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**OSCAR WILDE vs.
GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS:
THEIR DIFFERING CONCEPTION
OF DECADENCE AS INFLUENCED
BY WALTER PATER**

THESIS

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**OSCAR WILDE vs.
GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS:
JEJICH ROZDÍLNÉ POJETÍ
DEKADENCE OVLIVNĚNÉ
WALTEREM PATEREM**

DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

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Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the Aesthetic Movement of the second half of the nineteenth century, mainly the two streams of Decadence initiated by Walter Pater, his doctrine and his controversial volume of essays *The Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, which became a source of inspiration of Oscar Wilde, not only in his literary work, but also in his life. Walter Pater is also a former academic tutor of Gerard Manley Hopkins, who under Pater's influence developed his own conception of Aestheticism and Art. Although Wilde and Hopkins were influenced, to a certain extent, by the same person, their conceptions of Aestheticism and beauty differed in many ways. Beauty and finding beauty was for all of the three artists not only their pleasure and life-long passion but also a strain and a source of difficulties. This thesis explores certain diversities in their perception of beauty and in the Aestheticism by which they expressed it, as is illustrated by their literary works, particularly Pater's "Botticelli" essay from *The Renaissance*, Hopkins's musical poem "The Leaden and The Golden Echo", and Wilde's lecture on decorative arts "The House Beautiful".

Abstrakt

Tato práce se zabývá estetickým hnutím druhé poloviny devatenáctého století, především dvěma různými proudy dekadence, iniciovanými Walterem Paterem, jeho učením, a jeho kontroverzní knihou esejí *Renesance: Studie o výtvarném umění a poezii*, která se stala zdrojem inspirace pro Oscara Wilde nejen v jeho literárních dílech, ale i v životě. Walter Pater byl také hlavním učitelem a později i přítelem Gerarda Manley Hopkinse, který pod jeho vlivem a učením našel svou cestu k estetice a umění. Ačkoliv Wilde i Hopkins byli do určité míry ovlivněni stejným vzorem, jejich pojetí estetiky a krásy se velmi liší. Krása a nalézání krásy bylo pro všechny tři umělce nejen životní touhou a potěšením, ale i strastí; pojem krásna pro každého z nich znamenal něco jiného. Tato práce objevuje určité rozdíly v jejich vidění krásy a vyjadřování krásy, což je ilustrováno jejich literárními pracemi, konkrétně Paterovou esejí “Botticelli”, Hopkinsovou melodickou básní “Olověná ozvěna a Zlatá ozvěna” a Wildovou přednáškou o dekorativním umění “Dům krásy”.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Pater's "Brief Life" and his scholarly stay at Oxford	4
Hopkins at Balliol: Jowett's and Pater's tutorage	6
Wilde's life and studies when meeting Pater	9
<i>The Renaissance</i> : The Yellow "Poisonous" Book	11
"Botticelli": The Under-current Sentiments of Pater's Aestheticism	20
"Inscape" and "Instress" influenced by Pater	27
Mortal and Immortal Beauty: "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo"	31
"House Beautiful"	41
Conclusion	50
Notes	55
Resumé	56
Bibliography	61
Appendices	63

Introduction

Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde and Gerard Manley Hopkins were three writers of genius peculiar in their lives, writing styles, and perceptions of the Aestheticism they first encountered at Oxford University, where they all found interest in Greek studies, especially Plato. However different they were in regard to lives, styles, and perceptions, these three were notionally linked to each other by their desires for the pleasures to be found in beauty, though beauty of different origins. Further, they all were influenced, to a greater or lesser extent, by Ruskin especially by what was for the Victorians a profound book, *Modern Painters*, which more or less formed their perceptions of beauty. Seeking beauty became for each a lifelong passion, and it is this passion which this paper will ultimately attempt to capture.

Walter Horatio Pater was a former academic tutor and later also a friend of Gerard Manley Hopkins; he was a textual influence upon Oscar Wilde and later his friend. For Hopkins, Pater was an honorable scholar, admirable, apart from others, for the distinct, polished style that he developed. For Wilde, Pater was the initial motivation in his aesthetic mission. This paper will explore certain diversities in their perception of beauty and in the Aestheticism by which they expressed it, as is illustrated by their literary works, particularly Pater's 'Botticelli' essay from *The Renaissance*, Hopkins's musical poem 'The Leaden and The Golden Echo', and Wilde's lecture on decorative arts--delivered during his American tour--"The House Beautiful".¹ Although Wilde and Hopkins were very different in their approach to beauty and their expressions of it, they were both inspired, to a certain extent, by the same tutor: hence, this paper will also attempt to answer how two very different pupils could have sprung from the same teaching. The traces left by Pater on the works and lives of Hopkins and Wilde and his influence over their aesthetic perceptions will be also discussed.

In literature, Decadence was the name given to the works of people like Pater, a name first given by hostile critics, and then triumphantly adopted by some of the writers themselves, especially to a number of late-nineteenth-century *fin de siècle* writers who were associated with Symbolism or the Aesthetic movement. Aestheticism is a movement in art and literature in later nineteenth century Britain. Generally, it represents the same tendencies that Symbolism or Decadence stood for in France, and may be considered the English branch of the same movement. The Aesthetic Movement flourished in the Victorian period between 1868 and 1901, though it is generally

considered to have ended with the trials of Oscar Wilde in 1895. Decadent writers used the slogan—coined by the philosopher Victor Cousin and promoted by Théophile Gautierⁱⁱ in France—“Art for Art’s Sake” (*L’art pour l’art*) which means that art should provide refined sensuous pleasure, rather than conveying moral or sentimental messages. As a consequence, they did not accept John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold’s utilitarian conception of art as something moral or useful. Instead they believed that art does not have any didactic purpose: it need only be beautiful. The Aesthetes developed the cult of beauty which they considered the basic factor in art. Historically, it has been linked to homosexuality, not only because of the implications of its principles, but also because of the personal sexual tastes of some of its main adherents.

Restrictive social and moral values of Victorian Britain were very rigid, based on good social manners, obedience of law, and sexual repression. Although these moral values were mostly hypocritical, the time was calling for change. The principals of Aesthetic Movement were influenced by Walter Horatio Pater, and his essays *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, in which he stated that life has to be lived intensely, following an ideal of beauty, and which was also a rebellion against Victorian morality, and for the majority of the Victorians (the Decadents excluded), morality was of great importance, a subject endlessly debated by them and intimately connected with their views on religion.

The Great role in the Victorian misalignment also played religious ambivalence. Oxford University during the Victorian era was a place of religious controversy. This religious controversy also set a stage for Aestheticism which was in a certain way opposition towards the convention. Religion influenced Pater and his agnosticism as well as Wilde’s decadence and Hopkins’s decision to become a Jesuit priest. Catholic Church had minor role in nineteenth-century England. The initial reason for this was the transfer of papal supremacy over the English Church to the crown in 1534. This happened during the reign of the king Henry VIII who wanted to obtain an annulment in 1533 of his first marriage to Catherine of Aragon, faced papal opposition and founded the Church of England (or Anglican Church). As a consequence, the minority of Catholics who remained faithful to Roman Church were looked down on and denied many civil rights including studies at Oxford or any other major university. Since the reign of Elisabeth I (1558), Church of England attempted to strengthen its position both as distinctive middle way between Catholicism and Puritanism and as the national religion of England. In the nineteenth century the Church of England remained a

middle way, but had to widen its doctrines substantially. Anglican Church at that time absorbed Evangelical movement which had given birth to Methodism and also broadened the Anglican Low-Church party. It also had to absorb the Oxford Movement that presided over the revival of a High Church party. Although the Evangelicals remained dominant among clergy, universities had become bastions of the High-Church faction. While Evangelists and High Church were sorely close to Catholicism, the opposing Broad Church party, which was loosely associated group of intellectuals who emphasized that the Bible was not literally true in every detail, received governmental support. In the mid-nineteenth century the Church of England was disorganized. As a consequence of Catholic Relief Act of 1829, which granted catholic full civil rights including serve in the legislature, many adherents of High Church would defect to Catholicism. From 1833 onwards The Oxford Movement attempted to retrieve the Catholic aspects of the Anglican Church.

Pater's "Brief Life" and his scholarly stay at Oxford

Walter Horatio Pater (see appendix one for a portrait) was born on August 4, 1839 in London. His father died when he was only two and half years old, and he lost his mother when he was fourteen. As Denis Donoghue, Pater's main biographer, remarks:

Pater retained, as a consequence of his father's death, mainly a sense of lack as an incorrigible factor in human life. He grew up with the conviction not only that life was brief but that, in a particular case, its tenure was arbitrary; it might end at any time and without apparent cause. In Pater's fiction, heroes die young, as if early death were in the nature of life and life itself a gratuitous concession. I am urged to live intensely, of only because my life is likely to be short, my death abrupt. In Pater, as in Wallace Stevens, death is the mother of beauty and the cause of our seeing beautiful things with a correspondingly acute sense of their transience (24).

The "sense of transience," especially the transience of human beauty, accompanied Pater throughout his whole life and set the grounds for his interest and studies in art and Greek philosophy, whose beauty is infinite.

In 1853, Pater entered King's school, Canterbury where he was influenced by Ruskin's *Modern Painters*. Pater greatly admired Ruskin although later on he also saw him as a rival and tried to emulate him, which was not always successful. During his studies in Canterbury, and under influence of Rev. John Keble, he was playing with the idea of entering the Anglican Church. But at the beginning of his studies of Classics at Queen's College, Oxford in 1858, he lost his previous urge for becoming priest of the Anglican Church. His faith in Christianity was shaken, but he still intended to become a minister because he thought that "it would be fun to become a minister without believing a word of Christian doctrine" (Donoghue, 28). He shared his frivolous ideas with his friend from King's school McQueen, who was startled by Pater's impertinence and reported him for unorthodoxy, to the Bishop of London. This event and his loss of faith did not disturb Pater much, and as Donoghue suggests:

He assumed that he could fulfill his spiritual nature just as well in secular as in religious terms...By translating soul into spirit, Pater acquired a sense of spirituality on easy terms. He was free to merge it with any current notion of mind, consciousness or sensibility... he found congenial to believe that life, in its flow, is not determined by a soul but driven by a force. Pater dissolved theology in states of feeling, for which the terms of individual psychology were fully adequate. He had, it appears, no sense of guilt or sin. Or if he had, he soon

consigned it to a more comprehensive sense of the lack, the empty necessity in life, for which he was not responsible (28).

In 1860 Pater received private tuition in Greek from Benjamin Jowettⁱⁱⁱ who found great potential in him. At Oxford, Pater also became associated with the larger Oxford Movement, Matthew Arnold's renouncement of religion for cultural studies. He also joined a discussion group called Old Mortality which assembled undergraduates and junior fellows “most of whom were agnostic” (Donoghue 29). In one of his speeches to Old Mortality, he claimed that he did not believe in immortality of the soul, which provoked Gerard Manley Hopkins to the decision of establishing an opposing group to resist the agnosticism of the Old Mortality. This was probably the first time Hopkins encountered Pater, and on an already not very good occasion.

After graduating, he settled in Oxford and taught private pupils, including Gerard Manley Hopkins and Oscar Wilde. In 1864, he was elected to a fellowship at Brasenose College, thanks to his knowledge of German philosophy. He remained a tutor and lecturer there the rest of his life, living a timid, uneventful—as he describes in *Botticelli*—“colourless” life:

For the rest of his life he moved between Oxford and London: Oxford for teaching, reading, writing, and the company of good-looking men; London for the flourish of being, if only for a few years, a man of the world as well as a man of letters. At Oxford he was that comfortable being, a bachelor don of homosexual disposition. Cared for by his sister, he lived a life mostly of reserve, but occasionally among friends he darted forth with an intrepid opinion (Donoghue 30).

Hopkins at Balliol: Jowett's and Pater's tutorage

Benjamin Jowett was a distinguished, profound tutor in Greek studies at Oxford and his translation of the dialogues of Plato (1871) is an outstanding work of English literature and classical scholarship. He tutored individual students at Balliol collage and his "Socratic method" of teaching by discussion with students was well-known. His influence over his students was grand and he became a friend for life with most of them, as White, Hopkins's biographer notes: "He gathered them 'closely round him, and his care for them gave him, shy, reticent, even repellent as he sometimes was, a strong hold on the affection of many remarkable men'" (98).

When Hopkins (see appendix two for a photo) entered Oxford, in 1863, the University religious factions were in a wrangle. The main dispute was between the High Church party of the University, represented by Pusey, Canon Liddon^{iv}, and Christ Church, and the liberal and utilitarian camp, represented largely by Jowett and Jowett's college. Hopkins was not very friendly with Jowett's circle, mainly for Jowett's utilitarian and liberal religion and their different perspective of Greek mythology and religion:

Greek mythology and religion did not express truths that satisfied Hopkins. He wrote to Dixon in 1886: 'Could I speak too severely of [Greek mythology]? First it is as history untrue. What is untrue history? Nothing and worse than nothing. And that history religion? Still worse. I cannot enter on this consideration without being brought face to face with the great fact of heathenism' (White 100).

In 1863 Hopkins joined Liddon's circle of Ritualist students and was supported by Liddon to not attend Jowett's tutorial.

Jowett's religious beliefs and attitudes were fairly different from those of Pater, who was an obstinate agnostic, and he was also very skeptical to Aestheticism: "As early as 1865 he had condemned 'the beginnings of a movement that he promptly called "aesthetic"', which he linked with High Church ritualism 'as one of many strange "toys in the blood'" (White 102).

In spite of all their contradictions, Jowett "had been extremely impressed with Pater as an undergraduate" (Higgins, E-text). He was certain of Pater's flair and thought that he would be able to stifle Hopkin's ritualism. On that account Pater started tutoring Hopkins in 1866 during an Easter term: "Hopkins took a walk with him on the last evening in April, a fine bitterly cold night. At that time Pater represented to him 'Bleak-

faced Neology'. A month later on another cold day Pater talked 'two hours against Xtianity'" (White 131-2). Their first meeting must have been quite awkward for Hopkins as well as for Pater since they had very differing attitudes towards religion and other matters. As Donoghue suggests: "Presumably the sentiments Hopkins had to listen to were the once Pater delivered to the Old Mortality. The text like the soul in Pater's account of it, has not survived, but "Diaphaneité" probably gives the gist of it" (33). During the tutorage, Hopkins wrote six essays for Pater of which only one was published. The only revealed essay was "The Origin of Our Moral Ideas", which, according to White, "shows Hopkins at his least strident and moralistic" (132).

During the time of Hopkins's tutorage by Pater, Hopkins was "fairly well established as an undergraduate, and he was respected by colleagues who share his concern for ritual and Anglican doctrine. His personal life in other aspects was often a torment" (Donoghue 32).

Richard Dellamora, in his book *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism*, notes that the "pedagogic moment" between Hopkins and Pater permitted them to share a sense of masculine desire informing one's perception of organic existence:

While this shared sense was, probably, the most positive bond between the two men, it was only one link among others, including a shared liberalism, radical in some respects, that runs counter to Hopkins's later political conservatism. ... At that time when orthodox undergraduates enjoyed bearing the university's skeptics, however, Pater also served as a figure of the seductions of contemporary agnostic thought (49).

The years between 1863 and 1868 were presumably the most crucial and difficult years in a development of Hopkins's religious denomination, and also his sexual preferences. He struggled with many thoughts and decisions. His religious equanimity was no longer unflinching and he was already "fondling" the thought of entering Catholic Church. He also strove with his affection for young men which was disturbing his spiritual life and according to repeating notes in his diaries, concerning his "imprudent looking at organ boy and other boys...evil thoughts" (as quoted in Saville 35) and others, it is evident, as Saville notes, that for Hopkins

attraction to men was—along with nocturnal emissions and masturbatory pleasure—a manifestation of unrestrained male lust liable to lead to moral degeneracy and even mental decline, hence his anxious insistence on the need for

rigorous self-discipline to cultivate manliness in both comportment and poetic style. ... These notes also reveal Hopkins's effort to distinguish two kinds of admiration for male beauty: that which was sinful and had to be confessed and that which did not need to be confessed but, on the contrary was worthy of articulation in poetry drafted alongside the notes (35-36).

As Saville remarks, male beauty was also one of Hopkins' Muse and mirrored in many of his poems. Neither Jowett's liberalism, Pater's agnosticism, Liddon's Ritualism, nor Hopkins's own affection for young men would influence his decision to "devote" his life to Christ, although the devotion to Christ slightly differed from the one we commonly speak of. He was accepted to the Roman Catholic Church in 1866 and two years later entered the Jesuit novitiate. He did not meet with Pater again until his 1877-1879 stay at Oxford. White notes: "he visited his old Balliol teachers. He dined with the Paters, invited Pater to dine with him, and wrote that he 'was one of the men I saw most of'" (307). The personal and intellectual ties between Hopkins and Pater were never broken.

Wilde's life and studies when meeting Pater

When Wilde (see appendix three for a photo) started attending Oxford, he also started thinking of entering the Roman Catholic Church. Many of his fellows converted to Roman Catholicism and kept persuading Wilde to follow them. Wilde could not decide whether to become Roman Catholic or not. He admired Roman rituals and also its aesthetic value as Pater did. Richard Ellmann, Wilde's foremost biographer notes that "Wilde was tempted, he felt guilty and sinful; he liked what he called 'the perfume of belief,' and adorned his third finger with an oval amethyst ring that looked faintly ecclesiastical" (54). Obviously he did not understand the real principal of belief in God and did not really meditate over the Christian doctrines and the real fundamental of Christian rituals. Supposedly, Wilde always took everything to extreme, even his interest in Catholicism:

By June 1875 Wilde's interest in Catholicism was ostentatious enough to astonish his visitors. Among these was the sculptor Lord Ronald Gower...Gower described Wilde in his diary for 4 June 1875 as 'A pleasant and cheery fellow, but with his long-haired head full of nonsense regarding the Church of Rome. His room full of photographs of Pope and of Cardinal Manning' (Ellmann 54).

Wilde's reason for interest in Catholicism was mainly influenced by his fascination of divine rituals and church decorations as well as the urge to "astonish his visitors" by his devotion to Church, but the real sense of Catholicism remained unrevealed for him and was dissolved in "head full of nonsense". The "Catholic period" in Wilde's life was one of his many masks. He did not receive Catholic religion until nearly to his death:

Ross asked Wilde if he wished to see Dunne, and Wilde, unable to speak, held up his hand. Dunne asked him if he wished to be received and he once more held up his hand. On this sign Dunne gave him conditional baptism, and absolved and anointed him (Ellmann 584).

During his studies at Oxford Wilde was always acting in desultory ways between Pater and Ruskin. He admired both and according to Ellmann, "Wilde was concerned for his soul as for his body, and however titillated he was by Pater, he looked to Ruskin for spiritual guidance" (49). Although Ruskin became Wilde's prophet and priest, "Ruskin's moral bearings were too much for Wilde in the long run. He gradually turned to Pater, having succumbed to his prose" (Donoghue 81).

Wilde did not meet Pater until his third year at Magdalen's Collage, but during his first term he read Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, the book which he in *De Profundis* described as "a book which has had such a strange influence over my life" (CW 1022). The influence of *The Renaissance* over Wilde's life will be discussed later. Although Wilde admired Pater and he did not speak of *The Renaissance* else as of "that golden book" (as quoted in Kimball, Art vs. Aestheticism, *The New Criterion* webpage). Pater did not carry the same affection for Wilde: "Pater never really liked Wilde; he thought his charm somewhat vulgar" (Donohue 81).

The gap between Pater's and Wilde's perception of Aestheticism became larger with Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, where Pater's volume of *The Renaissance* appeared in form of a yellow "poisonous" book which became idol for Dorian Gray and led him in his excesses. Wilde completely misinterpreted the message of Pater's *Renaissance* and when the manuscript of *Dorian Gray* was shown to Pater in hopes he would review it, Pater was disinclined by Wilde's representation of his book: "Not surprisingly, Pater took the occasion of this review to distance himself from both Dorian Gray and his corrupter, Lord Henry Wotton – both of whom were clearly modeled on Pater and the ideas he had expressed in volume *The Renaissance*" (Kaylor 41).

The Renaissance: The Yellow “Poisonous” Book

The Renaissance was first published in 1873 containing nine essays, brief preface and conclusion. It was the “Conclusion” that was the most controversial and also the most influential part of the book. It was declared by bishop as immoral and caused Pater lot of nuisance, and undoubtedly damaged his academic career of a Slade Professor. For that reason it was omitted in the second edition (1877) and amended in later editions, as Pater writes in the footnote:

This brief "Conclusion" was omitted in the second edition of this book, as conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning. I have dealt more fully in *Marius the Epicurean* with the thoughts suggested by it (*The Renaissance*, 233).

Nowadays, it is quite difficult to understand the displeasure that Pater’s “Conclusion” must have caused. Hext suggests that “[Pater’s] sexualized language (‘ecstasy’, ‘passion’, etc)” in the “Conclusion” was for the rigid Victorians inadmissible. (Illusive, *Victorian* webpage) The ever-present, book permeating homosexual undertone must have been in given conditions bold and presumptuous.

In Victorian England of the nineteenth century, homosexuality was still taken as a crime. Since 1533, sodomy was a felony and “the offenders being hereof convict . . . shall suffer such pains of death, and losses, and penalties of their goods, chattels, debts, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, as felons be accustomed to do” (as quoted in Schmidgall 214). Although in 1828 many hanging crimes were abolished, sodomy was not among them: “In 1846 there were more hangings for sodomy than for homicide” (Schmidgall 214). Only with the Offences Against Persons Act of 1861 was the punishment by death abolished. This law concerned only acts of buggery, as homosexual or homoerotic acts were then called, committed in public. Basically and theoretically, what people did in their bedroom was out of concern. When realizing the cultural and moral preferences of the period in which the book was written, one must agree with a thought of Linda Dowling that Pater was also more or less a latent combatant for legitimacy of male love:

Pater chose to conduct his campaign from within the boundaries of Victorian liberal discourse, not posing any open challenge to liberal assumptions as such but

devising a “coded” version of liberalism in which its more radical implications became visible to anyone who knew how to read. For Pater would throughout a long lifetime of writing demonstrate by his very neutrality and urbanity that he was writing from within the great tradition of humanist thought. Yet his writing would always consist of a daring texture of covert allusions working continuously and unmistakably to demonstrate that the reiterated liberal claims for liberty, individuality, self-development, and diversity as the qualities capable of rescuing England are unintelligible unless viewed within the context of a Socratic eros of men loving men in spiritual procreancy (93-4).

Pater refers to his book *Marius the Epicurean* as to a source which more fully describes the thoughts suggested in the “Conclusion”. Donoghue suggests that Pater wrote *Marius the Epicurean* as an apology for the “Conclusion”:

It is clear that Pater started thinking of writing such a book shortly after he had suppressed the Conclusion for the 1877 edition of *The Renaissance*. ... The main reason was to refute the charge, leveled against *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, that he was a hedonist, an epicurean, and—the implications was clear—that he was a hedonist, an epicurean, at Brasenose to live for pleasure alone. *Marius the Epicurean* attacks both Epicureanism and Stoicism; each is shown as partial, morally limited, an exaggeration of one element in an ideally comprehensive philosophy (Donoghue 188-9).

The book, and mainly the “Conclusion”, was interpreted by some Victorians as a pure hedonism and as a guideline to an indulgence. The claim that “not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end” (Pater, *The Renaissance* 236) and the reiterated phrase that the main success in life is “to burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy,” (ibid.) was from the point of view of religion and morality insolence and profanity. Pater’s colleague Rev. John Wordsworth:

acknowledged the book’s “beauty of style” and “felicity of thought.” But he objected that the fundamental message of the book was immoral: “I cannot disguise from myself,” he wrote in a letter to Pater, “that the concluding pages adequately sum up the philosophy of the whole; and that that philosophy is 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 and that probably or certainly the soul dissolves at death into elements which are destined never to reunite” (Kimball, “Art vs. Aestheticism”, *The New Criterion* web page).

One of the Pater’s greatest rivals in Oxford, Ruskin, thought that *The Renaissance* is “the work of powerful men rotten with insolence... and that they forgot that art is justified only if it states a true thing or adorns a serviceable one” (as quoted in Donoghue 121). Wilde called *The Renaissance* “the golden book of spirit and sense, the holy writ

of beauty” (as quoted in Kimball, “Art vs. Aestheticism”, *The New Criterion* webpage). *The Renaissance* truly was a very controversial piece of art which induced different feelings and attitudes and not only that. It was a source of inspiration for “some of those young men” who misconceived its meaning, as Pater explains in the footnote he provides to the “Conclusion” of *The Renaissance*. Who were “those young men” who might have been possibly misled? It is probable that Wilde was one of them, possibly, the main one for whom the footnote to the “Conclusion” was added.

The book is written with a certain homosexual tincture natural to Pater. Kimball suggests that: “Although he was clearly homosexual by disposition, Pater’s fastidious nature—what Christopher Ricks called his “greed for fineness”—forbade anything so obvious as a love affair or a sex life” (ibid.). In comparison to Wilde, Pater was very discreet man of distinction and scrupulous manners, who rather wrote about others in homoerotic context and was delighted when he found fellows of the same disposition, like Winckelmann, Wilde or Hopkins.

The essay about Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the German archaeologist and art historian who lived in the seventeenth century and in time he does not belong to the Renaissance period, was first published in 1867, as a contribution to *The Westminster Review*. Parts of the essay called “Diaphaneité” about the crystal-like man were worked in to the essay called “Winckelmann”:

... he [Pater] regarded Winckelmann as a complete exemplar of diaphaneity: “...that transparent nature, with its simplicity as of the earlier world...” Pater associates diaphaneity with the beauty and autonomy of youth, and writes of Winckelmann as if he had remained changelessly young till his death by murder on June 8, 1768, at the age of fifty (Donoghue 154).

Part of “Diaphaneité” was also a version of Pater’s speech to Old Mortality from 1864, which was interpreted by Pater to Hopkins while they went for a walk the first time.

In the essay Pater expresses some kind of desire for freedom and understanding. He writes that when Winckelmann started to visit the antique collections in Dresden, he found great affinity in Greek studies which made him feel free:

And now there opened for him a new way of communion with the Greek life. Hitherto he had handled the words only of Greek poetry, stirred indeed and roused by them, yet divining beyond the words an unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life. Suddenly he is in contact with that life still fervent in the relics of plastic art. 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. Winckelmann here reproduces for us the earlier sentiment of the Renaissance. On a sudden the imagination feels itself free. How facile and direct, it seems to say, is this life of the senses and the understanding when once we have apprehended it! That is the more liberal life we have been seeking so long, so near to us all the while. How mistaken and roundabout have been our efforts to reach it by mystic passion and religious reverie; how they have deflowered the flesh; how little they have emancipated us! (*The Renaissance* 183-4)

Pater found affinity in Plato and Greek studies and also in Winckelmann. Speaking of Winckelmann for him felt as speaking of himself: “he chose to write about Winckelmann rather than about himself, while enjoying the warmth of homosexual motifs” (Donoghue, 42). Pater writes:

Enthusiasm,—that, in the broad Platonic sense of the *Phaedrus*, was the secret of his divinatory Power over the Hellenic world. This enthusiasm, dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament, has a power of re-enforcing the purer emotions of the intellect with an almost physical excitement. That his affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in it, is proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men. He has known, he says, many young men more beautiful than Guido’s archangel. These friendships, bringing him into contact with the pride of human form, and staining the thoughts with its bloom, perfected his reconciliation to the spirit of Greek sculpture (*The Renaissance*, 190-1).

The claim that Winckelmann’s “affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual” is also the case of Pater. And, as he writes that Winckelmann’s interest in Greek studies sets him free, he also finds his own freedom in Greek studies, but not only in that, he found great pleasure and freedom in writing, as well as Wilde reading, about Winckelmann’s sexual encounters with young boys. Pater never really expressed his own desires freely and when he did, he did it obscurely under a shroud of Aestheticism with grace and elegance.

Pater, certainly, was not alone enjoying the warmth of homosexual motifs in his books. Wilde also enjoyed the forbidden, but still very familiar feelings and the freedom that Pater’s book gave him. As he writes in *Dorian Gray*, about the “yellow book”:

It was the strangest book that he had ever read. It seemed to him that in exquisite raiment, and to the delicate sound of flutes, the sins of the world were passing in dumb show before him. Things he had dimly dreamed of were suddenly made real to him. Things of which he had never dreamed were gradually revealed (*CW* 96).

The influence of Pater's book *The Renaissance* over Wilde is evident. "I never travel anywhere without it;" he said, "but it is the very flower of decadence; the last trumpet should have sounded the moment it was written" (as quoted in Ellmann 301) *The Renaissance* was for him inspiration and revealed world that until now was for Dorian Gray, thus, Wilde unknown, or just "dimly dreamed of". Those "things", dangerously revealed to Wilde in *The Renaissance* were giving him freedom at least in his mind as it was earlier giving freedom to Pater or Winckelmann.

Wilde tried to hide his homosexuality for years; and, through the long time of disguising his sexual preference, he became a great actor and speaker through masks in other spheres as well: "He developed a public face as a writer, bon vivant and sparkling guest entertaining the dinner parties of the social elite" (Fisher 33). He himself was convinced that all people were actors, as he informed the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*: "Anybody can act ... Most people in England do nothing else. To be conventional is to be a comedian" (Schmidgall 20). This swipe reveals the famed Victorian hypocrisy, although Wilde was not quite natural himself, as Ross, Wilde's friend, observed: "It was natural to Wilde to be artificial" (as quoted in Schmidgall 16). Marriage provided Wilde with the most successful of his many masks:

For more than two years Wilde had restlessly performed his roles as husband and father. ... He was well aware of the dangers of being homosexual, though he had consorted freely with those who were. His delight in young male bodies and in intense friendships with men was patent. (275)... Little by little Wilde, though he remained fond of Constance, lost enthusiasm for playing husband. He did not feel this way about being father, for his boys delighted him. ... His disaffection from his wife seems implicit in the eagerness of his return to the society of young men, especially in Oxford and Cambridge (Ellmann, 277).

Wilde certainly loved his wife but his desire to live his wild life and to "feast with panthers" the way he used to before he got married was greater. As Ellman describes Wilde's life when he left Constance: "There were almost nightly dinners given in Wilde's honour by members of his coterie. It was like his old days in Oxford, but grander" (399). Later in prison Wilde confessed in *De Profundis*:

People thought it dreadful of me to have entertained at dinner the evil things of life, and to have found pleasure in their company. But then, from the point of view through which I, as an artist in life, approach them they were delightfully

suggestive and stimulating. It was like feasting with panthers; the danger was half the excitement (CW 1042).

In his life and an artistic career Wilde was far more expressive in proclaiming the legitimacy of male love than Pater. And, although there is no doubt he caused his own downfall—as he himself admits in *De Profundis*: “I blame myself for allowing an unintellectual friendship, a friendship whose primary aim was not creation and contemplation of beautiful things, entirely to dominate my life” (CW 981)—he was also quite bold and consistent in expressing his disagreement with Victorian society and morality. From this point of view he was the most distinct decadent. Although he took Pater’s theory of everlasting ecstasy into extreme, he lived true life as he speaks of it in *De Profundis*:

I don't regret for a single moment having lived for pleasure. I did it to the full, as one should do everything that one does. There was no pleasure I did not experience. I threw the pearl of my soul into a cup of wine. I went down the primrose path to the sound of flutes. I lived on honeycomb. But to have continued the same life would have been wrong because it would have been limiting. I had to pass on. The other half of the garden had its secrets for me also (CW 1026).

Friendship between Wilde and Pater began with Wilde’s review of the Grosvenor Gallery (in *Dublin University Magazine*) of which copy he sent to Pater. Pater must have been delighted because: “In many ways the article was a declaration of his [Wilde’s] congruence with Pater, whom he had still not met” (Ellmann 83). Pater wrote to Wilde in return almost immediately:

I should like much to talk over some of the points with you, though on the whole I think your criticism very just, and it is certainly very pleasantly expressed. It shows that you possess some beautiful, and for your age quite exceptionally cultivated tastes, and a considerable knowledge also of many beautiful things. I hope you will write a great deal in time to come (as quoted in Ellmann 83).

Wilde was thrilled and sent him several sonnets. Later on when they met, Pater suggested that for Wilde it would be better to write prose than poetry. “Why do you always write poetry? Why do you not write prose? Prose is so much more difficult.” (as quoted in Ellmann 83). They dined together, went for walks and had tea together. Although during his studies, Wilde never attended Pater’s lectures as much as Ruskin’s in the fourth year

“Pater was his great enthusiasm, as Ruskin had been in the first year” (Ellmann 85). In 1887, Wilde reviewed Pater’s “Imaginary Portraits” in *Pall Mall Gazette*, which delighted Pater because “it extolled Pater’s mastery of prose” (Donoghue 82) and also because he also asked Wilde to review his *Appreciations* in 1889.

Their friendship, in fact, ended with Pater’s review of Wilde’s notorious book *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. When the book first appeared in *Lippincott’s Magazine* (see appendix four for the image of a cover of the magazine) in 1890, the attitude that *Punch* had towards Wilde became more spiteful and malicious. In the review of *Dorian Gray* by the pseudonymed “Baron de Book Worms”, it was called “Oscar Wilde’s Wildest and Oscarest work... a weird sensational romance...” and he added “I have read it, and, except for the ingenious idea, I wish to forget it” (as quoted in Schmidgall 201). Wilde did not pay much attention to the public acceptance of his novel and in the letter to the editor of *Daily Chronicle*, Wilde consciously wrote: “[My story] is poisonous if you like, but you cannot deny that it is also perfect” (as quoted in Ellmann 321).

In the book there are three main protagonists: Dorian Gray, Lord Henry and Basil Halward. Lord Henry embodies the aspect of Aestheticism, which appeals to sensuous pleasure, associated with Pater and his ideal to maintain the moment of maximum beauty or passion in every passing moment: “To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life” (*The Renaissance* 236). No experience or desire should be rejected or repressed, because it is in each desire as it arises that the flame of life exists. Lord Henry opposes conventional morality, which preaches restraints on desire, because he thinks such restraints are opposed to the essence of life. Pater’s volume of *The Renaissance* appeared in Wilde’s novel in form of a yellow “poisonous” book which was handed to Dorian Gray by Lord Henry and which became idol for him and led him in his excesses. In this sense, Wilde completely misinterpreted the message of *The Renaissance*.

Pater’s review published in the periodical *Bookman* in November 1891 is a clear evidence of his discrepancy with Wilde’s ideas:

A true Epicureanism aims at a complete through harmonious development of man’s entire organism. To lose the moral sense therefore for instance, the sense of sin and righteousness, as Mr. Wilde’s hero—his heroes are bent on doing as speedily, as completely as they can, is to lose, or lower, organization, to become less complex, to pass from a higher to a lower degree of development. ... Lord

Henry, and even more the, from the first, suicidal hero, loses too much in life to be a true Epicurean—loses so much in the way of impressions, of pleasant memories, and subsequent hopes, which Hallward, by a really Epicurean economy, manages to secure (as quoted in Donoghue 85).

Wilde's Epicureanism and his aestheticism refuse to place good above evil in life as well as in art. The novel leaves unclear whether its author prefers wickedness to moral behaviour. This produces the novel's ambivalence in its morals which Victorian reviewers could not accept.

When Wilde introduced Lord Alfred 'Bosie' Douglas (see appendix five for the photo of Douglas and Wilde), his intimate friend^v, to Pater,

the meeting didn't lead to a friendship ... Pater's sense of the relationship between Lord Alfred and Wilde, added to common rumor about Wilde's sexual life... [Pater] could have avoided having anything further to do with the book. Instead, with unusual boldness, he arranged to review it and took the occasion to repudiate not only Lord Henry but his creator (Donoghue 84).

According to Kaylor, "Wilde's cultivation in love and literature were too overt and scandalous for Pater, who in turn began to cultivate as much distance between himself and his friend, in person and in print, as courtesy would allow" (42). Pater chose to live discreet almost uneventful life. He was always obscure about his favor to young beautiful boys. In fact, he never showed fully his desires. Wilde interpreted Pater's momentary ecstasy which is like "gemlike flame" into an immense, life-long self-indulgence where he lived for moments of passion and which caused his decay: "Had Pater lived a year longer—bypassing his heart attack of 1894—he would have been witness to Wilde's conviction and complete disgrace" (Kaylor 42). Wilde was convicted (see appendix six for a sketch of closing trial scene) on May 25, 1895 of gross indecency and sentenced to serve two years hard labour. Prison was unkind to Wilde's health and when he was released on May 19, 1897 he spent his last three years penniless, in self-imposed exile from society and artistic circles. On his deathbed he converted to the Roman Catholic Church. He spent his last days in the Hôtel d'Alsace in Paris. Just a month before his death he is quoted as saying, "My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or other of us has got to go".

“Botticelli”: The Under-current Sentiments of Pater’s Aestheticism

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. To define beauty not in the most abstract, but in the most concrete terms possible, not to find a universal formula for it, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of æsthetics (Pater, *The Renaissance* vii).

Seeking and defining beauty, finding pleasure in feeling through the indulgence that beauty can give was a sense of Pater’s whole life. In the book *The Renaissance*, Walter Pater tried to define beauty using a “formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it”. For this purpose he wrote nine essays concerning different kinds of beauty of art that he found in originality and expressive sensitivity of painters, sculptors, philosophers and writers. The expressive sensitivity was why Pater chose to write about them. He felt some kind of affinity with all these artists; and this affinity came from the similar way of feeling the Art. He admired the originality of artist’s spirit that he put into his art. For him the spirituality and sensitivity is also the most important factor in his aesthetic criticism:

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 and unique kind. This influence he feels and wishes to explain, analysing it, and reducing it to its elements (Pater, *The Renaissance* viii-ix).

It seems that the greatest pleasure Pater found in luxuriating in his own work of art. Writing beautifully about beautiful things was his tendency. For Pater it was necessary to define beauty using “the most concrete terms possible” (*The Renaissance*, vii). He found great pleasure in picking delicate, relished words and he was a real artist of word. What a palette of colours is for painter, words are for Pater. As Donoghue claims:

He was not an original thinker: virtually every idea he expressed can be traced to a source in English, French, or German writers. He is a force in the criticism of these subjects because he devised a distinctive style of writing about them: The Pateresque, a new color in the palette (Donoghue 139).

Pater puts his sensitivity and feelings into all his works. For him, also the period of the Renaissance was a feeling. In the first essay of *The Renaissance*, “Two Early French Stories”, Pater talks about the Renaissance:

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, prompting those who experience this desire to seek first one and then another means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment, and directing them not merely to the discovery of old and forgotten sources of this enjoyment, but to divine new sources of it, new experiences, new subjects of poetry, new forms of art. Of this feeling there was a great outbreak in the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the following century (2).

As it is evident, the Renaissance for Pater was not only a historical period filled with beauty, for him it was his life, his pleasure-bringing state of mind. The fact, that he included an essay about Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the German archaeologist and art historian who lived in the seventeenth century and in time he does not belong to the Renaissance period, is a confirmation of that. The only reason why Pater chose to write about him was his renaissance spirit, so elevating for him:

By his enthusiasm for the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake, by his Hellenism, his life-long struggle to attain to the Greek spirit, he is in sympathy with the humanists of an earlier century. He is the last fruit of the Renaissance, and explains in a striking way its motive and tendencies (Pater, *The Renaissance* xiv).

The Renaissance filled with the Greek spirit was simply very close to Pater's heart, as it was close to Winckelmann's, giving him the freedom at least in his mind and the freedom of personal diversity he never had at Oxford. Although his life was almost uneventful, as Donoghue remarks: "By comparison with his grand contemporaries, he seems hardly to have lived" (24), in his mind he lives life full of "intellectual excitement" (*The Renaissance* 212). Since he spent most of his life immersed in what might be considered the self-indulgence by art and beauty, Pater and the details of his life are described by Donoghue, as if they were only "evanescence [which] drifted away" (23). And, although he was mild, sensitive, dainty and, even for his friends, almost enigmatic person who lived a colourless and uneventful life, his mind and soul were very passionate seeking "new experiences". In those moments he was free, far away from all the conventions of time. *The Renaissance* was a place where he tried to adumbrate part of his world where he felt free. Unfortunately, he experienced a lack of understanding from a major part of a Victorian audience.

Although the book edition from 1873 is, originally called *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, it does not have much to do with a history. Maybe for that reason was the book title of the second edition changed into *The Renaissance: Studies in the Art and Poetry*. Donoghue suggests that: “Pater was interested in history for the images it offered and the feelings it inspired, but in the end the only history he cared about was that of someone’s mind; it became historical by being representative of a certain type of feeling”(126). Sandro Botticelli was also one of those “representatives of a certain type of feeling” whose “history of mind” Pater cared about. Donoghue uses Pater’s own description of Leonardo Da Vinci, who is one of Pater’s contemplations in *The Renaissance*—“lover of strange souls”—and suggests that

[Pater] examines what he is sure of, his feelings in the presence of certain paintings. But the phrase that identifies his whole activity in criticism is “a lover of strange souls.” “Souls” doesn’t imply a theology but a humanist claim to spiritual capacity. “Strange” is supposed to make the reader think of genius (Donoghue 141).

Pater saw the beauty in the traces of artist’s soul and his sentiment left in the work of art. In *The Renaissance* he chose to speak about geniuses who *felt* the art similarly. The word *felt* is used on purpose because Pater did not perceive painting as particularly well painted landscape, event or person. The art brought him pleasure only then when he felt the kinship with the artist, when he felt the spiritual traces left by the artist and when he could associate himself with the certain spirituality the art embodied. That was the time when Pater tried to look closer at the painting and find out what it actually is that gives him the pleasure: “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?” (Pater, *Renaissance* 50-51). According to Donoghue, “Pater’s aim as a critic was to indicate the particular feeling he divines in Botticelli’s paintings” (150). As mentioned above, in order to feel the “peculiar sensation” Pater must have felt a certain affinity to the objects of art or artists he wrote about. He must have had very similar spirituality to the artists he wrote about, hence his sensitive soul was able to understand the particular “under-current sentiments” and “spirit”. This was also the case with Botticelli and other representatives of the Renaissance Pater wrote about including Leonardo da Vinci or Winckelmann.

The artistic quality of Botticelli's paintings as seen by Pater could be summarized in several categories: "originality", "spirituality", "under-current sentiments", "visionariness" and feelings the paintings embodied. All these features are very important for Pater but the particular feelings or sentiment that Botticelli inserted into his paintings stands above all. In the following lines, different examples in which Pater consciously appeals to feelings, sentiments and spirit of the painter and his art will be analyzed.

At the beginning of the essay Pater does not speak of Botticelli's genius of painting techniques or his artistry of great combination of colours, he rather speaks of Botticelli as of anticipator of his contemporaries with his "meditative subtlety". He saw Botticelli as a great innovator in sense of expressing his original subtle thoughts and feelings as mirrored in his mystical art:

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, 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: or, if he painted religious incidents, 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 (Pater, *The Renaissance* 50).

What Pater likes about Botticelli is that boldness of "leaving the simple religion and simple naturalism" and rather being inspired by his own "original sentiments". Pater enjoyed his inserting of the "under-current of original sentiment which touches you" and also the symbolism, own to Botticelli's art.

Pater also saw Botticelli as "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" (52) and he further adds that:

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 (52).

Not only that Botticelli knew how to put together story, line and colour but he also added the sentiment at which Pater marveled. The sentiment expressed by "light, colour, everyday gesture" was the beauty of Botticelli's art not attained by Giotto or his

followers. According to Pater, Botticelli knew how to carry “this sentiment into classical subjects”. (*The Renaissance* 57) When Pater speaks of Botticelli’s painting of Venus (see appendix seven for the image of a painting), he describes the part of the painting where one can see the sea, the wistful trees and far-away coast as “a landscape full of its peculiar feeling” (*The Renaissance* 58). He further adds that the “imaginative colouring really is, that all colour is no mere delightful quality of natural things, but a spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit” (*The Renaissance* 58). Donoghue comments this excerpt: “Pater finds this emotion even in Botticelli’s colours” (150).

In Botticelli’s commentary on Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, Pater sees the

peculiar sentiment with which he [Botticelli] 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 passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains, which runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy (*The Renaissance* 55).

“The peculiar sentiment”, “sense of displacement or loss”, “the wistfulness” and “ineffable melancholy” is only another proof that Pater truly sought for feelings in every aspect of the art. He was seeking the feelings that he himself sensed and wanted to share. The origin of “ineffable melancholy” could have been Pater’s theory that “we are all condemnés” (*The Renaissance*, 238)—condemned to death—and our time here is limited.

As it is clear, discovering the feelings and sentiment left by the artist in the work of art is, for Pater, the main aim in his aesthetic criticism. It almost seems that he tries to find a particular psychology of the work of art and also the artist’s mind. Donoghue suggests that:

Pater concerned himself, then, not with objects, works of art, but with the types of feelings they embodied. ... converting the image into the particular structure of feeling from which it has supposedly issued. Ontology is displaced by psychology. This is Pater’s form of attention (140-1).

Another feature of Botticelli’s paintings that Pater found amazing and beautiful was “visionariness” of his paintings. “He is a visionary painter” says Pater “and again compares Botticelli to Giotto who is rather dramatic lacking the deeper insight.

Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it as the exponents of ideas, moods, visions of its own; with this interest it plays fast and loose with those data, rejecting some and isolating others, and always combining them anew. 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 structure of his own, 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 sensuous circumstances (*The Renaissance* 53).

The last feature that may be taken as Pater's admiration of Botticelli's art is Botticelli's compassion, his "sympathy for humanity" and his middle current of art expression. Pater considers Botticelli's attitude as a certain limit he sets for himself "...within which art, undisturbed by any moral ambition, does its most sincere and surest work" (*The Renaissance* 45). Unlike Dante, he does not need to stand on a side of good or evil, he has understanding of both: "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" (Pater, *The Renaissance* 55). Pater found the affinity with Botticelli for he himself chose the middle way. Although he was a pertinacious agnostic he was living fairly spiritual, high-principled life. He did not like the rigid and false Victorian morality which was lacking tolerance and freedom. About Botticelli's morality he says: "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" (*The Renaissance* 56). The phrase is also partly repeated by Wilde in his *De Profundis* when speaking of Christ: "His morality is all sympathy, just what morality should be" (CW 1035). He appreciated the sympathy he saw in Christ as well as Pater appreciated Botticelli's sense of humanity and sympathy, that benign wisdom of aged men who do not need to judge, for their long-life experience of reality of life. As Pater notes in *Marius the Epicurean*: "And what we need in the world, over against that, is a certain permanent and general power of compassion—humanity's standing force of self-pity—as an elementary ingredient of our social atmosphere, if we are to live in it at all" (180). Botticelli's sympathy is what Pater and Wilde missed—for their diverse personalities and sexual dispositions—in the Victorian period.

At certain moments, it seems that the affinity Pater felt with Botticelli was often his own feelings applied on Botticelli's paintings. Pater saw the things the way he wanted them to be according to his own character, sensitivity and spirituality as he was

carried away by his thoughts exploring the “peculiar sentiments” until drifted away in evanescence. Wilde’s comment that “It is the *spectator*, and not *life*, that art really mirrors” (*CW* 17,—my italics) could in this case be changed in: It is the *spectator*, and not the *artist*, that art really mirrors.

“Inscape” and “Instress” influenced by Pater

An old Jesuit lay brother, remembering Gerard Manley Hopkins thirty years after his death, could only say, “Ay, a strange young man crouching down that gate to stare at some wet sand. A fair natural ‘e seemed to us, that Mr. ‘Opkins.” Many considered Hopkins odd. Though beloved by friends, particularly those from his Oxford days, he was deemed peculiar at best for having become a Jesuit, much less a Catholic. The Jesuits themselves as hard as they tried to assimilate him, could not fully do so. The harsh reality was that his own religious brethren never understood him. He was an oddity. He attracted attention to him-self through his innocent eccentricities—hovering over a frozen pond to absorb the pattern of trapped bubbles, putting his face down to a cup of hot chocolate to observe the grey and grained look of the film on this surface, sprinting out of building after a shower to stoop down and study the glitter of crushed quartz before the water could evaporate (Ballinger 1).

He may have seemed a little odd to his brethren. His patient observations of nature, his diligent note taking and sketching, all that was strange, but all that was also part of his distinct genius. Pater’s description of Da Vinci “lover of strange souls” where according to Donoghue the word “‘strange’ is supposed to make the reader think of genius”, (114) would also very aptly describe Pater’s relationship towards Hopkins since Pater himself was a “lover of strange souls”.

As pointed out earlier in this paper, the relationship between Pater and Hopkins did not begin in the best manner. However Pater’s talk against Christianity and Hopkins’s first essay which is aimed at contradiction of Utilitarian theory, “which makes morality lie in what attains or tends towards attaining the greatest happiness for the greatest number” (as quoted in Higgins, E-text) would not influence their long and mutually welcome friendship; as Higgins suggests:

Despite these outstanding disparities, a rapport between the two was established, testimony to a shared belief that “in unimpeded talk with sincere persons of what quality soever—there, rather than in shadowy converse with even the best books—the flower, the fruit, of mind was still in life-giving contact with its roots (E-text).

Higgins further notes that Pater must have been for Hopkins an appreciated change of air from “hothouse atmosphere” of Balliol to “vaguely *avant-garde*” Brasenose also because Pater’s attitudes were not as condemnatory as those of Jowett or Liddon. According to Higgins, the friendship between Pater and Hopkins was “a fortuitous and mutually gratifying result of diligent and enriching academic association” (E-text).

Hopkins was fascinated neither with Greek studies nor with German idealist philosophy; as Pater and Wilde were. According to White, for Hopkins as well as for Ruskin, “Art had to be morally respectable, and the greatest art should be morally useful” (101). For Hopkins the Greek art was not morally respectable and he rather preferred Gothic art. According to him the Gothic architecture had a noble character: “The very imperfection of Gothic art, which admitted man’s ‘lost power and fallen nature’ was at one with true Christian doctrine, and tended ‘in the end, to God’s greater glory’” (White 101). White further suggests that it was Jowett who taught Hopkins how to admire Plato:

So far as Greek studies were concerned, his enthusiasm was limited and muted, but he did grant ‘that Greek mythology is very susceptible of fine treatment, allegorical treatment of instance, and so treated gives rise to the most beautiful results. No wonder: the moral evil is got rid of the pure art, morally neutral and artistically so rich, remains’ (102).

Although Hopkins did not admire Greek art that much, he became fluent in Greek and Latin and he did take lectures on Greek philosophy by Pater. As Austin Warren suggests, “perhaps he heard, in an earlier version, Pater’s lectures on Plato and Platonism, in which with monstrous effrontery, the Doctrine of Ideas was praised as giving contextual interest to the concrete” (6-7).

Although Hopkins’s and Pater’s ideas concerning philosophy and Greek studies differed in many directions, undoubtedly, those disparities helped Hopkins to discover his own philosophy and perception of beauty. According to Higgins, Pater and Hopkins had different conceptions of unity: “[Pater’s] early philosophical essays reveal a hesitancy towards the ‘constraining’ forces of unity. Hopkins, on the other hand, accepted wholeheartedly the arguments for unity. ... ‘All thought is of course in a sense an effort a[t] unity’” (E-text). Another discrepancy observed between Hopkins and Pater was their different perception of forms in the natural world. Pater claimed that there is always a continuity (or “flux” as Higgins translates the word into modern English):

Forms of intellectual and spiritual culture, often exercise their subtlest and most artful charm when life is already passing from them ... Nature, which is by one law of development evolves ideas, moralities, modes of inward life, and represses them in turn, has in this way provided that the earlier growth should propel its fibres into the later, and so transmit the whole of its forces in an unbroken continuity (as quoted in Higgins, e-text).

To the contrary, Hopkins argues that some things are “inexplicable on the theory of pure chromatism or continuity—the forms have in some sense or other an absolute existence” (quoted in Higgins, e-text). Higgins further notes that Pater’s suggestion that:

The demand of the intellect is to feel itself alive, [i]t 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. It struggles with these forms until its secret is won from each, and then lets each fall back into its place, in the supreme, artistic view of life (E-text).

This suggestion is according to Higgins Hopkins’s search for “inscape”. Higgins asserts that it is probable that Hopkins’s philosophy of “inscape” and “instress” had been, up to a certain extent, influenced by Pater:

The terms "inscape" and "instress" may have sprung fully grown from his mind, but their final theoretical gestation is recorded in D.XII. As previously mentioned, these "Notes on Gk. Philosophy" begin with a review of Pater's thoughts on the subject, his essential lessons about the Idea and form. Then, on 9 February 1868, Hopkins combines the Ruskinian notion of "relation" with Pater's emphasis on expression, impression, prepossession, and form to puzzle out the meaning of words and works of art. His conclusion: "The further in anything, as a work of art, the organisation is carried out, the deeper the form penetrates, the prepossession [of feeling] fuses the matter, the more effort will be required in apprehension, the more power of comparison, the more capacity for receiving that synthesis . . . [of] impression which gives us the unity with the prepossession conveyed by it." These animadversions on "words" then give way to a series of notes on pre-Socratic philosophers, the second of which, "Parmenides," introduces and explains the terms "inscape" and "instress." Only when Hopkins understands for himself the relationship between impression, form, and inscape, does he truly comprehend the origins of beauty (Higgins, e-text).

In certain aspects, similarities of Hopkins’s subtle theory of “instress” and “inscape” could be traced in Pater’s “Conclusion” to *The Renaissance*. In his “Conclusion” Pater suggests that: “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.” Supposedly, the observation should lead one to finding the ecstasy through beauty. Hopkins was very “constant and eager” in his observations; and also very diligent in capturing them—making notes or drawings in his journals (see appendix eight for the image of a page from Hopkins’s journal):

after the end of the year his journal expanded considerably, and he described sunsets, the scaping of leaves, the natural sculpting of snow, stories the lay brothers told him during a week he spent in the kitchen, a visit to Kew Gardens, the causes of dreams, gathering mulberries and bluebells (White 184).

His thoughtful observations, Pater's tutorage and also, according to Warren, influence of a great medieval thinker Duns Scotus who "most swayed Hopkins' spirit to peace" (7), led him to coinage of "inscape" and consequently then also "instress". Although Hopkins used the terms "inscape" and "instress" variably and never formally defined them there is a certain explanation of their sense drawn out by several critics and scholars. Warren remarks that the word

"inscape" is any kind of formed or focused view, any pattern discerned in natural world. Being so central a word in his vocabulary and motif in his mental life, it moves through some range of meaning: from sense perceived pattern to inner form. The prefix seems to imply a contrary, an outer scape—as if to say that an "inscape" is not mechanically or inertly present, but requires personal action, attention, a seeing an *seeing into* (8,—Warren's italics).

Norman MacKenzie sees the inscape as: "not a superficial appearance; rather it is the expression of the inner core of individuality, perceived in moments of insight by an onlooker who is in full harmony with the being he is observing"(as quoted in Ballinger 5). According to Ballinger's divine approach,

Inscape is the objective reality that exists independent of the beholder while instress is partly the response of the beholder and partly the force of being which links the object and the beholder. ... while instress is partially the internal alchemy or response of God's artist that occurs when a thing is truly seen. The artist 'feels' a thing's instress as God's plan behind it's inscape and internally responds to the divine will expressed there (54). ... Instress is an energy or "stress of being" which holds the inscape together. Hopkins also refers to instress as "the force which also, as an impulse from the inscape, carries it whole into the mind of the perceiver." Whatever the origin, instress ultimately became for Hopkins the stress of God's Will in and through all things (5-6).

Hopkins himself asserts that "All the world is full of inscape and chance left free to act falls into an order as well as purpose" (Journals, 230); he described "inscapes" several times in his journals:

... looking out of my window I caught it in the random clods and broken heaps of snow made by the cast of a broom. The same of the path trenched by footsteps in ankledeep snow across the fields leading to Hodder wood through which we went to see the river" (Journals, 230).

In the note from June 1871 Hopkins catches the "inscape" of the Horned Violet:

The Horned Violet is a pretty thing, gracefully lashed. Even in withering the flower ran through beautiful inscapes by the screwing up of the petals into straight like barrels or tubes. It is not that inscape does not govern the behaviour of things in slack and decay as one can see even in the pining of the skin in the old and even in a skeleton but that horror prepossesses the mind, but in this case there was nothing in itself to shew even though the flower were shutting or opening (*Journals* 211).

According to all of what quoted above “inscape” could be the inner essence of an entity, most likely “discerned in natural world”, which makes the entity unique. The “instress” then would be the force which makes the onlooker realize the momentary oneness of the entity and which holds the entity together. Hopkins’s famous claim that “What you look hard at seems to look hard at you” (*Journals* 204) would then explain the theory of “instress”, thus, that there is a connection between the onlooker and the observed thing.

When seen in terms of Hopkins being a devote catholic and Jesuit priest, for him the “inscape” could have been the proof of God’s perfection of creation and the “instress” would be the omnipresent God, incarnated in every entity, which gives one the experience of seeing it. In his journal Hopkins wrote: “I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it. It is strength and grace, like an ash” (as quoted in White 184).

Seeing Hopkins as an Aesthete of a noble kind, influenced by Pater, his terms could be also traced in Pater’s “Conclusion”:

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. ... To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life (*The Renaissance* 236).

“Inscape”, when applied on the above quoted, would be the realized beauty seen in “hand or face; some tone of the hills or the sea... some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement” giving one the momentary, unique experience and ecstasy which would be its “instress”.

When blending the two approaches together, “inscape” would be the unique beauty and perfection of an entity created by God which gives one pleasure and ecstasy through the God’s touch. Further generalized, Hopkins’s “instressed-inscape” for him supposedly could have been a kind of divine meditation with an aesthetic tincture. ”

Mortal and Immortal Beauty: “The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo”

Hopkins hoped to convey inscape through his poetry. In his arguably better moments, he saw his poems as a kind of ‘sacramental medium’, a communication of the incarnate and creative divinity to others. Yet his views and aesthetic inclinations caused him confusion and suffering. In Hopkins, aestheticism and asceticism collided. His aesthetic valuing of the senses collided with his ascetic fear of them. His stress upon, empathy with, and at times, deep love for individual things and people, could so he feared, draw him away from primary duty of love of God. So Hopkins struggled in a dilemma of conflict between the phenomenal world and the realm of the spirit. His artistry developed in the context of this moral and religious tension (Ballinger 6).

Ballinger’s suggestion that Hopkins’s “aesthetic inclinations caused him confusion and suffering” may be illustrated and explained with a quotation of Hopkins’s sermon where as White notes: “Christ is discussed under the three attributes of body, mind, and character, of which the first section overshadows the other two by its power and unexpectedness” (317). Hopkins loved Jesus Christ not only with divine love but he also admired Jesus as a handsome man: “In his body he was most beautiful... I make no secret I look forward with eager desire to seeing the matchless beauty of Christ’s body in the heavenly light” (as quoted in White 317). As White further mentions: “Part of this sermon had been worked out in a letter for Bridges, Hopkins’s friend, previous month” (317). In his letters to Bridges he wrote:

I think then that no one can admire beauty of the body more than I do, and it is of course a comfort to find beauty in a friend or a friend in beauty. But this kind of beauty is dangerous. Then comes the beauty of them and, such as genius, and this is greater than the beauty of the body and not to call dangerous. And more beautiful than the beauty of the mind is the beauty of character, the ‘handsome heart’ (as quoted in White 317-8).

The following month in a sermon he wrote that Christ is “the true-love and the bridegroom of men’s soul” (quoted in White 318). His catholic devotion and his aesthetic and homoerotic inclination caused him confusion and personal strife. Therefore, Hopkins’s poetry is very complex and subtle with many obscurities and hidden thoughts, feelings and passion. Sexual desire and catholic devotion is difficult to cohere. Hopkins managed to gratify both his desires, with grace and genius go him own, within the boundaries of Jesuit rules.

The poem “The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo” was written for Hopkin’s unfinished drama “St Winefred’s Well”. He wrote to Bridges in September 1880: “You

shell see the Leaden Echo when finished. The reason, I suppose, why you feel it carry the reader along with it is that it is dramatic and meant to be popular. It is a song for St. Winefred's maidens to sing" (quoted in Mc Chesney 125). Music for Hopkins as well as for Pater was central to all; it was harmony and unity, the very core of all arts. Pater in his *Plato and Platonism* wrote: "Music, which is or ought to be ... itself the essence of all things" (200). Hopkins also thought, as Higgins observes, that music "by virtue of *harmonia*, is the pattern of all the arts, and that the arts, like morals, contribute to and reflect the inner unity of humankind" (E-text—Higgins's italics). Pater in his essay "The School of Giorgione" claims that: "*All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music*" (*The Renaissance* 135—Pater's italics). Music for its harmony, unity and also form is, thus, for Pater as well as for Hopkins, the basis of all Arts and Aestheticism.

The musical sound of the poem was Hopkins's purposeful aesthetic approach also in "The Leaden and the Golden Echo". Hopkins himself said: "I never did anything more musical" (quoted in McChesney125), and he further suggested that the poem "ought to sound like the thoughts of a good but lively girl" (ibid.). Hopkins wanted his poems to be read aloud. About the poem on Eurydice he wrote to Bridges:

To do Eurydice any kind of justice you must not slovenly read it with the eyes but with your ears, as if the paper were declaiming it at you. For instance, the line 'she had come from a cruise training seamen' read without stress and declaim, is mere Lloyd's Shipping Intelligence; properly read it is quite a different thing. Stress is the life of it. Take breath and read with the ears, as I always wish to be read, and my verse become all right (as quoted in White 297).

As well as Pater indulged in the sound of the beautiful words he used in his essays, Hopkins found beauty in sound of his poems. What mattered to him the most was the shape, the pattern of sound: "Poetry to Hopkins was neither prose nor music—it uses the spoken word, not for the same purpose as prose uses it, but to create a pattern of speech sound. 'Poetry is in fact speech only employed to carry the inscape of speech *for the inscape's sake*'" (McChesney 25,—McChesney's italics). The stress, rhythm^{vi} and pitch would give beauty and life to his poetry and would be part of his aesthetic expression. Hopkins believes that sound and sense are related: "Rhythm, sound, and sight involve for Hopkins a sense of the body, the total and individual body, and his poems and notes are full of pride and despair at the inseparable sensuous character of his vision" (Hartman 17). The aim of his poetry is to capture the inscapes as precisely as

possible and make the poem sound like music. That way the poem would resemble the unity, harmony and beauty created by God. According to Warren: “In poetry, he desired both to record inscapes and to use words so that they would exist as objects. He was a double particularity” (9).

Hopkins also marveled Pater as a neologian because he himself as well as Pater was eager to find words that would most precisely express what he had observed. During Pater’s tuition Hopkins was enthusiastic to gain as many ideas and phrases of his tutor as possible. Higgins noticed that Hopkins’s “favourite Paterian verb and participle are ‘to colour’ and ‘colouring’; the adjective most admired is ‘strange’; the most adaptable Pater term is ‘under-current,’ which was transformed into Hopkins’s ‘underthought’” (E-text). From his tutor he learned to look for the most concrete word which would describe the inscape the best. His life-long study of rhetoric was aimed at polishing of style to technical perfection. He got inspired by Welsh, Old English, Old Norse and Icelandic verse and also rhetoric of Greece and Rome. According to Milroy, Hopkins is interested in the words that are “particularized and accurate” because, as he further suggests, “they will help him to capture accurately the inscape of the world” (98).

The diversity of Hopkins’s personality, as described previously, also mirrors in his poem “The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo”. The poem has two parts; the first part called “The Leaden Echo” could be seen as written by Hopkins, the Aesthete, influenced by eagerness for superficial beauty. How to keep beauty “from vanishing away” is the central motif of the whole poem and is expressed in the second line:

Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . . from vanishing away?
(line 2)

The beauty of a girl is traced through out the poem and as Hopkins says, should represent the physical beauty. About the two words “bow or brooch” (line 1) Hopkins wrote to Bridges:

I cannot satisfy myself about the first line. You must know that words like charm and enchantment will not do: the thought is of beauty as of something that can be physically kept and lost and by physical things only, like keys; then the things must come from mundus muliebris. And thirdly they must not be markedly old fashioned. You will see that this limits the choice of words very much indeed (as quoted in McChesney126).

The physical beauty for Hopkins was dangerous as he mentioned in the letter to Bridges quoted earlier, but also in his poem “To What Serves Mortal Beauty?”:

To what serves mortal beauty ---dangerous; does set dancing
blood---the O-seal-that-so feature, flung prouder form

(lines 1-2)

The blood of a man is dancing—expressing the inscape, the momentary beauty of features of man’s body which should last for that moment (“seal-that”). Mortal or physical beauty is dangerous. The male physical beauty, which is obscurely present in many of his poems, was for Hopkins perilous; it was a source of personal delight as well as torment. Saville notes that by using the “mundus muliebris” (the world of women), Hopkins tried to “distance himself from a male beauty he find dangerous... Thus the terms he uses to represent the maidens’ beauty have an uncanny similarity to those used elsewhere in his poetry to describe young men” (170). When Digby Dolben, Hopkins’s colleague from Oxford to whom Hopkins was attracted, drowned,^{vii} Hopkins wrote to Bridges: “I find it difficult to realize his death or feel as if it were anything to me. You know there can very seldom happen the loss of so much beauty (in body and mind and life)” (as quoted in White 146). Marylou Motto in his essay “Dramas of Time and Loss” suggests that Hopkins’s poems are deeply concerned with human loss in general: “Through the transient immediacy of the experiences recorded, through the self-proclaiming sound patterns that insist that we read “with ears,” Hopkins’ poetry is always making us aware of loss” (131). As well as Hopkins, Pater is also concerned with time and loss. In his essay on Botticelli he sees in Botticelli’s figure’s the “sense of displacement or lost... sentiment of ineffable melancholy” (*The Renaissance* 55). Transience of life and beauty is what troubles him the most. In the “Conclusion” he claims that we are all condemned to death, our time here may be short and our life is arbitrary. For Pater life and physical beauty is mostly everything. He himself was not a very handsome man. As Donoghue notes, “He was ugly” and he further comments,

A matter that distressed Pater far more than his loss of Christian faith was his appearance. ... ‘I would give ten years of my life to be handsome,’ he said. He was already thinking of beauty as not only a value but perhaps the supreme one. That he should so lack it while admiring it in the choice of young men of Oxford was painful to him (28-9).

Perhaps, for this reason Pater so admired the changeless beauty of Greek statues and the renaissance paintings.

Loss of beauty, youth and life bothered also Oscar Wilde. He was very concerned with his image: “Wilde had been much concerned with images. He had painted self-portrait after self-portrait” (Ellmann 311). Portrait was also a main symbol of his contentious novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Dorian was anxious about the loss of his youthful beauty. Through his self-portrait Dorian Gray lives young and beautiful without restraint, while his portrait is changing into a monstrous image according to Dorian’s vicious acts. In certain sense, Wilde denied the flow of time and the influence of time on youthful beauty as well as the established truth of endurance of images of beauty expressed in visual arts.

Although Hopkins is concerned with the loss of physical or mortal beauty, his belief in Catholic doctrine of afterlife and the resurrection of soul and body saves him from “despair” which is conveyed in the second part of the poem “The Golden Echo”.

In the second, longer part of the poem Hopkins gives a moral advice: Return beauty back to God. This part mirrors the catholic side of Hopkins’s personality and reveals certain asceticism. To manifest his personal sacrifice and ascesis to God Hopkins burned his early poems before he entered the Jesuit Novitiate in Roehampton. As Bridges wrote in the notes of his edition of Hopkins’s poems, in his letter to Reverend Dixon, he wrote:

What (verses) I had written I burnt before I became a Jesuit (i. e. 1868) and resolved to write no more, as not belonging to my profession, unless it were by the wish of my superiors; so for seven years I wrote nothing but two or three little presentation pieces which occasion called for (E-text).

The austere and restrictive life of the various Jesuit institutions left him at times in melancholy. He suffered from depression and loneliness, but in those times of contemplation, tension, and personal struggle he grew into a genius poet. About his use of the word “back” (line 35) he says: “‘Back’ is not pretty, but it gives that feeling of physical constraint which I want” (as quoted in Hartman 17). Hopkins thought that only through the physical constraint, sacrifice and ascesis one can reach the “everlastingness” of both, mortal (physical) and immortal (spiritual) beauty.

The first lines of “The Golden Echo” give hope that there is a place where one can save the beauty:

Spare!

There is one, yes I have one (Hush there!);
 Only not within seeing of the sun,
 Not within the singeing of the strong sun,
 Tall sun's tingeing, or treacherous the tainting of the earth's air,
 Somewhere elsewhere there is ah well where! one,
 One. Yes I can tell such a key, I do know such a place,
 Where whatever's prized and passes of us, everything that's fresh and fast flying
 of
 us, seems to us sweet of us and swiftly away with, done away with,
 undone,
 Undone, done with, soon done with, and yet dearly and dangerously sweet
 Of us, the wimpled-water-dimpled, not-by-morning-matchèd face,
 The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too too apt to, ah! to fleet,
 Never fleets móre, fastened with the tenderest truth
 To its own best being and its loveliness of youth: it is an everlastingness of, O it
 is
 an all youth!
 Come then, your ways and airs and looks, locks, maiden gear, gallantry and
 gaiety
 and grace,
 Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden manners, sweet looks, loose locks, long
 locks,
 lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant, girlgrace---
 Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath,
 And with sighs soaring, soaring síghs deliver
 Them; beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before death
 Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty's self and
 beauty's
 giver.

(Lines 17-35)

As if poet wanted to say, do not despair, but “Spare!”, wait and “Hush there!”, stop weeping. I have a key from a place where to keep the beauty immortal but it is not here in this Earth; “not within the singeing of the strong sun”. Everything that is “fresh” and “dangerously sweet” passes quickly away from us; like the innocents, “maiden manners, sweet looks, loose locks”, beautiful face or “flower of beauty” or “fleece of beauty”: “In 1885, Hopkins wrote to Bridges explaining his use of ‘fleeced’ in St. Winfred’s Well: I mean the velvetiness of rose leaves, flesh and other things, *duvet*’ (B, 215—Hopkins’s italics)” (McChesney 126). Sacrifice beauty to God, deliver everything, the “beauty-in-the-ghost”, the beauty of the soul, early before you die. Give it to the “everlastingness”. Give it back to God who is the origin of everything and “in God all things are found in their highest causes, i.e. in their finest essence” (McChesney 126).

Hopkins further suggests what we get when we sacrifice to God. The title of the poem itself is symbolical. “Lead” and “gold”, two metals, which by value cannot by

measured. Gold is the mostly valued metal. The golden colour would symbolize heaven, super-conscious and spiritual truths, eternal or spiritual love. Lead would be then the earthly heaviness, symbol of a carnal severity. By “echo” Hopkins virtually means bell. The sound or the echo of bell is here to adopt and stress the musicality of the poem. When the bell swings it sounds either gold or lead. By ringing the golden bell the spiritual, heavenly bell one reaches the eternity, keeps the beauty, and resembles the golden echo.

See; not a hair is, not an eyelash, not the least lash lost; every hair
Is, hair of the head, numbered.
Nay, what we had lighthanded left in surly the mere mould
Will have waked and have waxed and have walked with the wind what while we
slept,
This side, that side hurling a heavyheaded hundredfold
hat while we, while we slumbered.
O then, weary then why should we tread? O why are we so haggard at the heart,
so
care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged, so fashed, so cogged, so cumbered,
When the thing we freely fórfeit is kept with fonder a care,
Fonder a care kept than we could have kept it, kept
Far with fonder a care (and we, we should have lost it) finer, fonder
A care kept.---Where kept? Do but tell us where kept, where.---
Yonder.---What high as that! We follow, now we follow.---
Yonder, yes yonder, yonder,
Yonder.

(lines 36-49)

Hopkins refers to Luke’s evangel: “But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Luk 12:7). Nothing bad can happen, because everything is predetermined by God and every single hair of the head is numbered. There is no reason to despair and be “so haggard at the heart, so care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged, so fashed, so cogged, so cumbered”, while there is God who cares with “fonder care”. Everything that is sacrificed to God will return hundredfold.

“House Beautiful”

On January 2nd, 1882 Wilde arrived to New York for his famous and successful American tour where he got an opportunity to define the idiosyncratic Aesthetic Movement. According to Ellmann: “He prepared carefully for his tour. What to wear came first of all” (154). Already at Oxford, Wilde became zealous about proper dandy dressing: “He developed a great appetite for formal wear, and told a friend, ‘If I were all alone marooned on a desert island and had my things with me, I should dress for dinner every evening.’ (Who would cook for him he did not say.)” (Ellmann 38). Perfect, suitable dress, reflecting aesthete’s personality and mood, was a necessity for proper demonstration of “Willean Aestheticism” but the unconventional dress he designed for his American tour seemed to be bit too eccentric (see appendix nine for the image of Wilde in his “aesthetic lecturing costume”). C. Lewis Hind commented his costume as ‘a befrogged and wonderfully befurred green overcoat’ (quoted in Ellmann 154). Whistler wrote in his letter published in *World*: “OSCAR,--How dare you! What means this unseemly carnival in my Chelsea! Restore these things to Nathan, and never let me find you masquerading the streets in the combined costumes of a degraded Kossuth and Mr Mantalini!”^{viii}(quoted in Ellmann 154). But, dress was not the only thing that was important in his Aesthetic display. Highly mannered style of speech and lecture delivery was also part of his brilliant Aesthetic pose and perturbed him greatly: “Wilde spoke in hexameters; the New York World heard him accenting every fourth syllable or so in a kind of singsong: ‘I came from *England* because I *thought* *America* was the best *place* to see”’ (Ellmann 158—Ellmann’s italics). It seems that his pose of an accomplished Aesthete spreading the beauty was far more important than the content of his lecture that he wrote during the voyage to America. He applied his theory that the form is more important than the content also on his lecturing.

Although Wilde was often mocked and laughed at (see appendix ten for an image of a caricature mocking Wilde), he rarely lost his humour and wit in front of his audience. Merlin Holland in his introduction to *Wilde’s Essays and Selected Journalism, Lectures and Letters* says: “The power of humour to engage his audience, no matter how serious the subject matter, becomes a Willean trademark” (CW 908). It is truth that the anticipation of Henry Labouchere, Wilde’s friend and journalist, that Wilde “has a distinct individuality, and, therefore, his lectures will attract many who will listen and look” (quoted in Ellmann 156) was fulfilled. As Ellmann suggests:

His tour was a series of more or less successful confrontations in which his flagrant and unconventional charm was pitted against conventional maleness and resultant suspicion. His costume polarized opposition. Sometimes he thought of giving it up, but the obvious disappointment of his audiences made him don it again (183).

His American tour started with a lecture called the “English Renaissance”; the title was undoubtedly inspired by Pater’s “Renaissance” as well as many notions reflected in it:

The English Renaissance was, he said, like the Italian Renaissance before it, ‘a sort of new birth of spirit of man.’ Under this rubric he could discuss the desire for a more gracious and comely way of life, the passion for physical beauty; the attention to form rather than content, the search for new subjects of poetry; for new forms of art, for new intellectual and imaginative enjoyments.... Some characteristics of the English Renaissance were difficult to document among most of the artists he named. He asserted without much justification that they celebrated form at the expense of content, being unconcerned with moral lessons or weighty ideas. (Pater in Plato and Platonism had pointed out that for Plato form was everything, matter nothing.) ... Although at moments he implied, like Pater, that his renaissance was a recurrent phenomenon in history, at moments he insisted that the present awakening of the spirit was more thoroughgoing than its predecessors. Although it lacked the ‘divine natural prescience of beauty’ in Greece and Rome, it had a ‘strained self-consciousness’ which he did not disparage (Ellmann 165).

Although he claimed, as Pater, that renaissance is a “birth of spirit of man” for him renaissance was not so noble, spiritual and based on certain type of feelings as for Pater. Wilde spoke of him to Ricketts: “Yes, poor dear Pater has lived to disprove everything he has written” (quoted in Ellmann 84). But the truth would be that Wilde misunderstood much of what Pater had written. Wilde’s English Renaissance was different; living in style surrounded with beautiful decoration was its main aim.

When his remarks and later whole lecture was printed in the newspapers, Wilde realized he would need to write another lecture; which he did during his one-week-break in Chicago. In fact he wrote two lectures “Decorative Arts” and “The House Beautiful”:

One he delivered on his second visit, in March, became known as ‘The House Beautiful’ (a dreadful phrase perpetuated by Pater). The other, first given on 13 February, was ‘The Decorative Arts’. Both these lectures differed from the first, since instead of being historical, they offered practical applications of aesthetic doctrine (Ellmann 193).

The “dreadful phrase perpetuated by Pater”, which appeared in a “Postscript” to his *Appreciations* and also in *The Renaissance* essay ‘Two Early French Stories’, might have inspired Wilde when giving a title to his lecture, although the sense in which Pater used the phrase of the *House Beautiful* is quite different from that of Wilde. In the “Postscript” to the *Appreciations* Pater talks about the *House Beautiful* as about some place unifying the classical and romantic tendencies in history of art and literature “which the creative minds of all generations—the artists and those who have treated life in the spirit of art—are always building together, for the refreshment of the human spirit” (*Appreciations* 241). Pater’s *House Beautiful* is an inner place, house of thoughts in artist’s mind, which he was always trying to discover when writing his critical essays. Wilde’s interpretation of *House Beautiful* is far more explicit and exterior.

The lecture “Decorative Arts” (see appendix eleven for an image of a leaflet) was announced as a lecture on the ‘Practical Application of the Principles of the Aesthetic Theory to Exterior and Interior House Decoration, With Observation upon Dress and Personal Ornaments’ and “The House Beautiful” was usually used by Wilde in cases when he had to deliver two lectures in the same city. “House Beautiful” was, as Ellmann comments, “a metaphorical walk through the house, with a commentary on mistakes that he had observed” (194). Throughout the whole lecture he points out different imperfections and “ugliness” that he saw in America and suggests simple and cheap improvements.

It seems, Wilde wants to give an impression that decorative art is approachable to everybody and he socializes the role of the Aestheticism and Beauty. In the first part of the lecture Wilde raises the role of women in decorative arts and claims that “women have natural art instincts” and therefore it should be them who will “revive decorative art” in America. (CW 913) Wilde greatly values individuality and originality. As Ellmann notes, “Wilde held that art was ‘the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known’” (359). He would have hated to wear anything that would be regular or that would not resemble his aesthetic genius. He would not allow his dwelling to be decorated in “general sameness”. He suggests that “the first necessity is that any system of art should bear the impress of a distinct individuality; ... every home should wear an individual air in all its furnishing and decorations” (CW 914). Unlike Wilde, Hopkins had chosen uniformity of Jesuit friary. Pater was most of his life, except for the period when he published *The Renaissance*, very discreet, like Hopkins, almost modest. They both admired originality and individuality but in a different manner. Hopkins

marveled originality and beauty of nature and God's creation; Pater, in "Botticelli", admired beauty of original sentiments and spirit of the artist. Wilde demeans the role of Nature, in his essay "The Decay of Lying", he disapproves the thought that the Art mirrors the Nature, as well as he disapproves the observation of nature. He claims that "the more we study Art, the less we care for Nature" (CW, "Decay of Lying" 1071). Hopkins would not agree. In nature, Hopkins saw the perfection, the uniqueness of God's creation, Wilde sees nature as imperfect: "When I look at a landscape I cannot help seeing all its defects" (CW, "Decay of Lying" 1071).

In his lecture "The Decorative Arts" Wilde points out the need of outer stimulus for handicraftsmen like "encouragement" and "fair surroundings". Because according to Wilde "one cannot get good work done unless the handicraftsman is furnished with rational and beautiful designs; ... but the really good designs will produce thoroughly good workman whose work is beautiful at the moment and for all time" (CW 927). Wilde's suggestion that handicraftsman needs to be surrounded with beautiful designs in order to create beautiful work makes one think that for Wilde beauty and art does not come from inside, from the spirit of the artist, where Pater and Hopkins found the artistic originality and power. Wilde's key to the Aestheticism could be the claim that beauty can be found anywhere and in everything: "Beauty is nearer to most of us than we are aware. The material is all around us but we want a systematic way of bringing it out" (as quoted in Ellmann 159). Reporter's question: "Might beauty then be in both the lily and Hoboken?" Wilde answered "Something of the kind" (as quoted in Ellmann 159). Beautifying things that would not be considered beautiful by others would be his tendency. During his lectures in London he used to say to students that anything can be beautiful.

His opinions about usefulness and uselessness of art change and sometimes they are contradictory. In "The House Beautiful", Wilde, generally, claims that useful things are beautiful, as he earlier mentioned: "I have found that all ugly things are made by those who strive to make something beautiful, and that all beautiful things are made by those who strive to make something useful" (as quoted in Ellmann 262). On contrary, he refuses useful things in "The Decay of Lying": "As long as a thing is useful or necessary to us, or affects us in any way, either for pain or for pleasure, or appeals strongly to our sympathies, or is a vital part of the environment in which we live it is outside the proper sphere of art" (CW 1077). In his "Impressions of America" Wilde speaks of ugly yellow coat he had to wear when visiting Niagara Falls (which he also

found disappointing), “which is as ugly as a mackintosh”, and adds: “I hope none of you ever wears one” (CW 939). Conversely, he admires the Colorado miners and their wide-brimmed hats and long cloaks. Wilde stresses the importance of handicraft in “House Beautiful” and that all the things in the house should be made with a pleasure of the craftsman and should give pleasure to those who use it; and he further suggests: “Have nothing in your house that is not useful or beautiful” (CW 914). He disapproves the poverty of machine-made furniture and decoration with machine-made ornaments and insists on using none rather than machine-made. He suggests that: “Ornament should represent a feeling in a man’s life” (ibid.), which also contradicts his thought expressed in “The Decay of Lying”, thus, that “To Art’s subject matter we should be more or less indifferent” (CW 1077).

About paintings Wilde says: “Nothing is more saddening, nothing more melancholy, than having to look upon pictures hung in lines” (CW, “House Beautiful” 922). Confusing Art and Aestheticism is the case of Oscar Wilde. It seems that Art and Aestheticism were for Wilde interchangeable terms. For Pater, the artistic values of the paintings would not be diminished by hanging the pictures in lines. The art for him was the inner force of the painting inserted by the artist into it but not the way how to hang it on the wall. Wilde vaunts Whistler’s *Symphony in White* (see appendix twelve for an image of Whistler’s *Symphony in White no. 3*): “Such pictures as this one are of infinitely more value than horrible pictures of historical scense; here are no extensive intellectual schemes to trouble you and no metaphysics, of which we have had quite enough in Art” (CW, “House Beautiful” 917). James McNeil Whistler was Wilde’s marveled friend. He claims that Art should be essentially concerned with the beautiful arrangement of colours in harmony, not with the accurate portrayal of the natural world, as it was recommended by Ruskin. Pater did not value the accurate portrayal of the natural world and not even the pictures where the painter paints by reference not to the subject, but to the colour. The metaphysical and intellectual schemes were those that Pater admired the most. Wilde also stresses the importance of use of different colours but unlike Pater he does not see the colour as a mean of expressing the sentiments. The sentiment expressed by “light, colour, everyday gesture” was the beauty of Botticelli’s art, says Pater. For Pater, colours were symbolical and therefore had higher value than just decorative. For Wilde, “Colours resemble musical notes: a single false colour or false note destroys the whole” (CW, “House Beautiful” 915). He claims that the subject of the art should be subordinate to colour. Colour is the main subject of the painting:

“You should have Whistler among you to teach you the beauty and joy of colour. When he paints a picture, he paints by reference not to the subject, which is merely intellectual, but to colour” (CW, “House Beautiful” 916-7).

When compared to, Ruskin’s or Wilde’s perception of Art, and paintings particularly, Pater’s vision was far more complex and profound. Donoghue suggests that there are two different ways of looking at a painting, and to explain, he uses a study of Dutch art of Svetlana Alpers. According to her, there is the Italian and the Dutch form of attention. When looking at a painting the Italian way,

The meaning of a painting is the second life that may be deduced from it. Dutch paintings proceed otherwise, they use what Alpers calls “the descriptive mode... A story was not required. Pater’s [form of looking] wasn’t quite Dutch; his attention wasn’t fulfilled, as Ruskin’s, or Hopkin’s, by the look of things or by sundry appearance. But his way of looking wasn’t Italian either, although most of the paintings he saw were Italian. He looked at them not to deduce stories from them but to divine the artist’s particular genius behind surface and story. He didn’t ask, What second life does this picture imply? but rather, What is the particular character of the artist such that he chose to create this semblance and tell this story? (309-10).

It is evident that Pater’s way of looking at and perceiving visual art and beauty was in this sense more complex than that of Hopkins and Ruskin. He rather looked at the spiritual part of the painting, the sensation and emotion which was left there by the painter. Although Donoghue suggests that Hopkins’s way of looking at paintings was Dutch, thus, aimed at the “descriptive mode” or “sundry appearance”, the record from his journal would impugn the claim. In his journal Hopkins notes his impression of Millais’s painting *Daydream*: “a Millais-Gainsborough most striking crossbreed [...] Intense expression of face, expression of character, not mood, true inscape – I think it [the face] could hardly be exceeded” (*Journals* 245). For Hopkins it was important to recognize in the painting the inscape of the painted subject itself, not only that the painting should capture the “surface reality” as McChesney suggested, but also the “‘shape’ or the pattern imposed by the artist on his raw material—paint, words, stone, etc. It is the shape itself that matters, not its correspondence to anything outside itself” (24). McChesney further suggests that “Inscaping in art, to Hopkins, involved the shaping, even the distorting of material, in the interest of artistic purpose. Sc[h]apeless art, to him, was aimless art. This views lies behind his remark that inscape is the very

soul of art” (24). In the case of the Millains’s *Daydream* the “shaping” of the material would be the character captured in face expression of the painted person.

Although Hopkins was probably more influenced by Ruskin’s perception of art than that one of Pater, he was certainly acquainted with Pater’s way of conception, as Higgins suggests:

Yet Hopkins was also privy to the ways in which Pater offset the lessons of Modern Painters with Platonic theory and Hegel’s Asthetik. Ruskin’s immediate focus was landscape painting and the natural world; Pater’s interests were both broader, in cultural terms, and different, because art for him was essentially artifice—a restructuring of sensation and emotions into a foreign medium made possible by the artist’s recognition of the “hidden causes” of life and motion, the “truth of nature” underneath the “visible surface” (E-text).

Wilde’s potential in intellect would allow him to recognize the “truth of nature” underneath the “visible surface” it seems he does not want that. But, he used his potential to reverse conventional values and fixed truths in very ingenious refined way. He luxuriates in masks, lies and he raises them above the “sincerity and accuracy of art” (Ellmann 302). He also turns morality in absurdity and reality masterly turns in dream, as can be illustrated by one of the epigrams in his notebook:

Life is the only thing that is never real.
Life is a dream that prevents one from sleeping
The impossible in art is anything that has happened in real life.
The impossible in art is anything that has happened too often in real life.
By the artificial separation of soul and body men have invented a Realism that is vulgar, an Idealism that is void.

(as quoted in Ellmann 303)

In this sense, he had drawn his decadent way of thinking into perfection. He wanted to engage and shock which he really did. Unlike Pater, he does not approve imagination and he tries to avoid the word: “Imagination was also a word that sounded too natural and involuntary for Wilde. ‘Lying’ is better because it is no outpouring of the self, but a conscious effort to mislead. It also sounds more sinful and willful” (Ellmann 302). For Pater, imagination and visoinariness was one of the marveled qualities of Botticelli’s paintings.

Although Wilde generally claims that there is no relation of art to morals, in the last part of “The House Beautiful”, Wilde speaks of a power of Art which can not only foster the morality and teach children good, but also prevent the wars and battles:

I think that art, by creating a common intellectual atmosphere between all countries might, if it could not overshadow the world with the silver wings of peace, at least make men such brothers that they would not go out to slay one another for the whim or folly of some king or minister as they do in Europe; for national hatreds are always strongest where culture is lowest. And hence the enormous importance given to all the decorative arts in our English renaissance, we want our children to grow up in England in simple atmosphere of all fair things; the refining influence of art, begun in childhood, will be of the highest value to all of us in teaching our children to love what is beautiful and good, and hate what is evil and ugly (*CW*, "House Beautiful" 925).

Pater's influence appeared as Ellmann notes also in the final sentence he used in his lectures: "For his final sentence he adopted a mannerism of Pater's, the interjection 'Well!': 'We spend our days looking for the secret of life, Well, the secret of life is art.' He disclosed it at last" (166).

Wilde was a rebel and fop, rotten with insolence. He luxuriated in reversing the accomplished facts and truths about time, beauty, morality, nature, art and life. This rebellion was partly his desire for individuality and originality and partly it was a protest against the society and an eagerness for greater freedom in life and personal diversity. But his rebellion combined with his genius gave the distinct flavour to the Victorian period and as Ellmann claims: "without Wilde the decade could not have found its character. These were the years in which aestheticism was revised and perfected" (305).

Conclusion

There are several aspects that could be found in Pater's, Wilde's and Hopkins' conceptions of Beauties, Art, Aestheticism and Decadence. This thesis attempted to discover the following: an origin of beauty, the way they saw beauty, their attitude towards beauty and its use in connection to morality.

Walter Pater set the first principle under which strength the following conceptions were formed. His claim that "Death is a mother of beauty" (as quoted in Donoghue 24), meaning that living under the sentence of death, increases the desire for beauty which is the only meaningful sense of life. Desire for beauty will produce new beauty and that only for beauty's sake. It is the perpetual cycle of beauty and art which lives in minds and desires of "artists and those who have treated life in the spirit of art" (*Appreciations* 241) where all the tastes in art are unified. Linda Dowling in the "Foreword" to *Pater in 90'* suggests that Pater's: "notion of the 'House Beautiful' as enclosing a simultaneous and timeless order of artworks is the very image of that autonomous art" (E-text). Similar suggestion was also suggested by Wilde; when he was asked when the Aesthetic Movement was going to end he answered: "There is no end to it; it will go on forever, just as it had no beginning. I have used the word renaissance to show that it is now new thing with *me*. It has always existed" (as quoted in Ellmann 159—Ellmann's italics). The renaissance spirit inspired them both and gave them the feeling of "being alive". The influence of Pater's book *The Renaissance* over Wilde's life was grand. The things that he, until he read the book, only dimly dreamed of became real. *The Renaissance* was for him a source of inspiration in life as well as in his literary work.

Wilde, as well as Hopkins and Pater was concerned with death and all kinds of personal losses, especially beauty. For Wilde, the loss of beauty and life was unconceivable. Therefore he tried to eliminate the fact, that the beauty is transient and the life is short, in many ways. To prevent the beauty from "vanishing away" he goes against all the established truths about the concept of time and death and through the art—the painting of a portrait of Dorian Gray—he preserves the youthful, innocent appearance. Everlasting youthful beauty is for him dream which he would fulfill through his literary hero. The desire for everlasting youthful beauty is also expressed in Pater's image of "Diaphaneité"—the crystal like man—whose attributes were also ascribed to Winckelmann. For Wilde life was an act full of poses and masks which

helped him to disguise his fear of reality—death, ugliness, sorrow and loneliness. Method of “beautifying” things was also one of the means how to diminish the reality and live life in pleasure and lies. Although Wilde, in his inside, knew that there are greater values in the “House Beautiful” than the china porcelain and the elegant wallpapers, on the outside he settled for the superficial beauty of decorative design which would also keep his pose of an Decadent spreading the beauty. One could think it impudent of Wilde to live such an indiscreet life, leaving his wife and children, reversing all values and pretending beauty and happiness, but, at times and in a certain manner, bold would be the description of his behaviour, because his masks are often nothing else but mockery of the society and his obstinate obliquity cry for freedom, while proclaiming the “Love that dare not speak its name”. And it is this boldness, which is often disguised bitterness from the lack of understanding, sympathy and humanity from the world—also so valuable for Pater—that makes him such a famed Decadent artist known to everyone. In this sense, he was the most venturous of the three because unlike Pater who chose the comfortable discretion and Hopkins who concealed in Jesuit friary, Wilde chose to live intense life which makes him, in the end, probably the truest decadent.

Hopkins is also concerned with preserving of beauty, which he expresses in his poems. He recognizes, like Pater and Wilde, that the youthful beauty—but not only that kind of beauty—is delightful. For him the physical, or mortal (as he calls it) beauty is dangerous therefore attractive. His poems are obscure but still revealing the struggle when he indulges in and right after strives with thoughts about the physical beauty. But, after all he is eased and relieved because, for him, the origin of beauty is God, and therefore the beauty will be preserved when given back to Him. The “everlastingness” of beauty is retrieved through the sacrifice.

For all of them beauty was, in a certain manner, diversion from the bitterness of life and restrictive, moralizing conventions of the period. For their diversity from the rest of the conventional world they had difficulties to find understanding and freedom. Throughout the Aestheticism they found certain freedom at least in expressing their cultivated sense for beauty and art. They all were, in a certain sense, combatants for legitimacy of male love. Their work is often a calling for more humanity, understanding and compassion. As Oscar Wilde says about Christ in his *De Profundis*: “His morality is all sympathy, just what morality should be.” (CW 1035)

Their conception of beauty was in certain aspects unified, but the way they saw beauty was differing in many features. According to the depth of their intellect and depth of their spiritual contemplation they reached different profundity of realization of beauty. For Pater and Hopkins, the notion of the beautiful was three-dimensional. They admired the surface beauty, the beauty of the meaning and the beauty of the traces left by the artist.

For Wilde beauty was the cover, the external appearance, the simple joyous splendour. Although he appreciates certain individuality left by artist in the art, he does not approve the profound, intellectual and metaphysical artistic concepts unlike Pater who choose to analyze only that art which was intervening deeply into the mind and spirit. For Wilde the colours do not symbolize any feelings or sentiments as for Pater but should be used only in harmony to please the eye. Hopkins was not looking for any profound meaning behind the composition but he felt that Art, particularly visual art, captures much more than only the landscape, historical scene or well combined colours. What he tried to capture in his poems was inscape, the inner essence and individuality of the entity, and therefore he must have also look for the same kind of inscape or the inner essence and individuality in art. But he was not looking only for the exact reproduction of the particularity of the surface reality, as Ruskin, his analysis went a step further. The individuality and originality in art for him was the one left by the artist. The “shaping, even the distorting of material, in the interest of artistic purpose” (McChesney 24) was the real inscape, Hopkins was looking for. In this aspect his view at individuality of art was similar to Wilde and to Pater.

Although Pater also stood for the attitude that art should be only beautiful for its own sake, thus art for art's sake, which means that it should not convey any moral message, he still discerns art as an object of spiritual and sensuous analysis where he finds pleasure in discovering the artists' souls and sentiments. His critical analysis are generally not supported by many historical facts or professional study but he inserts his own sentiments into an artist and his art or he feels strong affinity with the artist which is setting him free. His conception of the Renaissance period is not only a period of rebirth of beauty and art but also a pleasure bringing state of mind, part of his life philosophy. What he valued the most was the expressive sensitivity of the artists about who he decided to write about in *The Renaissance*. He admired the originality of artist's spirit that he put into his art. Pater's perception of beauty was based on his own feelings, sentiments and spirit as it was illustrated on his essay “Botticelli”.

Hopkins saw beauty, in God's creation—primarily the nature—in form of “instressed inscapes” which he was conveying into his poetry to create harmonious whole resembling the beauty of nature, thus, the beauty of God. He saw God incarnated in every natural phenomenon which he carefully observed and captured. He, like Pater, appreciated music as the highest and essential form of art which should give base to all the following arts. Therefore, he wanted his poetry to sound like music and for that reason he became a successful innovator in poetic language and rhythm. Sound of his poetry was his aesthetic purpose. Hopkins, like Pater, was deeply interested in concrete. He was looking for the most concrete word which would describe the inscapes the best. His poetry was in a certain way relief from a taint caused by a conflict of his homosexual preference and religious believes.

Wilde, in the “Preface” to his novel *Dorian Gray*, rises the importance of the form of art above the content, presumably also influenced by Pater's lectures and the claim that form was everything, matter nothing. He refuses the objections from the critics and the society that there is a connection between art and morals, and he claims that: “There is no such a moral or immoral book” (CW 17). When he asks Pater to review his book, Pater, although as mentioned above, is also an adherent of Art for Art's sake, disapproves “wildean” way of Epicureanism and adds that “To lose the moral sense therefore for instance, the sense of sin and righteousness, ... is to lose, or lower, organization, to become less complex, to pass from a higher to a lower degree of development” (as quoted in Donoghue 85). Hopkins, in life, chose asceticism and sacrifices. He would not agree with Wilde's separation of morals and art. His poems were often aimed at giving a moral, through the beauty of words and sound of his poetry, he admonishes to sacrifice and restraint.

One can find different ways to diminish the “undefinable taint of death” (Pater, *The Renaissance* 238) and the dreadfully short time-limit given to life. There are two possibilities, either one can find a certain metaphysical explanation and believe, as it was in the case of Hopkins, or except the life and death and live out life in intellectual excitement, pleasure and ecstasy as it was in the case of Pater. Or, in death and short time-limit given to life find excuses for decay of morality and use of Art and Aestheticism as it was in the case of Wilde.

Notes

ⁱ All references to the primary texts are, unless specified, taken from the following: Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910). Norman H. MacKenzie (ed.), *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Oxford English Texts edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Oscar Wilde, *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3rd edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994).

ⁱⁱ Pierre Jules Théophile Gautier ([August 31, 1811](#) – [October 23, 1872](#)) was a [French poet, dramatist, novelist, journalist](#) and literary critic. In 1835 Gautier published a brief text the posited *l'art pour l'art* or ['art for arts sake'](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ 1817–93, English educator and Greek scholar, b. London. Jowett was a Church of England clergyman, master of Balliol College, Oxford (1870–93), and vice chancellor of Oxford. His influence on his pupils was profound. Jowett's translation of the dialogues of Plato (1871) is an outstanding work both of English literature and of classical scholarship.

^{iv} Rev. Henry Liddon was a chief disciple of high Church Puseysim and Hopkins' confessor since February 1864

^v In summer 1891 Wilde first met young, ravishing Lord Alfred Douglas—"Bosie" as he is always known—as one of his literary admirers. Douglas was an undergraduate at Wilde's old college of Magdalen, Oxford. He was only 21 years old when they met, but they became intimate much later. In spring 1892, Douglas wrote to Wilde for help. The reason was blackmail over an indiscreet letter to some rent boy. For Douglas's urge Wilde went up to Oxford and stayed the weekend in Douglas's rooms in the High Street. He resolved the crisis airily enough by putting his friend and solicitor George Lewis on to it. ...The love affair began under the threat of blackmail and under this threat it flourished

^{vi} Sprung rhythm, discovered by Hopkins, is a poetic rhythm designed to imitate the rhythm of natural speech. It is constructed from feet in which the first syllable is stressed and may be followed by a variable number of unstressed syllables. He claimed he discovered this previously-unnamed poetic rhythm in the natural patterns of [English](#) in folk songs, spoken [poetry](#), [Shakespeare](#), [Milton](#), et al. He used [diacritical](#) marks on [syllables](#) to indicate which should be drawn out (acute e.g. á) and which uttered quickly (grave e.g. è). Some critics believe he merely coined a name for poems with mixed, irregular feet, like [free verse](#). However, while sprung rhythm allows for an indeterminate number of syllables to a foot, Hopkins was very careful to keep the number of feet he had per line consistent across each individual work, a trait that free verse does not share.

^{vii} The boy could not swim, but he learned to float on his back. Digby was a good swimmer. They had bathed together before, and there was so little thought of danger that no apprehension was felt when they did not return. ... What happened was that when they were bathing Digby took the boy on his back and swam across the river with him. Returning in the same fashion he suddenly sank within a few yards of the bank to which he was swimming. The boy, who was the only witness, had the presence of mind to turn on his back and keep himself afloat, and shout to some reapers in the riverside meadows. They did not at once take alarm, but on the boy's persistently calling they ran to the bank and got him out with difficulty and delay: the water was deep, and none of them could venture in.(as quoted in White 145)

^{viii} Lajos Kossuth, the Hungarian revolutionary who lived in England from 1851 to 1859, wore a Polish cap, and Mr Mantalini, husband of a milliner in Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*, wore a gorgeous morning gown. (Ellmann 154)

Resumé

Pojem dekadence se objevuje na přelomu 19. a 20. století v souvislosti s novou vlnou umělců, kteří jsou znechuceni stereotypní společností, hledají z ní únik a vytvářejí si svůj vlastní svět. Estetismus je hnutí v umění a literatuře v Británii 19. století, všeobecně reprezentující stejné tendence jako symbolismus nebo dekadence ve Francii, a je možno ho brát jako anglickou větev stejného hnutí. Dekadent bylo původně hanlivé označení pro umělce, kteří se odvraceli od konvenčního, často pokryteckého, života. Dekadentní spisovatelé si toto označení oblíbili a nakonec osvojili. Estetismus vzkvétal v průběhu Viktoriánského období, nejvíce pak mezi lety 1868 až 1901, a prakticky skončil odsouzením a uvězněním Oscara Wilda. Dekadentní spisovatelé používali slogan vytvořený francouzským filosofem Victorem Cousinem a podpořený Theophilem Gautierem ve Francii “Umění pro umění” (L’art pour l’art), což znamenalo, že umění by mělo spíše podporovat smyslovou rozkoš, než přinášet určité morální nebo sentimentální poselství. Estetismus a dekadence byly tedy určitou opozicí proti konvenci, předstíraným dobrým mravům a sexuální represi. Estéti vyvinuli určitý kult krásna, který je považován za základní faktor v jejich umění. Historicky bylo hnutí spojeno s homosexualitou nejen kvůli implikaci jejich principů v dílech, ale také kvůli sexuální orientaci některých jeho přívrženců.

Walter Pater, Gerard Manley Hopkins a Oscar Wilde byli tři geniální spisovatelé, osobití v pojetí života, estetismu i ve svém spisovatelském stylu. Poprvé se setkali na Oxfordské univerzitě, kde všichni našli zalíbení v řeckých studiích, zvláště pak v Platónovi. Ačkoliv se jejich životy, pojmání estetismu i spisovatelské styly velmi odlišovaly, spojovala je jejich touha po potěšení, které nalézali v krásě, i když v krásě různých původů. Všichni tři byli do určité míry ovlivněni Johnem Ruskinem, zejména jeho viktoriánci váženou knihou *Moderní malíři* (*Modern Painters*), která také více či méně zformovala jejich pojmání krásna. A právě jejich pojetí krásna je to, čím se tato práce zabývá.

Oxfordská univerzita v 19. století byla také dějištěm mnohých názorových rozporů, týkajících se náboženské ambivalence. Náboženství hrálo velkou roli v životě a v pojetí estetismu Paterova oblíbeného žáka a později i přítele Gerarda Manley Hopkinse, který po studiích na Oxfordské univerzitě konvertoval a stal se jezuitským knězem. Oscar Wilde koketoval s myšlenkou stát se římským katolíkem již od svého studijního působení na Oxfordské univerzitě, ale křesťanství oficiálně přijal až na smrtelné posteli. I když se sám Walter Pater prohlašoval za bezvěrce, spiritualita umělce byla základem jeho estetické kritiky.

Walter Pater žil klidným, téměř bezbarvým životem. Byl diskrétním profesorem, své sexuální preference na rozdíl od Wilda spíše skrýval a nepřímou je vyjadřoval pouze ve svém literárním díle. V době, kdy potkal Gerarda Manley Hopkinse, byl Pater v období, kdy psal svou známou knihu *Platón a platonismus (Plato and Platonism)*, ve které se zaobíral mimo jiné i myšlenkou podstaty a hmoty. Jeho učení ať přímo, či nepřímou ovlivnilo nejen Hopkinsovu pozdější teorii „inscapu“ a „instressu“ ale i Wildův princip pojmání krásy a morálky, že totiž podstata neovlivňuje formu, ale forma podstatu. Jeho názor, že umění by nemělo být spojováno s morálkou, že tedy nezáleží na tom, jak nemorální je dílo, ale jak krásné se jeví, byl odsuzován v tisku i ve společnosti.

Základy estetismu byly také značně ovlivněny Paterovým útlým svazkem esejí, v českém překladu nazvaném *Renesance: Studie o výtvarném umění a poezii (Studies in the History of the Renaissance)* vydaném v letech 1867-1868. Tato kniha byla biskupem prohlášena za nemorální a po odsouzení Oscara Wilda bylo její publikování zakázáno. Kniha prosazovala názor, že život by měl být prožíván intenzivně a následovat ideál krásy. Estetické hnutí bylo provázeno určitou sexuální smyslností a kultem krásy těla, které byly přítomny téměř ve veškerém literárním umění vyprodukovaném tímto hnutím. Oscar Wilde tuto knihu prohlašoval za “zlatou knihu, která měla takový zvláštní vliv na můj život”^{viii} Tato kniha se také objevuje ve Wildově románu *Obraz Doriana Graye*, vydaném poprvé v USA v magazínu *Lippincott* v roce 1890, jako “žlutá kniha“, která svedla Dorianu Graye na scesti. Jedna z ústředních postav knihy, Lord Henry, který je nápadně podobný Walteru Paterovi svým vystupováním a stylem řeči a který věnoval “žlutou knihu” Dorianovi, ztělesňuje aspekt estetismu, který si libuje ve smyslovém požitkářství. Tento aspekt estetismu je asociován s Paterovým ideálem vyjádřeným v “Závěru” jeho *Renesance*, tedy zachovávat si chvíle krásy a touhy v každíčkém momentu života: “hořet vždy tímto silným drahokamovým plamenem, udržovat tuto extázi na téže výši je životním úspěchem”^{viii} Tento výrok si ale Wilde špatně vysvětlil a prakticky pojal Paterovo epikurejství jako hedonismus. Když Oscar Wilde požádal Waltera Patera, aby recenzoval jeho umělecké dílo, Pater se ve své kritice od Lorda Wotna i od samotného Wilda distancoval, čímž prakticky ukončil své přátelství s Wildem.

Pojetí estetismu Waltera Patera demonstrováno na jeho eseji o umělci Sandru Botticellim by se dalo shrnout do několika bodů: originalita, spiritualita, “podproudové sentimenty”, vizionářství a pocity, které dílo ztělesňovalo. Pater si tedy necenil pouze estetické hodnoty obrazu, ale také spirituálního cítění. Cílem jeho kritiky bylo definování krásy použitím vzorce, který by vystihoval nejméně její tu, či onu ojedinělou manifestaci. Svou kritiku tedy spíše zaměřuje na osobnost umělce a častokrát se zajímá ne o

historii obrazu, ale o historii osobnosti, která umělecké dílo stvořila. Pater vidí krásu ukrytou ve střípcích osobního sentimentu a originalitě zanechané v díle umělcem samým. Tímto se blíží více Hopkinsovi, který také obdivoval vnitřní krásu věcí stvořených Bohem. Na rozdíl od Patera a Hopkinse Wilde si liboval spíše v kráse povrchové. Jeho excentrické oblékání, nesčetné pózy a masky jsou toho důkazem.

Wilde svou „estetickou misi“ za oceán v roce 1881 pečlivě plánoval a do čeho se oblékne, bylo to hlavní. I když byl často terčem posměchu jak obecnstva, tak tisku, nikdy neztrácel svůj šarm, domýšlivost a humor. Pro své obecnstvo Wilde napsal tři přednášky. První se nazývala po vzoru Paterovy *Renesance* „Anglická renesance“ („The English Renaissance“), druhá „Dekorativní umění“ („The Decorative Arts“) a poslední „Dům krásy“ („The House Beautiful“). Název jeho poslední přednášky byl také pravděpodobně inspirován Paterovým *Domem krásy*, o kterém mluvil ve svém „Dodatku“ k svým *Appreciations* i v jedné ze svých esejí v knize *Renesance*. Pro Patera *Dům krásy* znamenal spíše imaginární místo v mysli jedince, přesněji řečeno v mysli umělců a těch, kteří žili v duchu umění. Wildova koncepce *Domu krásy* byla povrchnější. Během své přednášky pomyslně procházel domem a kritizoval chybnou dekoraci a prakticky implikoval estetické principy na externí i interní zařízení domu. Nijak dalece si necenil složitých historických, intelektuálních a metafyzických obrazových kompozic. Tvrdil totiž, že umění by mělo existovat pouze pro potěšení, a nabádal své posluchače, aby neměli v domě nic, co není krásné a užitečné. Kombinace barev pro Wilda neodrážejí senzitivitu a spiritualitu umělce, jak tomu bylo u Patera, ale barvy měly pouze být vhodně sladěny pro potěchu oka.

I když Hopkinsovo pojetí umění bylo spíše ovlivněno Ruskinem a jeho názorem, že umění by mělo odrážet povrchovou realitu, nezůstal zcela jen u tohoto pojetí. Pro Hopkinse bylo důležité dotvoření, či přizpůsobení si „syrového materiálu“ umělcem samým. Například na Millaisově obraze *Daydream* si nejvíce cenil mistrného vyjádření charakteru v obličejí zobrazované osoby.

Hopkins je jedním z největších náboženských i přírodních básníků své doby, který se snaží ve svém díle zachytit co nejvěrohodněji „inscape“. Termíny „inscape“ a „instress“ byly vytvořeny samotným Hopkinsem na základě hluboké kontemplanace nad původem krásy, vytrvalé observace přírody a pečlivých zápisků. Jeho filozofie byla také pravděpodobně do jisté míry ovlivněna Paterovými přednáškami, myšlenkami filozofa Dunse Scotuse i jeho vlastní studií řecké filozofie. Hopkins oba termíny sám nikdy nespecifikoval a často je i zaměňoval. Jak je popsáno v této práci, „inscape“ by se dal vysvětlit jako unikátnost a dokonalá krása bytosti či věci stvořené Bohem. „Instress“ by

potom byla síla, která drží “inscape“ pospolu a díky které si pozorovatel uvědomí tu momentální jedinečnost dané bytosti či věci.

Pro Hopkinse bylo v jeho díle nejdůležitější použít co nejkonkrétnější slova, aby tak co nejlépe vyjádřil krásu pozorovaného “inscape“. Pro tento účel pozorně studoval rétoriku, aby tak co nejvíce zdokonalil svůj styl k technické preciznosti. Hopkins chtěl, aby byl jeho jazyk specifický a přesný. V tomto byl také bezpochyby ovlivněn svým učitelem Walterem Paterem, od kterého převzal i některé výrazy. Ve svých verších i v slovním vyjádření se nechal inspirovat velštinou, starou angličtinou, starou norštinou, islandským veršem a také rétorikou Řecka a Říma a stal se tak, jako jeho učitel, jazykovým novátorem.

Ve svém novátorství nezůstal ale pouze u jazyka. Jeho touhou bylo vytvořit takovou báseň, která by zněla téměř jako hudba. Pro něho, zrovna tak jako pro Patera, byla hudba základem všeho umění pro svou harmonii a jednotu a veškeré umění by k hudbě mělo směřovat. Z tohoto důvodu vytvořil takzvaný skákavý rytmus (sprung rhythm). Hopkins chtěl, aby byla jeho poezie čtena nahlas. Důraz, rytmus a hlasová intonace dávala jeho básním život a krásu. Zvuk jeho básní se tak stal i jeho vlastním estetismem.

Hopkinsova hudební báseň “Olověná ozvěna a Zlatá ozvěna”, která byla původně napsána pro jeho nedokončenou hru “St Winfred’s Well”, se zabývá myšlenkou, jak si udržet krásu navěky. Touto myšlenkou se zabíral i Oscar Wilde v Dorianu Grayovi, kde se Dorian snažil zachovat si mládí, nevinný vzhled a krásu pomocí své podobizny, namalované přítelem Basilem Halwardem. Dorianova tvář zobrazená na malbě se měnila ve zrůdný obličej podle zrůdnosti Dorianových činů, přičemž Dorianova tvář zůstávala stále krásná a mladá. Wilde tímto popřel ustálené pravdy o čase, smrti, i neměnnosti vzhledu uměleckých děl. Jak pro Wilda, tak pro Hopkinse i Patera ztráta mládí a krásy a krátký čas, který byl člověku pro život udělen, jsou rozhodujícími faktory v jejich pojmání smyslu života. Pater si byl vědom, že život je krátký a smrt může přijít nečekaně, a proto, jak ve své Renesanci tvrdil, by život měl být plný intelektového vzrušení, krásy, vášně a extáze, oddávající se umění a touze po kráse. Hopkins svou básní “Olověná a Zlatá ozvěna“ (“The Leaden and the Golden Echo“) vyslovil, že rozlišuje dva druhy krásy - smrtelnou, tedy vnější, a nesmrtelnou, tedy vnitřní. V první části básně (“Olověná ozvěna”) Hopkins mistrně popisuje fyzickou krásu ztělesněnou dívčími atributy a zoufalství nad pomíjivostí a smrtelností tohoto druhu krásy. Tělesná kráska, a především mužská tělesná kráska, byla pro Hopkinse nebezpečná. Působila mu potěšením a slast, stejně tak jako zmatek a strast. Jeho homosexuální orientace a jeho náboženské přesvědčení bylo pro něho zdrojem osobního sváru, ale i velké poetické inspirace. Ve druhé části básně (“Zlatá ozvěna”) si náhle uvědomí, že není proč zoufat. Fyzická kráska je neporovnatelná s tou, která je člověku dána

Bohem. Obětování a vrácení této vnitřní krásy Bohu již v tomto životě uchová krásu navěky a bude s ní dobře naloženo. Hopkinsovy básně jsou často moralizující, nabádající k askezi a sebeobětování. V tomto aspektu se velmi liší od Wilda, pro Hopkinse je morálka od umění neodlučitelná.

Touhou všech tří jedinečných spisovatelů nebylo pouze objevování krásy, ale také získání určité svobody projevu i myšlení, kterou jen těžko ve viktoriánském období nalézali. Pro svou odlišnost a genialitu byli mnohokrát společností nepochopeni a odsouzeni. Jejich díla jsou častokrát voláním po více lidství a soucitu. Jak Oscar Wilde napsal o Kristu v *De Profundis*: "Jeho morálka je samý soucit, tedy to, co morálka má být."^{viii}

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