grasp. The movement of the Conclusion is in the passage between the two: from the dissolution that analysis finds to the grasping that it permits.

The book's earlier essays have their own dissolutions, and they are of the body after death. In the Michelangelo essay the Florentine masters, dwelling for a moment "on the point where all this transitory dignity must break up", paused just in time (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction), and Michelangelo, in the sacristy of San Lorenzo, is the poet of a "dumb inquiry over the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life" (MIC §20; see Formlessness). The Conclusion makes that dissolution continuous. It is not an event at the end of life but the process of every moment of it.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "dissolution" occurs, with its 1873 text, the paragraph in which all melts under our feet, and the paragraphs of the Michelangelo essay on the body after death, in the order of the book.

**MIC §19** The Florentine masters dwelt for a moment on the point where all this transitory dignity must break up.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo is the poet of a dumb inquiry over the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life.

**CON §3** Under reflexion objects are dissipated; analysis leaves off with the passage and dissolution of impressions.

**CON §5** While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion.

**C73 §4** In 1873: "It is with the movement, the passage and dissolution of impressions".

## Pater's sources

David Hume's account of the self as a bundle of perceptions in perpetual flux (see Analysis) can be read beside the sentence; Pater gives the same account from inside, with the flux felt rather than described.

## See also

Analysis; Cohesive force; Death in its distinction; Divisibility; Formlessness; Lifted horizon; Reflexion; Self-reflexion; Weaving and unweaving.

# Divisibility

*Time cut without end into smaller parts, and every impression with it: the step by which the Conclusion's analysis reduces the real to a vanishing moment · The Renaissance*

*infinitely divisible*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The quality of being divisible; to be infinitely divisible is to admit of division without end.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Analysis assures us that each impression is limited by time, "and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also" (CON §3).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** CON §3.

## Meaning

That magnitude and time can be divided without end was the ground of the paradoxes of Zeno of Elea, in which the runner never reaches the end of the course because he must first cross half of it, and half of the half, without end. Aristotle answered that the infinitely divisible is only potentially divided, and that motion is real.[630] The question of the present moment was given its classic form by Augustine of Hippo in the eleventh book of his *Confessions* (about 400): the present is only what can be divided into no smaller part, and it flies from future into past so swiftly that it has no extent at all, and we can say that time is only because it tends not to be.[631]

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the sentence that takes the Conclusion's analysis to its last step. Impressions have been shut in the individual mind (CON §3; see Wall of personality). "Analysis goes a step further still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone

[630] Aristotle, *Physics* VI.2, 233a21–31; VIII.8, 263a4–b9.

[631] Augustine, *Confessions* XI.14.17–15.20: *ut scilicet non vere dicamus tempus esse, nisi quia tendit non esse?*

while we try to apprehend it, of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is" (CON §3).

The argument is a syllogism hidden in a sentence. Every impression takes time; time is infinitely divisible; so every impression is infinitely divisible, and what is actual in it at any instant is less than any part we can name. The last clause turns the logic into a paradox about being. Of the moment it is "more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is": the present is always already past. Augustine had said almost the same thing of time itself, and Pater, who does not name him, can be read as giving the Christian philosopher's perplexity a new setting. Augustine looked from the vanishing present to the eternal; Pater looks from it to the next impression.

The paragraph does not stop at nothing. The next sentence finds a remainder, "a single sharp impression" (CON §3; see Tremulous wisp), and what is real in our life fines itself down to a tremulous wisp re-forming on the stream. And the next paragraph builds the ethic on the paradox. If the moment is gone while we try to apprehend it, then to apprehend it at all requires the fullest attention: every moment some form "grows perfect in hand or face" (CON §4; see Moment), and the moment that is infinitely small is also the only place where perfection is found.

The idea of division runs through the book in a gentler key. The essays praise discrimination, the finer and finer division of what the rough eye sees as one (see Discriminate), and the Winckelmann essay praises the arts that can refine upon a single moment of passion, "unravelling its subtlest threads" (WIN §33; see Romantic arts). Divisibility is the same refinement carried to its limit, and the Conclusion can be read as finding at the limit both the dissolution of the self and the reason for its intensity.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "infinitely divisible" occurs, with its 1873 text and the paragraph of the arts that refine upon a single moment, in the order of the book.

**WIN §33** Painting, by the flushing of colour in the face, and music, by its subtle range of tones, can refine most delicately upon a single moment of passion.

**CON §3** As time is infinitely divisible, each impression is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it is a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it.

**C73 §4** In 1873 the sentence opens a paragraph of its own, and analysis "tells us" what it assures us in 1893.

## Elsewhere in Pater

*Marius the Epicurean* (1885) gives the thought to Marius himself, the later disciple of Heraclitus and the Cyrenaic Aristippus, in whom "the abstract apprehension that the little point of this present moment alone

really is, between a past which has just ceased to be and a future which may never come" becomes a resolve to live in the present.[632]

## See also

Analysis; Discriminate; Dissolution; Moment; Perpetual flight; Romantic arts; Tremulous wisp; Wall of personality.

## Ephemeral

*ephemeral*

Attested: *ephemeral* (BEL §14). Ephemeral is lasting a day, from the Greek *ephēmeros*, for a day; the word that also named the mayfly, the *ephemeron*. Pater uses it of the words the Pleiad made. Ronsard was anxious about orthography and full of remote learning, and the paragraph ends: "And therewithal a certain number of Greek words, which charmed Ronsard and his circle by their gaiety and daintiness, and a certain air of foreign elegance about them, crept into the French language; as there were other strange words which the poets of the Pleiad forged for themselves, and which had only an ephemeral existence" (BEL §14). The forging of words was part of their programme. The *Deffense* tells whoever undertakes a great work not to fear "to invent, adopt and compose in imitation of the Greeks some French words" (II.6).[633] Some of the new words lived and some did not, and Pater's sentence distinguishes them without regret: the Greek words "crept into" the language, the forged ones had their day. Ephemeral may serve as the essay's word for the fate of what is à la mode (BEL §13; see À la mode), and for the pure effect of the essay's last paragraph, which has vanished "because it was pure effect" (BEL §28; see Pure effect).

## See also

À la mode; Caducity; Daintiness; Orthography; Pure effect.

## Fine down

*fines itself down*

Attested: *what is real in our life fines itself down* (CON §3; C73 §4). To fine is to make fine, thin or pure, and to fine down is to reduce by refining, as a brewer fines his beer by clearing it, or a refiner fines a metal by burning off the dross. The verb is reflexive here: what is real "fines itself down", as if the reduction were the work of life and not of the analyst. The sentence

[632] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1885), chapter VIII, "Animula Vagula".

[633] Joachim du Bellay, *La Deffence, et illustration de la langue françoyse* (Paris, 1549), book II, ch. 6: *inventer, adopter et composer à l'imitation des Grecs, quelques mots français*.

puts the verb at the end, after the long description of what is left, so that the reader reaches the reduction last: to such a tremulous wisp, to "a single sharp impression", what is real in our life "fines itself down" (CON §3; see Tremulous wisp). And "fine" keeps its double sense: what is fined down is made less but also made purer, and the "single sharp impression" that remains is the finest thing in the life. The word can be read beside the Preface's chemistry, in which the critic, having separated a virtue from its adjuncts, has "disengaged" it (PRE §3; see Disengage): the analysis of the Conclusion does to the self what the critic did to the work, and finds the same kind of residue, sharp and small.

## See also

Disengage; Divisibility; Relic; Tremulous wisp.

# Formlessness

*The state before life and after death, into which the body relapses and from which the spirit is imagined rising · The Renaissance*

*formlessness*; *formless*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The state of having no form: shapelessness, the absence of definite outline.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Michelangelo is the poet of "dumb inquiry over the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life" (MIC §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** MIC §20.

## Meaning

In Aristotle's philosophy, which Pater read at Oxford, form is what makes a thing what it is, and matter without form is mere potentiality. Formlessness is thus the condition of matter before it is shaped, and the condition to which a shaped thing returns when it dissolves. Applied to a life, it names the state before birth and after death, when the body that was a form becomes dust again.

## Use in the book

The word's chief passage is the last sentence of the Michelangelo essay's account of his thoughts of death, which gathers the whole range of feeling the Medici tombs express: "And of all that range of sentiment he is the poet, a poet still alive, and in possession of our inmost thoughts—dumb inquiry over the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life, the change, the revolt from that change, then the correcting, hallowing,

consoling rush of pity" (MIC §20; see Hallow); and at last, far off, comes the new body, a passing light "over those too rigid, or too formless faces" (MIC §20; see New body).

The sentence is a sequence of states of mind, and formlessness stands at its start. The first is "dumb inquiry": the mind asking, without words, what death is. Its object is "the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life", the body sinking back into the shapeless matter from which it came. "Relapse" makes death a falling back, as a patient relapses; "which preceded life" makes the formlessness the same at both ends. Then come "the change, the revolt from that change", the shock of the dissolution and the mind's refusal of it, and then pity. At the end, far off, the new body, imagined as "a passing light" over "those too rigid, or too formless faces". The dead faces are either too rigid, fixed in death, or too formless, already dissolving.

The word joins the end of the Michelangelo essay to its beginning. The essay's first subject is the creation of life "in the cold and lifeless stone" (MIC §3; see Creation of life), "always in strong contrast with the rough-hewn mass in which it is kindled" (MIC §4; see Rough-hewn mass). The formlessness that precedes life is that mass, the uncut stone; the relapse after death is the return to it. Michelangelo's art, on this reading, works at the two edges of form: the half-emergent figure rising from the block (see Half-emergent form) and the dead face sinking back. The unfinished state of so much of his sculpture can be read as the formlessness out of which and into which his figures pass.

"Formless" occurs twice elsewhere, both of earlier, ruder stages of art and religion. The old French chanson was "often, in its essence, something rude and formless" until Ronsard made it a Pindaric ode (BEL §4); around the feet of the Olympian gods "still crowd the weary shadows of an earlier, more formless, divine world" (WIN §45). In both, formlessness is what comes before, and form is the achievement of art. The Michelangelo essay adds that it is also what comes after.

The word can be read as the darkest in the book's vocabulary of time. The Conclusion describes a world in which "all melts under our feet" and every form is passing (CON §5); its counsel is to seize the form while it is perfect. The Michelangelo essay looks at the other side of that counsel: the formlessness before and after, which the art of the Medici chapel neither denies nor consoles, but contemplates, in "vague and wistful speculation" (MIC §20; see Wistful speculation).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "formlessness" or "formless" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §20** Michelangelo is the poet of dumb inquiry over the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life.

**BEL §4** The old French chanson was often something rude and formless, until Ronsard made it a Pindaric ode.

**WIN §45** Around the Olympian family crowd the weary shadows of an earlier, more formless, divine world.

## See also

Creation of life; Half-emergent form; Hallow; New body; Rough-hewn mass; Wistful speculation.

# Freedom

*What the modern spirit needs of art: not the old sense of a will limited only by a stronger will, but an equivalent within the network of natural law · The Renaissance*

*freedom*; *the sense of freedom*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The condition of acting by one's own will, unconstrained; the sense of being free.

**In *The Renaissance*.** What the spirit needs in the face of modern life, Pater says, is the "sense of freedom" (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The Key Words, under Hellenism, say that in *Winckelmann* Greek art "offers a way to think about how human freedom and inward life can be expressed through outward form".

**A place to read.** WIN §53.

## Meaning

Freedom is the state of the free, from the Old English *frēodōm*; in philosophy, the power of the will to determine itself. The nineteenth century set it against the necessity of natural law. Physics, chemistry and the new biology described a world in which everything, the mind included, had causes, and the question was whether freedom could survive such a description. Pater's answer, at the end of the Winckelmann essay, is not a philosopher's but a critic's: he asks what art can do for the sense of freedom, not whether the will is free.

## Use in the book

The word comes in the last paragraph of the essay, the last of the studies before the Conclusion. Poetry is defined as all literature that pleases by its form (WIN §53; see Pleasure), and only in that varied form can art deal with modern life (WIN §53; see Overwrought delicacy). "What modern art has to do in the service of culture is so to rearrange the details of modern life, so to reflect it, that it may satisfy the spirit. And what does the spirit need in the face of modern life? The sense of freedom" (WIN §53). The old sense of

freedom, "which supposes man's will to be limited, if at all, only by a will stronger than his", he can never have again (WIN §53; see Le naïf). "The attempt to represent it in art would have so little verisimilitude that it would be flat and uninteresting" (WIN §53). For the chief factor in the modern mind's thoughts about itself is "the intricacy, the universality of natural law, even in the moral order" (WIN §53; see Universality), and necessity is no longer a mythological person to be fought but "a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53; see Magic web; Necessity).

The question follows: "Can art represent men and women in these bewildering toils so as to give the spirit at least an equivalent for the sense of freedom?" (WIN §53). The word "equivalent" is the essay's concession. Freedom itself is not on offer; art can give only something that does for the spirit what freedom did. Pater finds it in the romances of Goethe and Victor Hugo (WIN §53; see Dénouement), and in an attitude: "Natural laws we shall never modify, embarrass us as they may; but there is still something in the nobler or less noble attitude with which we watch their fatal combinations" (WIN §53). Freedom has passed from the act to the attitude, from what we do to how we watch what is done to us. The romances show noble characters working out within the network of law "a supreme dénouement" (WIN §53; see Dénouement), and the last sentence asks who would fret against "the chain of circumstance" that brings such experiences (WIN §53; see Chain of circumstance).

The essay can be read as ending where the Conclusion, placed after it, begins: with a mind that accepts the flux and the laws of nature and asks only how to live well within them (CON §§1–4; see Whirlpool). The Winckelmann essay's freedom is the Greek repose translated into modern terms, blitheness and repose reflected upon a life that the modern mind must regard as bound (WIN §53; see Blitheness). The book's other freedoms are freer. Provençal poetry has "its freedom, its variety—the liberty of the heart" (FRE §2; see Liberty of the heart); the medieval prophets dreamed of a "spirit of freedom" in which law shall have passed away (FRE §32; see Spirit of freedom); Du Bellay pleads for the mother-tongue as a plea "for freedom, impulse, reality" (BEL §11; see Mother-tongue); the Greek myth expands "with the freedom and mobility of the things of the intellect" (WIN §26); and Winckelmann, once he attained "an adequate condition of freedom", appeared, in Goethe's words, "complete in the ancient sense" (WIN §10). Against these, the freedom of the last paragraph is the hardest won and the most modest.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "freedom" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §2** In Provençal poetry earthly passion, with its intimacy, its freedom, its variety, makes itself felt.

**FRE §32** The prophetical writers dreamed of a final dispensation of a spirit of freedom.

**BEL §11** Du Bellay pleads for freedom, impulse, reality, in literature and in daily speech.

**WIN §10** So soon as he attained an adequate condition of freedom, Winckelmann appeared complete in the ancient sense.

**WIN §26** The æsthetic element of Greek religion expands with the freedom and mobility of the things of the intellect.

**WIN §53** The modern spirit needs the sense of freedom; art may give it an equivalent within the network of natural law.

## See also

Blitheness; Chain of circumstance; Dénouement; Le naïf; Liberty of the heart; Magic web; Magnetic; Mother-tongue; Necessity; Overwrought delicacy; Pleasure; Sense of fate; Spirit of freedom; Universality; Whirlpool.

# Ideal instant

*The brief, concrete moment into which a whole history is condensed, which dramatic poetry presents and Giorgione's school selects · The Renaissance ideal instants*; *animated instants*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A moment of perfect significance: an instant in which the meaning of a whole is gathered.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Such ideal instants the school of Giorgione selects, with its admirable tact, from that feverish, tumultuously coloured world of the old citizens of Venice—exquisite pauses in time, in which, arrested thus, we seem to be spectators of all the fulness of existence, and which are like some consummate extract or quintessence of life" (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the Introduction says that "A painting can hold the attention at the very instant it seems to depict something that cannot be held, the sound of music."

**A place to read.** GIO §20.

## Meaning

An instant is a moment too short to divide, from the Latin *instans*, standing near, present. An ideal instant is one in which the instant is made to carry the whole: a gesture, a look, a pause that holds a past and a future. The phrase brings together the essay's two concerns, the moment, which is painting's natural unit since a picture shows one moment, and the ideal, the perfect union of matter and form.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the twentieth paragraph, after Pater has defined Giorgione's school by its subjects. The master is pre-eminent for "the resolution, the ease and quickness, with which he reproduces instantaneous motion" (GIO §20; see Instantaneous motion), and the sudden act, the rapid transition of thought, the passing expression "he arrests with that vivacity which Vasari has attributed to him" (GIO §20; see Il fuoco Giorgionesco). Then comes the theory. "Now it is part of the ideality of the highest sort of dramatic poetry, that it presents us with a kind of profoundly significant and animated instants, a mere gesture, a look, a smile, perhaps—some brief and wholly concrete moment—into which, however, all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have condensed themselves, and which seem to absorb past and future in an intense consciousness of the present" (GIO §20; see Ideality of expression). And the application: "Such ideal instants the school of Giorgione selects, with its admirable tact, from that feverish, tumultuously coloured world of the old citizens of Venice—exquisite pauses in time, in which, arrested thus, we seem to be spectators of all the fulness of existence, and which are like some consummate extract or quintessence of life" (GIO §20).

The sentence borrows its model from drama and finds it in painting. In a play the significant instant is reached through the story, and it condenses "a long history"; in Giorgione's pictures there is no articulated story (GIO §20; see Articulated story), and the history must be felt in the instant alone. "Selects" and "tact" make it a choice, and "exquisite pauses in time" names what is chosen: not the climax of an action but a pause in it, the singer who "seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing" in the Concert (GIO §15; see Harpsichord). "Quintessence" makes the instant the extract of a life (see Quintessence of life).

The phrase "intense consciousness of the present" can be read as joining the Giorgione essay to the Conclusion. There "Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face" (CON §4; see Hard, gem-like flame). The ideal instants of Giorgione's school are such moments painted, and the Conclusion asks the reader to live them. Rossetti, whom Pater's note at GIO §16 names as the poet of a sonnet on the Fête Champêtre, ended that sonnet in his *Poems* of 1870 with a line that can be read as the same thought, a moment in which life touches eternity: "Life touching lips with Immortality".[634]

[634] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "For a Venetian Pastoral, by Giorgione (In the Louvre)", *Poems* (1870); the earlier version in *The Germ* (1850) ends instead "Silence of heat, and solemn poetry".

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "ideal instants" occurs, with a selection of paragraphs on the perfect moments of music and of experience, in the order of the book.

**LEO §21** Leonardo will never work till the happy moment, the moment of bien-être, comes.

**GIO §10** In its consummate moments music realises the identification of matter and form.

**GIO §15** In the Concert a singer seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing.

**GIO §20** The school of Giorgione selects ideal instants, exquisite pauses in time, like a quintessence of life.

**GIO §21** The perfect moments of music itself are prominent as subjects in Giorgione's school.

**CON §4** Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face.

## Pater's sources

Pater names Lessing's *Laokoon* in the second paragraph of the essay (GIO §2; see Art-casuistry), and the ideal instant has its precedent there. Lessing argued that painting, which can show only one moment of an action, must choose *den prägnantesten*, the most pregnant one, the moment from which what went before and what follows can best be grasped.[635] Pater's ideal instant can be read as Lessing's pregnant moment turned from narrative to feeling. Lessing's painter chooses a moment that implies a story; Pater's chooses a pause that absorbs "past and future in an intense consciousness of the present" (GIO §20).

## See also

Art-casuistry; Articulated story; Empyrean; Hard, gem-like flame; Harpsichord; Ideality of expression; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; Instantaneous motion; Quintessence of life.

# Importunate

*importunate*; *importunately*

Attested: *importunate* (BOT §4; CON §3; C73 §3); *importunately* (WIN §50). Pressing, insistent, demanding attention. The Latin *importunus* is the opposite of *opportunus*, "toward the harbour", and so meant out of place, unseasonable, troublesome. The word joins the Botticelli essay to the Conclusion. To the visionary painter "the scene, the colour, the outward image or gesture, comes with all its incisive and importunate reality" (BOT

[635] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon* (Berlin, 1766), chapters 3 and 16.

§4; see Mood). In the Conclusion experience at first "seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, pressing upon us with a sharp and importunate reality, calling us out of ourselves in a thousand forms of action" (CON §3; 1873 "a sharp importunate reality", C73 §3). In both the world presses in, and the two passages differ in what answers it: in the visionary, a mood that gives the world back clothed; in the Conclusion, reflection, under which the objects "are dissipated" (CON §3; see Weaving and unweaving). The Winckelmann essay uses the adverb for the Greek type, which comes to Goethe in Winckelmann "not as in a book or a theory, but more importunately, because in a passionate life, in a personality" (WIN §50).

## See also

Mood; Outward image; Visionary painter; Weaving and unweaving.

# Inconstant modes or fashions

*Ways of being that do not stay: the first sentence of the Conclusion, and its name for the tendency of modern thought · The Renaissance*
*inconstant modes or fashions*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A mode is a manner of being; a fashion is the shape a thing takes for a time; to call both inconstant is to say that nothing has a fixed form.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought" (CON §2).

**In this edition.** The note at the phrase gives the essay's history, omitted in 1877 and restored with revisions in 1888; the Key Word "Flux" says that the Conclusion asks what happens "when we regard bodies, objects, and states of mind as patterns undergoing continual change".

**A place to read.** CON §2.

## Meaning

*Modus* is measure and manner, and in the philosophers a mode was a way of being that belongs to a substance and can change while the substance stays: for the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza, finite things are modes of the one substance. *Fashion* is the French *façon*, from *factio*, a making: the shape a thing is made in, and then the shape that is current for a season. "Inconstant" denies both their usual partner. The modes have no substance under them that stays, and the fashions no shape that lasts.

## Use in the book

The sentence opens the Conclusion after its Greek epigraph, and translates the epigraph into the language of modern philosophy. "To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought" (CON §2). It is a sentence about a tendency, not a declaration of belief. Pater describes the drift of thought in his century and then tests it, first on the body ("Let us begin with that which is without—our physical life", CON §2; see Physical life), then on the mind. The words "all things and principles of things" make the claim as wide as it can be: not only objects but the principles by which we know them are to be regarded as passing.

The sentence had been written before. Pater's first published essay, on Coleridge (1866), had set the modern against the ancient spirit: "Modern thought is distinguished from ancient by its cultivation of the 'relative' spirit in place of the 'absolute.'" Ancient philosophy sought to arrest every object in an eternal outline and types of life in a classification by kinds; to the modern spirit "nothing is or can be rightly known except relatively under conditions".[636] The Conclusion's first sentence is the same claim in a more unsettling image. A mode or a fashion is relative to the time that holds it, and the Preface had said that beauty itself, "like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative" (PRE §1; see Relative).

"Fashion" in the rest of the book is a word for what is valuable in passing things. The Giorgione essay finds "what is valuable and justly attractive, in what is called the fashion of a time", which makes the trivialities of speech, manner and dress "ends in themselves" (GIO §8; see Fashion; End in itself). The Winckelmann essay sees classicism become "from time to time an intellectual fashion" (WIN §22), and warns against the superficial view by which the Renaissance "is represented as a fashion which set in at a definite period" (WIN §47; see Renaissance). In the Conclusion the word is turned on everything. If all things are fashions, the critic's task is the Giorgione essay's, to find what is valuable in each while it lasts.

The sentence can be read as the book's last account of history. The essays have studied the Renaissance as a mode of the human spirit that appears and disappears, now in twelfth-century France, now in fifteenth-century Florence, now in eighteenth-century Germany (see Renaissance). The Conclusion says that this is how all things are: not substances with histories but histories without substances.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which "inconstant modes or fashions" occurs, with its 1873 text and three paragraphs in which "fashion" names the shape of a time, in the order of the book.

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[636] Walter Pater, "Coleridge's Writings", *Westminster Review*, n.s. 29 (January 1866); revised as "Coleridge" in *Appreciations* (London, 1889).

**GIO §8** What is valuable in the fashion of a time elevates the trivialities of speech, manner and dress into ends in themselves.

**WIN §22** Classicism has become from time to time an intellectual fashion.

**WIN §47** The superficial view represents the Renaissance as a fashion which set in at a definite period.

**CON §2** To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has become the tendency of modern thought.

**C73 §2** In 1873 the sentence is the same.

## See also

End in itself; Fashion; Modern spirit; Physical life; Relative; Renaissance.

# Indefinite reprieve

*A delay of execution whose length is not known: Victor Hugo's image, which the Conclusion makes the measure of every life · The Renaissance a sort of indefinite reprieve*; *des sursis indéfinis*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A reprieve is the suspension of a sentence of death; an indefinite one has no fixed term.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "We are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve—les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis" (CON §6).

**In this edition.** The note at CON §6 renders the French "Everyone is sentenced to death, with a reprieve of indefinite length", and says that the reprieve of uncertain length "is Pater's measure of the time available to any human being".

**A place to read.** CON §6.

## Meaning

*Reprieve* is from the French *reprendre*, to take back: a reprieved prisoner is taken back from the scaffold to the cell. A reprieve differs from a pardon. The sentence stands; only its execution is put off, and a man reprieved knows that he will die and does not know when. The French *sursis* is the same thing, a suspension, from *surseoir*, to put off.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the Conclusion's last paragraph, after the story of Rousseau. "Well! we are all condamnés, as Victor Hugo says: we are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve—les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis: we have an interval,

and then our place knows us no more" (CON §6; see Condamnés; Interval). The sentence gives the same thought three times, in a French word, in English, and in Hugo's French sentence, and then a fourth time in a biblical cadence. Each version moves the stress. "Condamnés" is the condition; "indefinite reprieve" is the time; "sursis indéfinis" is Hugo's authority; "our place knows us no more" is the end.

The image changes the Conclusion's argument. Until here the brevity of life has been given in images, a counted number of pulses (CON §4; see Pulsation), a short day of frost and sun (CON §5; see Short day of frost and sun), as well as in the impression gone while we try to apprehend it (CON §3; see Divisibility). Now it is felt as a sentence passed. A man under sentence of death lives differently from one who has forgotten that he will die, and the paragraph's question is how he should live, and its answer ranks the ways, from listlessness to "art and song" (CON §6; see Listlessness). Our one chance, Pater says, lies in expanding that interval with as many pulsations as possible (CON §6; see Pulsation).

The source gives the image its edge. Hugo's *Le Dernier Jour d'un condamné* (1829) is the journal of a man waiting for the guillotine, written to move its readers against the death penalty. In its third chapter the prisoner, trying to think himself calm, recalls having read in some book that all men are condemned to death with indefinite reprieves, and asks what has changed in his own case: many who counted on long lives have died before him, and all the executioner can take is a dark cell, black bread and rough handling. Then the reasoning breaks: "n'importe, c'est horrible" ("no matter, it is horrible").[637] The argument holds and does not console him. Pater quotes the sentence without its context, but the context can be read as part of its force: every reader is under the prisoner's sentence and differs from him only in not feeling it.

The phrase was added in English in the revision. The 1873 text gave Hugo's French alone, "les hommes sont tous condamnés a morte avec des sursis indéfinis" (C73 §7), with a misprint that the edition's note records. The English gloss of the revised text makes the image impossible to pass over.

## Places to read

The paragraph in which the phrase occurs, with its 1873 text, in the order of the book.

**CON §6** We are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve: we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more.

[637] Victor Hugo, *Le Dernier Jour d'un condamné* (Paris, 1829), chapter III: *Les hommes, je me rappelle l'avoir lu dans je ne sais quel livre où il n'y avait que cela de bon, les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis.*

**C73 §7** In 1873 the sentence is in French only, with “a morte” for “à mort”.

## See also

Brevity; Condamnés; Divisibility; Interval; Listlessness; Literary sense; Pulsation; Short day of frost and sun.

### Interval

*interval*, *intervals*

Attested: *interval*, *intervals* (FRE §21; MIC §6; LEO §§2, 18, 22; GIO §§15, 21, 22; WIN §33; CON §2; CON §6, four times; C73 §2; C73 §7, four times). An interval is the space between the ramparts, from the Latin *intervallum* (*inter*, between, *vallum*, rampart), and so any space between two points; the book uses it in time and in music. In music it is the distance between two notes, as in “the smallest interval of musical sound” (GIO §21), and the “exquisite intervals” of the romantic arts (WIN §33); in time it is a pause, as when Michelangelo is born “in an interval of a rapid midnight journey” (MIC §6), and the Giorgione essay joins the two in “the musical intervals in our existence” (GIO §22; see Musical interval). The Conclusion uses the word five times, and each time it names a span of time between limits. The body is fixed upon “in one of its more exquisite intervals”, the moment of recoil from the flood of water in summer heat (CON §2; see Recoil). Rousseau asks how he may make the most “of the interval that remained” (CON §6; see Literary sense), and the case is made universal: “we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more” (CON §6; see Indefinite reprieve). The words echo the Psalm, where man is as a flower of the field and “the place thereof shall know it no more”, and Job, “neither shall his place know him any more”.[638] Our one chance, Pater goes on, lies in expanding the interval (CON §6; see Pulsation). The musical sense can be read as staying under the temporal one: the Conclusion’s interval is defined by birth and death, as a musical one by its two notes.

## See also

Brevity; Indefinite reprieve; Listlessness; Literary sense; Musical interval; Pulsation; Recoil.

### La grandeur du rien

*The grandeur of nothingness, which consoled Du Bellay among the ruins of Rome · The Renaissance*

*la grandeur du rien*; *the grandeur of nothingness*

[638] Psalm 103:16; Job 7:10.

## At a Glance

**The word.** The grandeur that belongs to nothingness itself, to the end of all things.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Among the ruins of Rome Du Bellay "is consoled by the thought that all must one day end, by the sentiment of the grandeur of nothingness" (BEL §22).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §22 renders the phrase "The grandeur of nothingness", and says that Pater "takes Du Bellay's feeling for Roman ruins as something stronger than regret for lost grandeur. The phrase gives grandeur to disappearance itself."

**A place to read.** BEL §22.

## Meaning

*Grandeur* is greatness, magnificence; *rien*, from the Latin *rem*, a thing, became in French the word for nothing, a thing reduced to none. *La grandeur du rien* sets them side by side: the greatness not of what once was, but of the nothing it has become. The phrase is a paradox, and its force is that it does not resolve it.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes in the paragraph on the sentiment of ruins, the feeling for antiquity, which, Pater says, is even more often described as modern than the feeling for landscape (BEL §22; see Sentiment of ruins), and Du Bellay has it. Pater then says what the sentiment is in him, and it is not what the reader expects. "The duration of the hard, sharp outlines of things is a grief to him, and passing his wearisome days among the ruins of ancient Rome, he is consoled by the thought that all must one day end, by the sentiment of the grandeur of nothingness—la grandeur du rien" (BEL §22). The ruins do not make him mourn a lost greatness. They console him, because they show that things end, and what grieves him is not decay but duration.

The order of the sentence can be read as an argument. First the grief: the duration of hard outlines, of things that will not pass. Then the place: "wearisome days" among ruins, the days of a man burdened with affairs (BEL §12; see Home-sickness). Then the consolation, in two forms, a thought and a sentiment. The thought is plain, "that all must one day end"; the sentiment is the paradox, the grandeur of nothingness. The next sentence carries the thought to its limit: the great whole into which all other things pass "ought itself sometimes to perish and pass away", and nothing less can relieve his weariness (BEL §22; see Le grand tout). Weariness wants an end, and the ruins promise one.

Du Bellay's sonnets on Rome give the thought its images. The third sonnet of the *Antiquités de Rome* tells the newcomer who seeks Rome in Rome that he sees "nothing of Rome in Rome", *rien de Rome en Rome*, and

ends on the paradox that the Tiber alone, which flees toward the sea, remains of Rome: "what is firm is destroyed by time, and what flees resists time".[639] The ninth asks why the gods made the world to last so long and the palaces of Rome to fall, and ends by saying that the great All itself must one day perish (see Le grand tout). Pater gives no source for *la grandeur du rien*, and the phrase can be read as his condensation of these poems: Rome is nothing, and the nothing is grand.

The Pleiad, in the sixteenth paragraph, has the same thought in a lighter key: there nothingness is the "airy nothingness" of a slight verse, and the reflections woven into it on the vanity of life are "trite" (BEL §16; see Vanity of life). In Du Bellay among the ruins the same nothingness has grandeur. The essay can be read as setting the two side by side, the fashionable melancholy of the school and the real one of its best poet, and as finding the difference in the weight the poet gives to the end of things.

The phrase reaches forward to the book's Conclusion, where the flux of things is the ground of all experience and every impression is "in perpetual flight" (CON §3). Du Bellay finds consolation in the end of things; the Conclusion finds in the passing moment the only thing to hold. The two can be read as the two faces of the same knowledge: that nothing lasts, borne as rest by a weary man in Rome, and as a call to intensity by the critic who asks that we "burn always with this hard, gem-like flame" (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame). The "hard, sharp outlines" that grieve Du Bellay, and the hardness of the Conclusion's flame, can be read as Pater's two hardnesses, of what lasts too long and of what burns while it lasts.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "nothingness" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BEL §16** The Pleiad weave into the airy nothingness of their verses their trite reflexions on the vanity of life.

**BEL §22** Among the ruins of Rome Du Bellay is consoled by the sentiment of the grandeur of nothingness.

## In this edition

The notes at BEL §22 render the three French phrases of the paragraph: *la grandeur du rien* as "The grandeur of nothingness", *le grand tout* as "The great whole", and *la douceur Angevine* as "The mildness of Anjou", which they trace to the last phrase of the Regrets sonnet "about returning home" (see La douceur Angevine).

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[639] Joachim du Bellay, *Le Premier Livre des Antiquitez de Rome* (Paris, 1558), sonnet 3: *Nouveau venu qui cherches Rome en Rome / Et rien de Rome en Rome n'apperçois*; the last lines, *Ce qui est ferme est par le temps destruit, / Et ce qui fuit, au temps fait résistance*.

## See also

Hard, gem-like flame; Home-sickness; La douceur Angevine; Le beau sejour du commun jour; Le grand tout; Return to antiquity; Sentiment of ruins; Vanity of life.

### Le beau sejour du commun jour

*le beau sejour du commun jour*

Attested: *le beau sejour du commun jour* (BEL §16). "The lovely dwelling place of our common daylight", the note at BEL §16 renders it, explaining that "The 'common day' is the daylight shared by the living, imagined as a dwelling one must leave." Pater gives it as the Pleiad's phrase for the world they are loath to leave: "Their dejection at the thought of leaving this fair abode of our common daylight—le beau sejour du commun jour—is expressed by them with almost wearisome reiteration. But with this sentiment too they are able to trifle" (BEL §16). The poets play with death as they play with love, and its imagery "serves for delicate ornament" (BEL §16; see Vanity of life). The word *sejour* comes twice more in the essay's world. In the last stanza of the winnower's song the winds are asked to air "ce sejour", this place where the corn is winnowed (BEL §27; see Doulce haleine), and in the Regrets sonnet that Pater draws on for Du Bellay's home-sickness the poet prefers to Roman palaces *le sejour qu'ont basty mes ayeux*, the dwelling his forefathers built (see La douceur Angevine). The sojourn is the dwelling of a life, and the essay can be read as moving from the dwelling the Pleiad trifles at leaving to the dwelling Du Bellay longs to return to. William Wordsworth, independently of the Pleiad, had used the same daylight for the end of childhood's vision, which fades "into the light of common day".[640]

## See also

Charnel-house; Doulce haleine; La douceur Angevine; La grandeur du rien; Vanity of life.

### Listening

*Life conceived as a sort of listening, the favourite subject of Giorgione's school and its figure for the musical intervals of existence · The Renaissance listening*, *listened*

[640] William Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" (1807; so titled from 1815), stanza 5.

## At a Glance

**The word.** Attending to sound; in Pater, a posture of the whole person toward what passes.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "In these then, the favourite incidents of Giorgione's school, music or the musical intervals in our existence, life itself is conceived as a sort of listening—listening to music, to the reading of Bandello's novels, to the sound of water, to time as it flies" (GIO §22).

**In this edition.** The note at GIO §21 says that Plato's *Republic* "describes investigators who listen closely for minute musical intervals", and that "Pater borrows the vivid picture of listening"; the note at GIO §22 says that Pater "imagines their recital", the reading of Bandello's tales, "as one of the intervals of listening characteristic of Giorgionesque life".

**A place to read.** GIO §§21–22.

## Meaning

To listen is to hear with attention, from the Old English *hlysnan*. Hearing comes to us; listening goes out to meet the sound. Pater's use turns the act into a way of being. In his account of Giorgione's school listening is not one activity among others but the form of life the pictures show: a stillness that waits and receives.

## Use in the book

The word gathers the twenty-first and twenty-second paragraphs. In the first, Pater lists the musical subjects of Giorgione's school, "men fainting at music; music at the pool-side while people fish, or mingled with the sound of the pitcher in the well, or heard across running water, or among the flocks; the tuning of instruments; people with intent faces, as if listening, like those described by Plato in an ingenious passage of the Republic, to detect the smallest interval of musical sound, the smallest undulation in the air, or feeling for music in thought on a stringless instrument, ear and finger refining themselves infinitely, in the appetite for sweet sound" (GIO §21; see Condition of music). Near its end the list turns to the listeners. Plato's passage is satire. Socrates complains that the students of harmony measure the concords and notes they hear against one another and labour to no purpose, and his companion Glaucon, calling it absurd, pictures them laying their ears close, as if hunting a voice from the house next door, some claiming to hear a sound still between two notes and to have found the smallest interval, the unit to measure by, others disputing it.[641] Pater keeps the picture and drops the mockery. His listeners refine themselves "infinitely", and their effort is an appetite for beauty, not a pedant's quarrel.

The next paragraph makes the listening universal. "In these then, the favourite incidents of Giorgione's school, music or the musical intervals in our existence, life itself is conceived as a sort of listening—listening to

[641] Plato, *Republic* VII, 531a–b.

music, to the reading of Bandello's novels, to the sound of water, to time as it flies" (GIO §22). The series widens as it goes: from music, which is meant to be listened to, to the tales of the Italian story-teller Matteo Bandello read aloud, to water, which makes no music on purpose, and at last to time, which has no sound at all. To listen to time as it flies is to attend to the passing moment, and the phrase can be read as joining the Giorgione essay to the Conclusion (see Ideal instant). The paragraph then explains the blessedness of such moments: our servile, everyday attentiveness relaxed, the happier powers in things without have their way with us (GIO §22; see Play). Listening is attention without strain, a passivity that lets the world in.

The posture runs through the essay's pictures. In the Concert a singer "seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord), and in the Fête Champêtre a woman pours water from a pitcher, "listening, perhaps, to the cool sound as it falls, blent with the music of the pipes" (GIO §23). The Leonardo essay had used the word of a different listening: in his years of study Leonardo "seemed to those about him as one listening to a voice, silent for other men" (LEO §9). Leonardo listens to nature's hidden voice; Giorgione's figures listen to music, water and time. The first is the listening of a seeker, the second of a life at ease, and the essay can be read as preferring the second for art: the happier powers come when they are not sought.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "listening" or "listened" occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §28** Nicolette listens awhile at a chink of the tower before she speaks to Aucassin.

**LEO §9** Leonardo seemed to those about him as one listening to a voice, silent for other men.

**GIO §21** People with intent faces, as if listening, like Plato's students of the smallest interval of sound.

**GIO §22** Life itself is conceived as a sort of listening, to music, to Bandello's novels, to water, to time as it flies.

**GIO §23** The woman in the Fête Champêtre pours water, listening, perhaps, to the cool sound as it falls.

## See also

Condition of music; Harpsichord; Ideal instant; Masque; Play.

# Mellowing decay

*mellowing decay*

Attested: *mellowing decay* (LEO §27). "Mellow", ripe, soft and full, is the word for fruit and wine that age has improved; "decay" is the word for loss. Pater joins them to describe the Last Supper, which had decayed within fifty years (LEO §26; see After-thought). Vasari "pretends that the central head was never finished. But finished or unfinished, or owing part of its effect to a mellowing decay, the head of Jesus does but consummate the sentiment of the whole company—ghosts through which you see the wall, faint as the shadows of the leaves upon the wall on autumn afternoons" (LEO §27; see Spectral). Pater allows that the head may owe "part of its effect" to the decay, so that the ruin of the picture may serve its sentiment instead of destroying it. "Pretends", which in Pater's English need mean no more than "claims", and "finished or unfinished" leave Vasari's account open; what matters is what the wall now shows. The word "mellow" has two earlier uses in the essay, of the objective painter through whose soul the figures of Florence passed "only made a little mellower and more pensive by the transit" (LEO §10; see Objective painter), and of "the mellow, unbroken surfaces of Giotto and Arnolfo" (LEO §15). In the first the soul mellows the image; in the refectory, on this reading, time does the same work.

## See also

After-thought; Objective painter; Spectral.

# Moment

*The least part of time, and the only part that is real: the unit of the Conclusion's analysis and the object of its ethic · The Renaissance*

*moment*, *moments*; *momentary*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A very short space of time; from the Latin *momentum*, movement, and so the least movement of the balance, the instant in which a thing turns.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us,—for that moment only" (CON §4).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** CON §§3–6.

## Meaning

*Momentum* is from *movere*, to move, and meant first a movement, then the weight that turns a balance, and so an instant, the time a balance takes to tip. The word thus holds both smallness and decisiveness: a moment is the

least time and the time in which things turn. Goethe's Faust stakes his soul on the moment to which he would say "Stay, you are so beautiful", and it is when at last he says that he might say them to such a moment that he dies.[642] Pater's moment never stays, and the Conclusion asks that it should not.

## Use in the book

The word comes thirteen times in the Conclusion, and its uses are the Conclusion's argument. In the second paragraph it is the instance taken for analysis, "the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water" (CON §2; see Recoil), and the measure of the body's renewal, "renewed from moment to moment" (CON §2; see Concurrence). In the third it is the last thing analysis reaches: what is actual in an impression is "a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it", and the self is a relic "of such moments gone by" (CON §3; see Divisibility; Tremulous wisp).

In the fourth paragraph the word changes its value. "Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us,—for that moment only" (CON §4). The moment that analysis found too small to hold anything is now the only place where anything is perfect. The three clauses give the three kinds of perfection, of a body, of a landscape, of a mood, and the last words limit all three. They are perfect "for that moment only", and it is because they are so limited that the sentence can claim them as real. The Conclusion's ethic follows: to discriminate "every moment some passionate attitude in those about us" (CON §5; see Discriminate); to grasp any contribution to knowledge that seems to set the spirit free "for a moment" (CON §5; see Lifted horizon); and, in the last sentence, to receive from art moments valued "simply for those moments' sake" (CON §6; see Art for its own sake).

The moment is the book's subject long before the Conclusion. The Giorgione essay makes it the object of painting: the "ideal instants", "some brief and wholly concrete moment—into which, however, all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have condensed themselves" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant), and music, toward which all arts tend, is the art whose "perfect moments" show the end not distinct from the means (GIO §10; see Condition of music). Leonardo waits for the "moment of bien-être, which to imaginative men is the moment of invention" (LEO §21; see Bien-être). Browning's poem throws into relief "a single moment of passion" (WIN §36; see Situation), and painting and music "can refine most delicately upon a single moment of passion" (WIN §33). The pleasure of

[642] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust. Der Tragödie erster Teil* (Tübingen, 1808), lines 1699–1702: *Werd' ich zum Augenblicke sagen: / Verweile doch! du bist so schön!*; *Faust. Der Tragödie zweiter Teil* (1832), Act V, lines 11581–11586: *Zum Augenblicke dürft' ich sagen: / Verweile doch, du bist so schön!*

Du Bellay's winnowing song is likened to a sudden light on some trivial thing, which vanishes in a moment "because it was pure effect" but "leaves a relish behind it" (BEL §28; see Pure effect). The Conclusion gathers these moments of art into a rule for life.

The word can be read as the book's answer to its own analysis. The Conclusion dissolves the self into moments, and then finds in the moment the only thing worth having. It does not escape the flux by a doctrine of permanence; it asks that each moment be lived at its height, since nothing else is offered.

## Places to read

The chief paragraphs in which the moment is the subject, in the order of the book; "moment" or "moments" occurs in thirty-two further paragraphs, five of them in the 1873 text.

**ROB §7** What by its own nature endures but for a moment is apt to look like a frozen thing if sculpture arrests it.

**LEO §21** Leonardo waits for the moment of bien-être, which to imaginative men is the moment of invention.

**GIO §10** In its consummate moments music shows the end not distinct from the means, the form from the matter.

**GIO §20** Painting seizes some brief and wholly concrete moment, condensing the interests of a long history.

**GIO §22** Such moments of listening, the musical intervals in our existence, are often really our moments of play.

**BEL §28** A sudden light transfigures some trivial thing; a moment, and the thing has vanished, because it was pure effect.

**WIN §33** Painting and music can refine most delicately upon a single moment of passion.

**WIN §36** Browning throws into relief a single moment of passion, and the poet must discriminate that moment.

**CON §2** The physical life is fixed upon in the moment of delicious recoil, and life is a concurrence renewed from moment to moment.

**CON §3** All that is actual in an impression is a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it.

**CON §4** Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face, for that moment only.

**CON §5** We are to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us.

**CON §6** Art gives the highest quality to our moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

## Later readings

Wilde's Dorian Gray, whose new Hedonism was "to teach man to concentrate himself upon the moments of a life that is itself but a moment", turned the Conclusion's sentence on the moment into a programme.[643]

## See also

Art for its own sake; Bien-être; Concurrence; Condition of music; Discriminate; Divisibility; Ideal instant; Lifted horizon; Pure effect; Recoil; Situation; Tremulous wisp.

### Musical interval

*musical intervals*; *interval*, of music

Attested: *musical intervals* (GIO §22); *interval*, of music (GIO §§15, 21); *intervals*, of the romantic arts (WIN §33). An interval in music is the distance in pitch between two notes, from the Latin *intervallum*, the space between the palisades of a rampart. In the Giorgione essay the word comes first in the Concert, where a singer "seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord), and the note he must find and the moment he must wait for are hard to tell apart. The people of the school's pictures listen, like those Plato describes in the Republic, "to detect the smallest interval of musical sound" (GIO §21; see Listening). In the next paragraph the word passes from pitch to time: in the favourite incidents of Giorgione's school, "music or the musical intervals in our existence", life is conceived as a sort of listening (GIO §22; see Listening). A musical interval in existence is a pause in the business of life, a space between its notes, and the paragraph goes on to say that "Often such moments are really our moments of play" (GIO §22; see Play). The Winckelmann essay gives the musical word to all the romantic arts, whose "exquisite intervals" project what is most inward in passion or sentiment (WIN §33). The Conclusion takes up the temporal sense without the music: "we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more" (CON §6; see Interval).

## See also

Harpsichord; Interval; Listening; Play.

### Natural law

*The regularity of nature, which the Winckelmann essay first uses to explain the growth of religions and of the Greek type, and at last finds woven through the moral order itself · The Renaissance*

*natural laws*; *natural law*

[643] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (London, 1891), chapter XI.

## At a Glance

**The word.** A law of nature: a regularity in the way things happen, discovered by observation.

**In *The Renaissance*.** Religions, Pater says, "grow by natural laws out of man's life" (WIN §24).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at WIN §53 says that Pater ends by asking how art can show "a kind of freedom in the way a person meets conditions beyond their power to alter".

**A place to read.** WIN §53.

## Meaning

The phrase has two old senses that Pater's century was pulling apart. In the tradition of Aquinas, the natural law was the moral law written in human reason, the part of God's eternal law that man can know without revelation.[644] In the science of the seventeenth century and after, the laws of nature were the regularities of matter, discovered by experiment and stated in mathematics. Pater uses the second sense, but his last use of the phrase brings the two together again from the other side: the moral order is not above nature but subject to its laws.

## Use in the book

The phrase comes four times in the Winckelmann essay, and its meaning grows heavier each time. In the twenty-fourth paragraph it explains the variety of religions. "Religions, as they grow by natural laws out of man's life, are modified by whatever modifies his life" (WIN §24). Religion is a growth, like a plant, and changes with climate and society (WIN §24; see Polytheism). The phrase is here a principle of explanation, the historian's assurance that even faith has causes.

In the twenty-ninth paragraph it explains the Greek ideal. The "Mothers" of Goethe's *Faust* preside over "such a concourse of happy physical conditions as ever generates by natural laws some rare type of intellectual or spiritual life" (WIN §29; see Ideal art). The spiritual type is generated by natural law out of physical conditions: air, landscape, the body. The phrase still explains, but what it explains is now the highest thing the essay knows.

In the last paragraph it becomes the modern fate. The chief factor in the modern mind's thought of itself is "the intricacy, the universality of natural law, even in the moral order" (WIN §53; see Universality). Necessity is a magic web woven through us (WIN §53; see Magic web). "Natural laws we shall never modify, embarrass us as they may" (WIN §53; see Freedom). The law that explained the growth of religion and the birth of the Greek type now holds the moral life itself, and the old sense of freedom, that a man's

[644] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I–II, q. 91, a. 2; q. 94.

will is limited only by a stronger will, "he can never have again" (WIN §53; see Le naïf).

The movement of the phrase can be read as the essay's history of the modern mind in miniature. Natural law begins as a key, by which the critic understands the past; it ends as a net, in which the modern self is caught. Pater does not resist the conclusion. He asks only what art can make of it, and his answer, in the romances of Goethe and Hugo, is the dignity of an attitude, the "nobler or less noble attitude" with which we watch the laws at work (WIN §53; see Freedom). The Conclusion that follows begins in the same world of law, with life as a "concurrence" of forces (CON §2; see Concurrence), and makes the same turn from what cannot be changed to the quality of attention we bring to it.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the phrase occurs, in the order of the book.

**WIN §24** Religions grow by natural laws out of man's life, and are modified by whatever modifies it.

**WIN §29** Happy physical conditions generate by natural laws some rare type of intellectual or spiritual life.

**WIN §53** The chief factor in the modern mind's thought of itself is the universality of natural law, even in the moral order; natural laws we shall never modify.

## See also

Concurrence; Freedom; Ideal art; Le naïf; Magic web; Necessity; Polytheism; Powers or forces; Universality.

# Necessity

*What cannot be otherwise: once a person to be fought, as in Greek tragedy, and for the moderns a law woven through the self · The Renaissance*

*necessity*; *necessities*

## At a Glance

**The word.** What must be, and cannot be otherwise; compulsion by the nature of things.

**In *The Renaissance*.** For the moderns necessity is no longer "a sort of mythological personage" outside us (WIN §53).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §53 says that Pater ends by asking how art can show "a kind of freedom in the way a person meets conditions beyond their power to alter".

**A place to read.** WIN §53.

## Meaning

*Necessity* is from the Latin *necessitas*, what cannot be yielded or avoided. The Greeks personified it as Anankē, a power above even the gods, and their tragedy staged men in conflict with it; in the *Prometheus Bound* that has come down under the name of the Athenian tragedian Aeschylus, the chorus asks who steers necessity and is told, the three Fates and the unforgetting Furies.[645] Pater does not name Aeschylus, but his "as of old" points to that world, in which necessity had a face and could be defied.

## Use in the book

The word's decisive use is in the last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay. The spirit needs the sense of freedom, and the naïve sense of freedom is gone (WIN §53; see Freedom; Le naïf). The reason is the universality of natural law (WIN §53; see Natural law). "For us, necessity is not, as of old, a sort of mythological personage without us, with whom we can do warfare" (WIN §53). The old necessity was outside us, and so could be opposed; the hero of tragedy fought it and lost, but he fought. The new necessity is inside: "It is rather a magic web woven through and through us" (WIN §53; see Magic web). There is no one to fight, because the adversary is woven into the fighter.

The change is the essay's account of what makes modern art hard. A conflict with a personal necessity has a shape, a hero and an enemy; a necessity that is a network of law has none, and art must find its drama elsewhere. Pater finds it in the attitude with which men and women meet their conditions, in the romances where "this entanglement, this network of law, becomes the tragic situation" (WIN §53; see Dénouement). Necessity becomes the stage rather than the antagonist, and the action is the "supreme dénouement" that noble characters work out within it. The paragraph's last question accepts the web entirely: who, if he saw through all, would fret against "the chain of circumstance" that brings at the end such great experiences (WIN §53; see Chain of circumstance)?

The word's other uses in the book are smaller and earlier, and each is a necessity of circumstance. Heine's exiled gods find themselves "beset by the same troublesome necessities to which they had once before been exposed" (PIC §2; see Exile); the Florentine reconcilers' "first necessity was to misrepresent the language" of the old religion (PIC §4; see Allegorical interpretation); and of Leonardo's restless years Pater guesses that necessity perhaps "kept his spirit excited" (LEO §29). These are necessities of circumstance and of argument. The last paragraph of the Winckelmann essay gives the word its philosophical weight, and the essay can be read as ending the studies of the Renaissance on the one word that the Renaissance itself had not yet had to face.

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[645] Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 515–516.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the word occurs, in the order of the book.

**PIC §2** Heine's exiled gods are beset by the same troublesome necessities as before.

**PIC §4** The first necessity of the reconcilers was to misrepresent the language of the old religion.

**LEO §29** Perhaps necessity kept Leonardo's spirit excited.

**WIN §53** For us necessity is not a mythological personage without us, but a magic web woven through us.

## See also

Allegorical interpretation; Chain of circumstance; Dénouement; Exile; Freedom; Le naïf; Magic web; Natural law; Sense of fate.

# Passing of a smile

*The most fleeting expression caught in low relief: what the Tuscan sculptors keep that the Greeks purged · The Renaissance*

*passing of a smile*; *smile*, *smiling*, *smiled*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A smile crossing a face, appearing and going.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The whole essence of their work is expression, the passing of a smile over the face of a child, the ripple of the air on a still day over the curtain of a window ajar" (ROB §4).

**In this edition.** The note at ROB §4 says that Pater treats the variation of shadow in low relief "as a means of suggesting movement".

**A place to read.** ROB §4.

## Meaning

A smile is the most transient of the face's expressions, and the "passing" of one is the smile in motion, seen neither before nor after but as it goes. The phrase names a moment too short to be held, and the essay claims that low relief holds it.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the second sentence of the fourth paragraph of the della Robbia essay: "The whole essence of their work is expression, the passing of a smile over the face of a child, the ripple of the air on a still day over the curtain of a window ajar" (ROB §4; see Essence; Expression).

The sentence gives two images of expression, one human and one natural, and they have the same form. A smile passes over a face; a ripple passes over a curtain. Each is a slight movement across a surface, made

visible by a change of light and shadow, and each is gone almost at once. That is exactly what low relief can show, since its means are "those last refinements of shadow, which are almost invisible except in a strong light" (ROB §4; see Refinements of shadow): a surface that barely changes, catching a light that barely moves. The child and the window ajar give the images their tone, innocent and domestic, the expression of a house on a still day.

The phrase answers the Greek law three paragraphs later. *Allgemeinheit* purged from the individual "all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment", all that "endures but for a moment" and "is apt to look like a frozen thing if one arrests it" (ROB §7; see Allgemeinheit). A passing smile is the special moment itself, and the Tuscan sculptors keep it. They avoid the frozen look not by leaving the moment out but by carving it so lightly that it seems still to pass.

The smile is one of the book's recurring images, and the other smiles define this one by contrast. Leonardo, as a boy, made models in relief "of women smiling" (LEO §5); "the smiling of women and the motion of great waters" were the ideas that touched him most deeply (LEO §10); the Saint John of the Louvre has a "treacherous smile" (LEO §25); and La Gioconda's is "the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it, which plays over all Leonardo's work" (LEO §30; see Unfathomable smile). Leonardo's smiles are adult, knowing, held; the Tuscan child's is innocent and passing. The Giorgione essay makes the smile one of the "animated instants" of the highest dramatic poetry, "a mere gesture, a look, a smile, perhaps—some brief and wholly concrete moment" (GIO §20), and the Winckelmann essay records the Christian recovery of "the gift of smiling" (WIN §46).

The phrase can be read as the della Robbia essay's answer to the Conclusion before the Conclusion is reached. The Conclusion asks how to be present at moments that pass; the Tuscan relief shows a moment passing and does not stop it. The art that the essay praises is not an art that fixes the moment, as the Greek law feared, nor one that ignores it, as the Greek law required, but one that lets it go on going.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "smile" or its family occurs, in the order of the book.

**FRE §27** Nicolette has smiling eyes, blue-green.

**ROB §4** The whole essence of the Tuscan sculptors' work is expression, the passing of a smile over the face of a child.

**LEO §5** Vasari mentions Leonardo's early models in relief of women smiling.

**LEO §10** The smiling of women and the motion of great waters touched Leonardo most deeply.

**LEO §25** The Saint John of the Louvre has a treacherous smile.

**LEO §30** The unfathomable smile, with a touch of something sinister, plays over all Leonardo's work.

**GIO §20** Dramatic poetry presents animated instants, a gesture, a look, a smile perhaps.

**WIN §25** The pagan sentiment makes gods smiling and flower-crowned.

**WIN §46** The religious spirit, as Hegel says, smiled through its tears; the gift of smiling was found once more.

## In this edition

The note at ROB §4 says that "Low relief projects only slightly from its ground. On a work like Luca's marble choir loft, the strength of a shadow varies with the depth of carving and direction of light. Pater treats that variation as a means of suggesting movement." The Introduction says that "A relief can catch a gesture just before it passes."

## See also

Accident; Allgemeinheit; Essence; Expression; Low relief; Play of life; Refinements of shadow; Unfathomable smile.

# Pause in time

*The moment held still in Giorgione's pictures, and the delicate pauses in which, for Pater, the ideal appears · The Renaissance*

*pauses in time*; *pause*, *paused*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A stop within the flow of time, held long enough to be seen.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The ideal instants of Giorgione's school are "exquisite pauses in time, in which, arrested thus, we seem to be spectators of all the fulness of existence" (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The Introduction says that a painting "can hold the attention at the very instant it seems to depict something that cannot be held, the sound of music".

**A place to read.** GIO §20, with WIN §§29, 36.

## Meaning

The Greek *pausis* is a ceasing, and a pause in music is a rest, or the held note marked by the sign of a fermata. "Pause in time" is a stop that remains within time: not an escape from it, but a moment in which its motion is suspended and can be looked at. "Exquisite", from the Latin *exquirere*, to seek out, makes the pause a chosen one, sought and refined.

## Use in the book

The phrase stands in the last sentence of the twentieth paragraph, as the name for what Giorgione's school chooses: its ideal instants are "exquisite pauses in time, in which, arrested thus, we seem to be spectators of all the fulness of existence" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). "Arrested thus" takes up the verb of the previous sentences, where the master arrests the passing expression (see Il fuoco Giorgionesco). A pause is the arrest seen from inside: for the figures in the picture time has stopped, and for the spectator the stopped moment opens on "all the fulness of existence". The essay's musical subjects make the pause literal. In the Concert a singer "seems to wait upon the true interval for beginning to sing" (GIO §15; see Harpsichord), and in a Dresden picture the critics took from Giorgione "the knight's broken gauntlet seems to mark some well-known pause in a story we would willingly hear the rest of" (GIO §16). There the pause is in a story, and the picture's charm is that it leaves the story untold.

The Winckelmann essay, written earlier, uses the word twice, of the conditions of the ideal. "That delicate pause in Greek reflexion was joined, by some supreme good luck, to the perfect animal nature of the Greeks" (WIN §29; see Artistic ideal). The pause there is a moment in the history of thought: the paragraph before has said that the Greek mind had reached a stage of self-reflexion and was careful not to pass beyond it (WIN §28; see Finite image), so that thought and its sensible form stood level. A few paragraphs later it is a moment in a life. Robert Browning's gift, Pater writes, "is shown by the way in which he accepts such a character, throws it into some situation, or apprehends it in some delicate pause of life, in which for a moment it becomes ideal" (WIN §36; see Situation). In both the pause is the place of the ideal: a character, an age, becomes ideal not by escaping time but by being caught at a still point within it.

The phrase can be read as gathering these uses into one doctrine of the moment. The Greek pause is the pause of a culture, Browning's of a single life, Giorgione's of a painted scene, and the Conclusion will ask the reader to live in such moments (see Hard, gem-like flame). The other uses of the word keep its ordinary weight and are not without their own drama. The Florentines, contemplating death, "paused just in time, and abstained, with a sentiment of profound pity" (MIC §19; see Death in its distinction); and the reader is asked to "pause over" Leonardo's drawings awhile (LEO §22). The pause is also the critic's: to look at a picture, one must stop.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pause", "pauses" or "paused" occurs, in the order of the book.

**MIC §19** The Florentines, contemplating the dead, paused just in time, and abstained.

**LEO §22** The reader is asked to pause over Leonardo's drawings awhile.

**GIO §16** The knight's broken gauntlet seems to mark some well-known pause in a story.

**GIO §20** The ideal instants of Giorgione's school are exquisite pauses in time.

**WIN §29** A delicate pause in Greek reflexion was joined to the perfect animal nature of the Greeks.

**WIN §36** Browning apprehends a character in some delicate pause of life, in which for a moment it becomes ideal.

## See also

Artistic ideal; Death in its distinction; Finite image; Hard, gem-like flame; Harpsichord; Ideal instant; Il fuoco Giorgionesco; Musical interval; Quintessence of life; Situation.

## Perfect moment

*perfect moments*

Attested: *perfect moments* (GIO §§10, 21). Pater uses the phrase twice in the Giorgione essay, in two senses that the essay brings together. In the tenth paragraph the perfect moments are music's own, its moments of greatest achievement: all the arts "may be supposed constantly to tend and aspire" "to the condition of its perfect moments" (GIO §10; see Artistic ideal), and the phrase concedes that music too is perfect only at times. In the twenty-first they are moments of music in a life: in Giorgione's school "the perfect moments of music itself, the making or hearing of music, song or its accompaniment, are themselves prominent as subjects" (GIO §21; see Condition of music). The first is the perfection of an art, the second the perfection of an hour, and the pictures show the second as an image of the first. The phrase can be read as preparing the Conclusion, where "every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face" (CON §4; see Hard, gem-like flame), and as answering the Leonardo essay's "moment of *bien-être*", the happy moment for which Leonardo waited before he worked (LEO §21; see Bien-être).

## See also

Artistic ideal; Bien-être; Condition of music; Hard, gem-like flame; Ideal instant.

## Perpetual flight

*in perpetual flight*

Attested: *in perpetual flight* (CON §3; C73 §4); *flight* (FRE §21; PIC §2, twice). Flight is the act of fleeing as well as of flying, and the phrase keeps both. Analysis "assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight" (CON §3; see Divisibility). The impressions do not merely pass; they flee, as if from the mind that would hold them, and the flight is perpetual, never finished. "Perpetual" is the word the Conclusion has turned from permanence to change (see Perpetual motion), and here it describes a movement that never comes to rest in the thing it moves away from. The book's other flights are of a song that can never quite take flight, in Aucassin and Nicolette (FRE §21), and of the old gods. In the Pico essay, after Heine's fancy, the gods of Greece had to "take flight" when Christianity triumphed, and to hide themselves among men in exile (PIC §2; see Exile; Decayed gods). The two flights can be read as one. In the Pico essay it is the gods who flee, and in the Conclusion the moments; in both what flees is what the mind would hold: the gods from the new faith, the impressions from the mind that tries to apprehend them (CON §3).

### See also

Decayed gods; Divisibility; Exile; Perpetual motion.

## Perpetual life

*The old fancy of one life gathering all experience, which La Gioconda embodies beside the modern idea of humanity · The Renaissance*

*perpetual life*; *perpetual*, *perpetually*

### At a Glance

**The word.** A life that goes on through the ages, gathering the experience of each.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life" (LEO §31).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase; the note at LEO §31 on Leda and Saint Anne says that "Pater folds myth and sacred history into one imagined biography".

**A place to read.** LEO §31.

## Meaning

"Perpetual" comes from the Latin *perpetuus*, continuous, unbroken. The fancy of a perpetual life is old and has many forms: the soul that passes from body to body in the Pythagorean doctrine (see Passage of the soul), the phoenix that is born again from its own ashes (see Phœnix), the Wandering Jew who cannot die. The "modern philosophy" Pater sets beside it is not named. Hegel had made history the progress of one spirit through all its forms, and Comte had made Humanity itself the great being that sums up the generations;[646] the Conclusion names both when it warns against "a facile orthodoxy, of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own" (CON §5).

## Use in the book

The phrase stands near the end of Pater's second paragraph on La Gioconda. The sentence before them has given her a perpetual life in the old manner, a single life through many ages: "She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants: and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary" (LEO §31; see Vampire). Then Pater names what he has been doing. "The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea" (LEO §31).

The last sentence divides its claim with care. She "might stand as" both, and she stands as each in a different way. Of the old fancy she is the embodiment: she is the person who has lived all the lives. Of the modern idea she is the symbol: she stands for humanity as a whole, "wrought upon by" all its history, as her own face is "a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh" (LEO §31; see Beauty wrought from within). The verb "wrought" binds the face to the idea. The old fancy is a story about one being; the modern idea is a theory of the race; and the paragraph's whole method has been to make a single face carry the second by telling it as the first.

The adjective has a darker set of uses at the end of the book. In the Conclusion "perpetual" is the word for flux, not for endurance. "Our physical life is a perpetual motion" of elements (CON §2); "That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours" (CON §2; see Lineaments); impressions are "in perpetual flight", and analysis leaves off at "that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves" (CON §3). The two uses can be read against each other. La Gioconda's perpetual life

[646] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (1837), introduction; Auguste Comte, *Système de politique positive* (1851–1854).

gathers everything and keeps it in her face; the Conclusion's perpetual motion lets everything go. The Leonardo essay appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1869, the year after the review of William Morris's poems in the *Westminster Review* that gave the Conclusion its first form,[647] and the two can be taken as the book's answers to the same question, what time does to a life.

The other uses are ordinary: Botticelli's people are "saddened perpetually by the shadow upon them of the great things from which they shrink" (BOT §6); Vittoria Colonna was "vowed to perpetual widowhood" (MIC §10); Leonardo sought to satisfy "a boundless curiosity" by nature's "perpetual surprises" (LEO §17; see Return to nature); his work suffers "this perpetual delay" (LEO §20); and every form of art is "perpetually aspiring" to the condition of music (GIO §20; see Condition of music).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "perpetual" or "perpetually" occurs, in the order of the book.

**BOT §6** Botticelli's people are saddened perpetually by the shadow of the great things from which they shrink.

**MIC §10** Vittoria Colonna was vowed to perpetual widowhood.

**LEO §17** Leonardo sought to satisfy a boundless curiosity by nature's perpetual surprises.

**LEO §20** Leonardo's agitation and perpetual delay give him an air of weariness.

**LEO §31** The fancy of a perpetual life is an old one; Lady Lisa might stand as its embodiment and the symbol of the modern idea.

**GIO §20** Every form of art is perpetually aspiring to the condition of music.

**CON §2** Our physical life is a perpetual motion; the perpetual outline of face and limb is an image of ours.

**CON §3** Impressions are in perpetual flight, and analysis leaves off at a perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

**C73 §2** The 1873 text of the sentences of CON §2.

**C73 §4** The 1873 text of the sentences of CON §3.

## In this edition

The Introduction says that Pater's chapter on Leonardo "makes the face of the *Mona Lisa* bear the weight of centuries", and that "The face and Pater's story about it repay different kinds of attention"; the notes, it adds, give readers enough of the painting's history to tell the two apart. The note

[647] "Leonardo da Vinci", *Fortnightly Review*, November 1869; "Poems by William Morris", *Westminster Review*, October 1868.

at LEO §31 says that "Pater folds myth and sacred history into one imagined biography".

## See also

Beauty wrought from within; Condition of music; Ends of the world; Lineaments; Modern spirit; Passage of the soul; Phœnix; Return to nature; Vampire.

# Pulsation

*The beat of life, given to stone by the sculptor and counted out to us in the Conclusion · The Renaissance*

*pulsation*, *pulsations*; *pulse*, *pulses*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A beat or throb, as of the heart; the rhythm of life.

**In *The Renaissance*.** "For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time" (CON §6).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the word.

**A place to read.** ROB §10, with CON §§4, 6.

## Meaning

The Latin *pulsare* is to beat, to strike repeatedly, and the pulse is the beat of the blood felt at the wrist, the sign by which a physician knows that a body lives and how fast. A pulsation is a single beat or the beating itself. In the nineteenth century the word was at home in physiology, and Pater uses it as the physiologists did and also as a measure of time.

## Use in the book

The word appears in the della Robbia essay in the sentence on Michelangelo's incompleteness, which communicates to pure form "breath, pulsation, the effect of life" (ROB §10; see Equivalent of colour; Breath). Pulse is the second sign of life, after breath, and the sculptor must give its effect to marble. Ovid offers a comparison that Pater does not make: in Ovid's story of Pygmalion the ivory statue comes alive under its maker's hand, and the sign is that the veins beat under his thumb.[648]

In the Winckelmann essay the word describes the first contact with Greek art. Winckelmann had divined beyond the words of Greek poetry "some unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life" (WIN §9; see Unexpressed pulsation), and then met that life in sculpture. The Michelangelo essay uses the plural noun of love poetry: Michelangelo, like Dante, dwells "on the

[648] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* X.289.

physical effects of the presence of a beloved object on the pulses and the heart" (MIC §15).

The Conclusion gives the word its most famous use, and makes the pulse a unit of time. "A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses?" (CON §4). Life is measured out in heartbeats, and the number is fixed. "For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time" (CON §6). The 1873 text has the same sentences (C73 §§5, 7), with "is in" for "lies in".

Taken together, the uses run one idea through the book. The pulse is life's beat; the statue lacks it and the sculptor must give its effect; the Greek words hint at it and the Greek statues hold it; and in the Conclusion each person's life is a counted sum of beats to be filled as full as possible. The della Robbia essay, describing how Michelangelo gave pulsation to stone, describes in small what the Conclusion asks of every life: to make each beat count, to communicate "the effect of life" to what would otherwise be heavy and still.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "pulsation", "pulsations" or "pulses" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §10** Incompleteness communicates to pure form breath, pulsation, the effect of life.

**MIC §15** Michelangelo dwells on the effects of the presence of a beloved object on the pulses and the heart.

**WIN §9** Winckelmann divined beyond the words of Greek poetry some unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life.

**CON §4** A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life.

**CON §6** Our one chance lies in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time.

**C73 §5** In 1873, a counted number of pulses only is given to us.

**C73 §7** In 1873, our one chance is in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time.

## See also

Breath; Equivalent of colour; Etherealise; Play of life; Unexpressed pulsation; Vitality.

# Quintessence of life

*The ideal instant as the distilled essence of a whole existence, drawn out of the feverish world of Venice by Giorgione's school · The Renaissance*

*quintessence of life*; *quintessence*; *extract*, *extracting*

## At a Glance

**The word.** The purest and most concentrated part of a thing, drawn out of it as an essence is distilled.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The ideal instants of Giorgione's school are exquisite pauses in time "which are like some consummate extract or quintessence of life" (GIO §20).

**In this edition.** The edition has no note on the phrase.

**A place to read.** GIO §20.

## Meaning

The Latin *quinta essentia*, the fifth essence, was the element beyond the four. In Aristotle's account of the heavens it is the first body, the aether, of which the stars are made, neither earth nor water nor air nor fire.[649] The alchemists of the later Middle Ages gave the name to the pure essence that distillation drew out of a substance, the spirit of wine or of a medicine, which they thought could preserve the body from corruption.[650] In ordinary English the word came to mean the most perfect and concentrated form of anything. "Extract", from the Latin *extrahere*, to draw out, is its plainer twin.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the twentieth paragraph. Giorgione's school selects its ideal instants "from that feverish, tumultuously coloured world of the old citizens of Venice", and they are "like some consummate extract or quintessence of life" (GIO §20; see Ideal instant). The figure is a distillation. The raw material is "feverish" and "tumultuously coloured", life at its least ordered; the product is a moment in which "we seem to be spectators of all the fulness of existence". "Extract" and "quintessence" say the same thing twice, as if the sentence itself were refining, and "consummate", summed up and complete (see Consummate art), crowns them.

The figure gathers a habit of the essay. The Venetian painters keep of their Alpine landscape "certain abstracted elements only", giving "the spirit or essence only of a certain sort of landscape" (GIO §6; see Abstracted elements); Legros maintains a solemnity "as the very essence of the thing" (GIO §6; see Indwelling solemnity). Abstraction, essence, extract, quintessence: the essay describes Venetian art as a refining of matter, and the quintessence is the end of the series, the point at which nothing is left but the essential.

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[649] Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.2–3, on the first body, which later writers called the fifth element; II.7, on the stars as made of it.

[650] John of Rupescissa, *De consideratione quintae essentiae omnium rerum* (about 1351).

The della Robbia essay had used the same figure of another art, and the comparison can be read as sharpening Pater's claim. The Greek sculptors, seeking the type in the individual, purged from it "all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment", and in this way "their works came to be like some subtle extract or essence" (ROB §§7–8; see Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity). Their extract was made by removing the moment. Giorgione's school makes its extract out of the moment itself: what the Greek sculptor purged as a thing "apt to look like a frozen thing if one arrests it" (ROB §7), the Venetian painter arrests and finds to be the quintessence of life. The two essays describe two distillations, one of the type, one of the instant, and the Conclusion follows the second, asking for "a quickened, multiplied consciousness" in the moments that pass (CON §6; see Quickened, multiplied consciousness).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which "quintessence", "extract" or "extracting" occurs, in the order of the book.

**ROB §8** The works of the Greek sculptors came to be like some subtle extract or essence.

**ROB §11** The system of Luca della Robbia and the Tuscan sculptors partakes of the Greek way of extracting certain select elements only of pure form.

**GIO §20** The ideal instants of Giorgione's school are like some consummate extract or quintessence of life.

## See also

Abstracted elements; Allgemeinheit; Breadth of humanity; Consummate art; Ideal instant; Indwelling solemnity; Pause in time; Quickened, multiplied consciousness.

# Saint Martin's summer

*A spell of warm weather in late autumn: Pater's figure for the French Renaissance as the last flowering of the middle age · The Renaissance*
*Saint Martin's summer*

## At a Glance

**The word.** A spell of mild, bright weather about Saint Martin's Day, 11 November, after the first cold.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The Renaissance in France is the middle age's "last fleeting splendour and temperate Saint Martin's summer" (BEL §1).

**In this edition.** The note at BEL §1 says that Pater "uses the season to imagine the French Renaissance as a late flowering of medieval forms".

**A place to read.** BEL §1, with PRE §6.

## Meaning

Saint Martin of Tours, the Roman soldier who divided his cloak with a beggar and became a bishop, died in 397, and his feast falls on 11 November. Martinmas closed the farming year: rents fell due, servants were hired, beasts were killed for the winter and the new wine was broached. The fine days that often come about then are Saint Martin's summer in English, *l'été de la Saint-Martin* in French and *l'estate di San Martino* in Italian, and a legend ties them to the cloak, as warmth sent for the saint who had given half of his away. Shakespeare's Joan of Arc promises the French "Saint Martin's summer, halcyon days" (*1 Henry VI* I.ii), a late season of good fortune for France. The American "Indian summer" names the same weather.

## Use in the book

The phrase closes the sentence on which the Du Bellay essay rests its account of the French Renaissance. After the Italian painters who kept within the limits of glass, Pater draws the conclusion: "What is called the Renaissance in France is thus not so much the introduction of a wholly new taste ready-made from Italy, but rather the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself, its last fleeting splendour and temperate Saint Martin's summer" (BEL §1). The figure reverses the name. A renaissance is a rebirth, and rebirth is a spring; Pater makes the French one an autumn, the last good weather of a year that is ending, and the "middle age itself" is the year. Each word has its weight. "Last" makes it an end, "fleeting" makes it brief, and "temperate" makes its warmth mild, a summer without heat. The same paragraph has the Italian voluptuousness of the Fontainebleau painters "attempered" by the native style (BEL §1; see Attemper), and the season fits the temper: the French Renaissance is warm but moderate, bright but short.

The book had prepared the figure in its Preface, which says that the Renaissance "put forth in France an aftermath, a wonderful later growth" (PRE §6; see Aftermath), and in the first essay, where the poetry of Provence has its "magnificent after-growth" in Italy and France (FRE §2; see After-growth). Aftermath, after-growth and Saint Martin's summer are three figures for one idea, the late crop and the late season, and they place the Pleiad at the end of a story that the book had begun in twelfth-century France. Together they say that the French Renaissance was the middle age's ending rather than antiquity's return (see Medieval Renaissance; Renaissance in France).

The season returns through the essay. Ronsard's deafness is a sign, "one might fancy", of "a certain premature agedness" and of the "tranquil, temperate sweetness appropriate to that" in the school he founded (BEL §17; see Une fadeur exquise); its poets have "the love of the aged for

warmth, and understand the poetry of winter" (BEL §18; see Bonhomie); the school's charm has its "caducity", a falling like that of leaves (BEL §17; see Caducity). Du Bellay's own life ended in the season that follows. He "reached home at last, but only to die there, quite suddenly, one wintry day, at the early age of thirty-five" (BEL §12). The essay can be read as keeping the calendar of its first paragraph to the end: an autumn warmth, an old men's fireside, a death in winter, and between them the winnower's song of summer heat, which ends *A la chaleur du jour* (BEL §27; see Doulce haleine), the one true summer in the essay.

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which the Renaissance in France, or the poetry that came before it, is figured as a late season or a later growth, in the order of the book.

**PRE §6** The Renaissance put forth in France an aftermath, a wonderful later growth.

**FRE §2** The poetry of Provence had a magnificent after-growth in Italy and France.

**BEL §1** The Renaissance in France is the middle age's last fleeting splendour and temperate Saint Martin's summer.

## See also

After-growth; Aftermath; Attemper; Bonhomie; Caducity; Doulce haleine; Medieval Renaissance; Renaissance; Renaissance in France; Une fadeur exquise.

### Servile attentiveness

*servile, everyday attentiveness*

Attested: *servile, everyday attentiveness* (GIO §22). Servile, from the Latin *servus*, a slave, is what belongs to a servant's condition: work done under command and for another's ends. Pater uses the phrase in his account of play, whose blessedness comes partly because "at such times, the stress of our servile, everyday attentiveness being relaxed, the happier powers in things without are permitted free passage, and have their way with us" (GIO §22; see Play). The attention of daily work can be read as servile because it serves: it looks at things for their use, and so lets in only what it is looking for. Relaxed, it lets in "the happier powers in things without", which come of their own accord. The phrase can be read against the Conclusion, which asks how we may "be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy" (CON §4; see Hard, gem-like flame). The two are not opposed. What the Giorgione essay relaxes is the attention that serves; what the Conclusion sharpens is the

attention that receives, and the second is possible only when the first has been let go.

## See also

Hard, gem-like flame; Listening; Play.

### Short day of frost and sun

*this short day of frost and sun*

Attested: *on this short day of frost and sun* (CON §5; C73 §6); *frost*, *frosty* (MIC §14; BEL §18). The phrase is the Conclusion's image for a life: a winter's day, short, with sun and frost together, clear and cold. It stands in the sentence that asks for discrimination, which says that not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us is, "on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening" (CON §5; see Discriminate; Tragic dividing of forces). To sleep before evening is to lose the light of a day that is already short, and the image makes inattention a waste of the one thing that cannot be had again. A winter's day is short but bright, and its brightness is sharpened by the frost: the phrase holds both the brevity of life and its clarity, and so belongs with the "hard, gem-like flame" of the same paragraph (CON §5; see Hard, gem-like flame), a light that is cold and keen. The book's other frosts are in the Michelangelo essay, where frost and fire are "almost the only images" of his poems (MIC §14), and in the Du Bellay essay, where the fireside appears with "the pleasures of the frosty season" (BEL §18). The Conclusion's frost and sun can be read as Michelangelo's frost and fire made mild, and they mark the day as one to be spent awake.

## See also

Brevity; Discriminate; Hard, gem-like flame; Tragic dividing of forces.

### Vanity of life

*the vanity of life*; *vanity*; *vanities*

Attested: *the vanity of life* (BEL §16); *vanity*, of a society's surface (ROB §12), and as a figure in a picture (LEO §§8, 29); *vanities* (PIC §11). Vanity is emptiness, from the Latin *vanitas*, and "the vanity of life" is the old theme of the Preacher, *vanitas vanitatum*, "vanity of vanities", in the Latin of Ecclesiastes.[651] Pater uses the phrase once, in his account of how the Pleiad trifle with death. Their dejection at leaving the daylight is often repeated, and with this sentiment too, Pater says, they trifle (BEL §16; see Le beau sejour du commun jour). "The imagery of death serves for delicate

[651] Ecclesiastes 1:2 (Vulgate).

ornament, and they weave into the airy nothingness of their verses their trite reflexions on the vanity of life" (BEL §16). The sentence makes the old theme a decoration. The imagery of death, which the preacher used to humble the reader, serves for "delicate ornament"; the reflections are "trite", commonplace, and they are woven into a nothingness that is "airy", the slightness of a light verse. The next sentence finds the same taste in stone, where the grotesque details of the charnel-house nest among birds and flowers in the traceries of the time (BEL §16; see Charnel-house). Pater calls the reflections trite and admires the weaving, and the essay, which will soon find in Du Bellay a real feeling for the end of things, the "grandeur of nothingness" among the ruins of Rome (BEL §22; see La grandeur du rien), can be read as setting the school's fashionable vanity against the poet's true one. The book's other vanities are Savonarola's bonfire (PIC §11; see Bonfire of vanities) and Leonardo's allegories of Modesty and Vanity (LEO §§8, 29).

### See also

Bonfire of vanities; Charnel-house; La grandeur du rien; Le beau sejour du commun jour; Raillery.

## People and places

### Castalia

*the sources of Castalia*; *the waters of Castalia*

Attested: *Castalia* (WIN §22, twice). Castalia is the spring at Delphi, on the slope of Parnassus, sacred to Apollo and the Muses, whose water was held to inspire poets; in a late story, told by a commentator on Statius, it was a nymph who threw herself into the spring to escape Apollo. Pater uses the name in his description of Raphael's Parnassus in the Stanza della Segnatura: "Surrounded by the muses of Greek mythology, under a thicket of laurel, sits Apollo, with the sources of Castalia at his feet. On either side are grouped those on whom the spirit of Apollo descended, the classical and Renaissance poets, to whom the waters of Castalia come down" (WIN §22), a river, Pater adds, that makes glad another City of God. The phrase recalls the Psalm in which a river makes glad the city of God,[652] and *The City of God* is the title of Augustine's book on the heavenly city, which quotes that verse at the opening of its eleventh book:[653] Pater turns the language of the one tradition to the other, and the spring of Apollo becomes a second river of grace. The fresco is on the wall next to Raphael's Disputation of the

[652] Psalm 46:4.

[653] Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XI.1.

Sacrament, with its beatific vision (WIN §22; see Beatific vision), and the two frescoes, the sacramental and the Castalian, show the two traditions that the essay sees in European culture. The essay can be read as making the image its account of the classical tradition: a spring that rises in one place and comes down to all who are touched by the spirit of Apollo (see Classical tradition; Conscious tradition).

## See also

Beatific vision; Classical tradition; Conscious tradition.

## Domesticity

*domesticity*; *domestic*

Attested: *domesticity* (BEL §18); *domestic* (WIN §25). Domesticity is the life of the household, from the Latin *domus*, house: home ways, home pleasures, the virtues of the hearth. Pater uses it of the Pleiad in their own country, the Vendômois, "ce pays du Vendomois" (BEL §18): the reader is shown Du Bellay and Ronsard "gardening, or hunting with their dogs", and "with all this is connected a domesticity, a homeliness and simple goodness, by which the northern country gains upon the south" (BEL §18; see Homely art). The south is Italy, and the paragraph goes on to call the Pleiad's country "this new Italy in France" (BEL §18). What the north gains by is not splendour but home life, and the fireside follows, "with a bonhomie as of little children, or old people" (BEL §18; see Bonhomie). The domestic is what Du Bellay missed in Rome, the smoking chimney of his village (BEL §22; see La douceur Angevine). The Winckelmann essay gives the adjective to the beginnings of religion. The pagan sentiment attaches itself to "certain usages of patriarchal life, the kindling of fire, the washing of the body, the slaughter of the flock", and when those usages change the germ of ritual remains, "losing its domestic character" (WIN §25; see Ritual).

## See also

Bonhomie; Heathen sorrow; Home-sickness; Homely art; La douceur Angevine; Pagan sentiment; Ritual.

## Et ego in Arcadia fui

*The motto of the Winckelmann essay: I too was in Arcadia, the voice of one who has lived in the ideal country and lost it · The Renaissance*

*Et ego in Arcadia fui*; *Arcadia*

## At a Glance

**The word.** Latin, "I too was in Arcadia": a remembrance of the happy pastoral land, spoken by one who has left it.

**In *The Renaissance*.** The motto heads the Winckelmann essay and is never repeated in it; the speaker is left unnamed (WIN §1).

**In this edition.** The note at WIN §1 says that "Pater's past tense recalls Goethe's Italian Journey, whose motto is usually printed Auch ich in Arkadien!"

**A place to read.** WIN §1, with WIN §§3–4.

## Meaning

Arcadia was a mountainous region of the central Peloponnese, a land of shepherds, which Virgil's *Eclogues* made the ideal country of pastoral poetry, where shepherds sing of love in an eternal spring. In the seventeenth century the Latin phrase *Et in Arcadia ego* appeared as an inscription in paintings, first by the Bolognese painter Guercino (1591–1666), where it is set beside a skull, and then twice by the French painter Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), where shepherds read it on a tomb.[654] The art historian Erwin Panofsky argued that grammatically the words mean "Even in Arcadia, I am", and that the speaker is Death:[655] there is death even in the ideal land. But they were long read as the voice of the dead shepherd, "I too lived in Arcadia", and by the late eighteenth century the motto had become a sigh of remembrance. Schiller's poem "Resignation" (1786) begins *Auch ich war in Arkadien geboren*, "I too was born in Arcadia",[656] and Goethe put *Auch ich in Arkadien!*, "I too in Arcadia!", on the title page of his *Italian Journey*. Pater's Latin, with its added *fui*, "I was", fixes the second reading: the speaker has been in Arcadia and is there no longer.

## Use in the book

The motto stands at the head of the Winckelmann essay as its first paragraph, alone and in capitals: *ET EGO IN ARCADIA FUI* (WIN §1). The essay never repeats it, and leaves it to the reader to decide who speaks. The note at WIN §1 hears Goethe, whose journey to Italy was his Arcadia and who owed his finding of Greek art to Winckelmann (WIN §§13, 48; see Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst). It can also be heard as Winckelmann's own voice, for the essay tells the life of a man who reached his Arcadia, Rome and the antique, late, after "a painful apprenticeship in the tarnished intellectual world of Germany" (WIN §3; see Hellenic spirit), lived in it twelve years, and died on the road back to it. And it can be read as

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[654] Guercino, *Et in Arcadia ego* (about 1618–22, Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica); Nicolas Poussin, *The Arcadian Shepherds* (about 1628–30, Chatsworth, and about 1637–38, Paris, Louvre).

[655] Erwin Panofsky, "Et in Arcadia Ego: Poussin and the Elegiac Tradition", in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, 1955).

[656] Friedrich Schiller, "Resignation" (1786), l. 1.

Pater's, the voice of the critic who has known Greece only in its relics and writes of it as a lost country.

The first paragraphs of the essay sound the motto's note. In his poverty Winckelmann built for himself "a house not made with hands" (WIN §4; see A house not made with hands), and the antique world "early came to seem more real than the present"; in his plans of travel there seems to be "a wistful sense of something lost to be regained" (WIN §4; see Wistfulness of exiles). Arcadia, on this account, is not a place to be discovered but one to be recovered, and Winckelmann's whole life a return to a country he had never seen. Madame de Staël's "weariness of the north" (WIN §3; see Cette fatigue du nord) can be read as the same longing, inherited. At Rome Winckelmann says that he has come "into the world and into Italy too late", one of those whom the Greeks call late learners (WIN §13), and on leaving Rome he feels "a strange, inverted home-sickness" (WIN §21; see Home-sickness).

The motto's double sense, death in Arcadia and the memory of Arcadia, fits the essay's end as well as its beginning. Winckelmann was murdered at Trieste on his way back to Rome, and Pater finds in the death a kind of fitness: it seemed as if the gods, "in reward for his devotion to them", had given him a death that he might well have desired, and Goethe says that he figures in the memory of posterity "as one eternally able and strong" (WIN §21). The essay can be read as answering the old inscription in both its senses at once: Death was in Winckelmann's Arcadia, and Winckelmann was there. The other Arcadias of the essay are Greek and plain, the Arcadia where Pausanias found unlovely idols still preserved (WIN §26; see Polytheism) and Cypselus, "King of Arcadia", who in Winckelmann's account established contests of beauty (WIN §30).

## Places to read

Every paragraph in which Arcadia is named, in the order of the book.

**WIN §1** Et ego in Arcadia fui: the motto of the Winckelmann essay.

**WIN §26** The country people cherish unlovely idols, such as those Pausanias found preserved in Arcadia.

**WIN §30** Contests for beauty were established by Cypselus, King of Arcadia, by the river Alpheus.

## See also

A house not made with hands; Cette fatigue du nord; Gewahrwerden der griechischen Kunst; Hellenic spirit; Home-sickness; Polytheism; Remote beauty; Wistfulness of exiles.

## Fondaco dei Tedeschi

*fondaco dei Tedeschi*

Attested: *fondaco dei Tedeschi* (GIO §14). The Fondaco dei Tedeschi, the "warehouse of the Germans", was the great building at the Rialto where the German merchants of Venice lodged and traded; the Italian *fondaco* comes from the Arabic *funduq*, an inn for merchants. Rebuilt after a fire, it was painted on its outer walls by Giorgione and the young Titian about 1508.[657] Pater uses it as the type of work that has perished: much of the work on which Giorgione's immediate fame depended, "work done for instantaneous effect, in all probability passed away almost within his own age, like the frescoes on the façade of the fondaco dei Tedeschi at Venice, some crimson traces of which, however, still give a strange additional touch of splendour to the scene of the Rialto" (GIO §14; see Instantaneous effect). The note at GIO §14 says that a fragment, *La Nuda*, "shows how much of the original program is now lost". The "crimson traces" can be read as a figure for the Giorgionesque itself: a splendour that survives only in its effect on a scene, when the work that caused it is nearly gone (see Giorgionesque).

### See also

Fresco; Giorgionesque; Instantaneous effect.

## Impersonation

*impersonation*

Attested: *impersonation* (GIO §18). To impersonate, from the Latin *in* and *persona*, was first to embody, to give a person to an idea; the sense of playing a part came later. Pater uses the older sense of Giorgione at the end of the paragraph on the Giorgionesque. Once a school has grown out of all that was attributed to him (GIO §18; see Giorgionesque), "Giorgione thus becomes a sort of impersonation of Venice itself, its projected reflex or ideal, all that was intense or desirable in it crystallising about the memory of this wonderful young man" (GIO §18; see Crystallise). The man has become a figure for a city. "Projected reflex" makes him the image Venice cast of itself, as a body casts a reflection, and "crystallising" makes the memory a nucleus around which the city's desires formed. The sentence can be read as the last step of the essay's argument about the real and the traditional: having lost most of his pictures, Giorgione gains the city, and the Giorgionesque is Venice remembering itself through his name. His early death fits him for the part (GIO §17).

[657] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), Life of Giorgione, on the fire (dated 1504) and Giorgione's frescoes; Life of Titian, on Titian's share.

## See also

Crystallise; Giorgionesque; Indirect influence.

## La douceur Angevine

*la douceur Angevine*; *Anjou*; *Angevine*

Attested: *la douceur Angevine* (BEL §22); *Anjou* (BEL §§22, 23); *Angevine* (BEL §14). "The mildness of Anjou", the note at BEL §22 renders it: the soft climate of the province on the Loire where Du Bellay was born, at the village of Liré. The note adds that it is "the last phrase of the famous Regrets sonnet about returning home". In that sonnet, as printed in 1558, Du Bellay prefers slate to marble and his Loire, *mon Loyre Gaulois*, to the Tiber; the note's "little Loir" follows a variant reading, and the little river Loir is the river of the Vendômois (BEL §18). The sonnet, the thirty-first of the *Regrets* (1558), ends: "more my little Liré than the Palatine hill, and more than the sea air the mildness of Anjou".[658] Pater's sentence draws on it closely: "From the stately aspects of Rome his thoughts went back continually to France, to the smoking chimneys of his little village, the longer twilight of the north, the soft climate of Anjou—la douceur Angevine; yet not so much to the real France, we may be sure, with its dark streets and roofs of rough-hewn slate, as to that other country, with slenderer towers, and more winding rivers, and trees like flowers, and with softer sunshine on more gracefully-proportioned fields and ways, which the fancy of the exile, and the pilgrim, and of the schoolboy far from home, and of those kept at home unwillingly, everywhere builds up before or behind them" (BEL §22). The "smoking chimneys" are the sonnet's *de mon petit village / Fumer la cheminée*. Pater's "roofs of rough-hewn slate" can be read as answering the sonnet's *l'ardoise fine*, the fine slate that Du Bellay prefers to Roman marble: the real slate is rough, and only home-sickness makes it fine.

## See also

Domesticity; Exile; Home-sickness; La grandeur du rien; Rough-hewn.

## Mæcenas

*Mæcenas*

Attested: *Mæcenas* (WIN §11). Gaius Maecenas (died 8 BC), friend and minister of the emperor Augustus, was the patron of Virgil and Horace, and Horace's first ode opens with his name; his name became a common noun

[658] Joachim du Bellay, *Les Regrets* (Paris, 1558), sonnet 31, ll. 5–6 and 13–14: *de mon petit village / Fumer la cheminée*; *Plus mon petit Lyré, que le mont Palatin, / Et plus que l'air marin la doulceur Angevine*.

for a patron of letters and the arts.[659] Pater uses it in the account of Winckelmann's conversion. "Cardinal Passionei, charmed with Winckelmann's beautiful Greek writing, was ready to play the part of Mæcenas, if the indispensable change were made" (WIN §11). The note at WIN §11 says that Pater "applies the name to the role of an ecclesiastical patron". The sentence's irony can be read as lying in the condition: the patronage of a Roman cardinal, offered in the name of a Roman pagan, depends on Winckelmann's profession of the Roman faith. Winckelmann "accepted the bribe" (WIN §11; see Nuncio), and the essay's next paragraph weighs the bargain against the higher life it made possible (WIN §12; see Higher life). In 1758 Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692–1779), who had formed a collection of antiquities in his Roman villa, played the part again (WIN §20).

## See also

Higher life; Nuncio.

## Natural child

*natural child*

Attested: *natural child* (GIO §17). A natural child is one born outside marriage, "natural" as against legitimate: the child of nature, not of law. Pater uses the phrase in his short life of Giorgione, which gives the painter a double origin. Pater makes him the natural son of a Barbarelli by "a peasant-girl of Vedelago", and yet he found his way early among "people of courtesy" (GIO §17; see Cortesia). The birth places him between the Barbarelli family and the peasant mother, and the sentence that follows says what he learned in the circle he entered: "those differences of personal type, manner, and even of dress, which are best understood there" (GIO §17; see Personal type; Distinction). The order can be read as making his distinction learned, not inherited, a courtly ease that came to him from outside. The Barbarelli name belongs to later tradition. The English art historian Herbert Cook, who judged the tradition false, found the name first in 1648, in the Venetian painter and biographer Carlo Ridolfi, and the peasant mother of Vedelago only in 1697: no early writer or document of Giorgione's own time, he observed, speaks of the Barbarelli, and the documents call him Zorzi or Zorzon of Castelfranco.[660]

## See also

Cortesia; Distinction; Personal type.

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[659] Horace, *Odes* I.1.1.

[660] Herbert Cook, *Giorgione* (London, 1900; 2nd edn, revised, 1904), chapter 1.