The Dialectics of Sense and Spirit in Pater and Joyce

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before the publication of *Ulysses*, Joyce's readers debated whether the novelist intended Stephen to be a creative artist or a posturing aesthete at the end of *Portrait*. Like Robert Scholes, who claimed that Stephen becomes a poet with the composition of the villanelle, some have argued that Stephen reaches artistic maturity by Part V of *Portrait*.² Others have maintained that Joyce intended Stephen to be a parody of his own younger self. Critics, reading *Portrait* in anticipation of "Telemachus," in which Stephen appears as the fallen Icarus rather than as the soaring and creative Daedalus, have increasingly seen the close of *Portrait* as Joyce's attempt to distance himself from Stephen. The aesthetic theory that Stephen elaborates in the last part of *Portrait* and takes with him to Paris proves unfruitful, and he ridicules his own past pretensions as he walks along the strand in "Proteus." He returns to Dublin and lodges in Martello Tower, where, instead of writing poetry, he suffers the daggered irony of Buck Mulligan. His mockery pricks Stephen's morbid conscience and gives voice to Stephen's uneasiness over his apostasy, guilt over his mother's death, and regret over his earlier artistic posing in Paris.

Stephen takes to Paris a multi-faceted aesthetic theory that defines the nature, function, classification, and effect of art. This theory, which he advances in Part V of *Portrait*, begins with a postulation that art should arouse not "kinetic" but "static" emotions, that is, pure aesthetic bliss rather than sensual engagement or sympathetic identification. He also affirms that the apprehension of beauty is a subjective rather than an objective process. This process of reception unfolds in the mind in three phases: the mind first
perceives the artwork as a single object (integritas), then as a unity of its component parts (consonantia), and finally, as a synthesis of the first two phases (claritas). In this last stage, the mind perceives the unique and distinguishing "whatness" (quidditas) of the artwork. The type and quality of the artwork lie in its relation to its creator; and these relations are hierarchical. In its lyrical form, the artwork is personal, in the epic form the artist depersonalizes himself, and in the dramatic the artist so fully removes himself from the artwork that it develops a life of its own. Dramatic works of art, Stephen holds, are best able to arouse "static" emotions because the invisible creator makes no personal, sympathetic appeal to the viewer/reader. Many of these ideas trace back to Pater; and others, if Pater did not sire them, at least reveal Stephen's kinship with him. There is, however; an essential distinction between Pater's aesthetics and Stephen's. Whereas Stephen desires to escape from his immediate environment through art, Pater insists that the artist should experience his environment with the finest senses. Pater's aesthetic hero is an Aeolian harp who leaves himself open to whatever random impressions may play upon him. Stephen, who desires to flee "dear, dirty Dublin," reveals a life-denying aesthetic in his preference for art's ability to produce "static" rather than "kinetic" emotions.

Hugh Kenner regards this Stephen as over-refined and dissipated, an aesthete akin to those young men of the 1890s who misread Pater:

His shape is that of aesthete. The Stephen of the first chapter of Ulysses who "walks wearily," constantly "leans" on everything in sight, invariably sits down before he has gone three paces, speaks "gloomily," "quietly," "with bitterness," and "coldly," and "suffers" his handkerchief to be pulled from his pocket by the exuberant Mulligan, is precisely the priggish, humourless Stephen of the last chapter of the Portrait who cannot remember what day of the week it is, sentimentalizes like Charles Lamb over the "human pages" of a second hand Latin book, conducts the inhumanly pedantic dialogue with Cranly . . .[and] writes Frenchified verses in bed in an erotic swoon. . . . 3

Yet Stephen is not as absurdly self-conscious as Gilbert and Sullivan's Bunthorne or Oscar Wilde's languid Lord Henry Wotton, and we should acknowledge that his aesthetic theories are more than merely a playful Wildean pose. On some level, Stephen is an aesthete in Part V of Portrait, but did Joyce intend Stephen's aesthetic to echo Pater's various theories in The Renaissance and Appreciations, some of which Joyce himself employs in his novels, or does Joyce present him as a caricature of a Paterian disciple? Pater's aesthetic is significantly different from that of such devotees as Wilde, Arthur Symons, and Yeats, all of whom were deeply influenced by French Symbolism. His writings of the 1870s and 80s helped to father the 1890s, but
his followers often depart considerably from his vision. Wilde, his greatest
disciple, argued not merely that life is inferior to art, but maintained that art
should be a model for life. By contrast, the empiricist Pater felt that art and
life are mutually dependent and interactive spheres of being. The artist must
go to life first. Pater valued the inclusion of sensuous, realistic detail. Like
Joyce, he argues in the essay “Style” (1889) for frankness in art and, within
the limits of a subjectivist epistemology, for at least an approximation of truth.

In his review of The Picture of Dorian Gray, Pater implicitly repudiates
this notion that art is superior to life when he praises the chapter with James
and Sybil Vane. In a book that both explores and practices aestheticism, the
section is distinguished by its naturalness and realism.

A wholesome dislike of the common-place, rightly or wrongly identified
by him with the bourgeois, with our middle-class—its habits and
tastes—leads him to protest against so-called realism in art; life, as he
argues, with much plausibility, as a matter of fact, when it is really awake,
following art—the fashion an effective artist sets [sic]; while art, on the
other hand, influential and effective art, has never taken its cue from
actual life. In Dorian Gray he is true certainly, on the whole, to the
aesthetic philosophy of his Intentions; yet not infallibly, even on this point:
there is a certain amount of intrusion of real life and its sordid as­
pects—the low theatre, the pleasures and griefs, the faces of some very
unrefined people, managed, of course, cleverly enough. The interlude of
James Vane, his half-sullen but wholly faithful care for his sister’s honour;
is as good as perhaps anything of the kind, marked by a homey but real
pathos, sufficiently proving a versatility in the writer’s talent, which
should make his books popular.4

Ironically, Pater speaks favorably of a “flawed” section in the novel in which
life intrudes. Wilde reacted to the hostile reviewers of Dorian Gray, who
argued that his main characters were not drawn from real life, by stating that
“If they existed they wouldn’t be worth writing about. The function of the
artist is to invent, not to chronicle. There are no such people [Dorian, Basil,
Lord Henry]. If there were, I would not write about them. Life by its realism
is always spoiling the subject-matter of art. The supreme pleasure in litera-
ture is to realize the non-existent.”5 Such comments spring from Wilde’s “life
imitates art” dictum; but Pater, his mentor, does not wholly subscribe to this
aesthetic, as he implies in his review of Dorian Gray. In “Style,” he argues
that art emerges from the artist’s “imaginative sense of fact” and from the
artist’s engagement with felt experience. This is what he praises in Wilde’s
handling of the James and Sybil Vane section, which Wilde “manages”
“cleverly enough” by neither characterizing the Vane environment with a
brute realism nor idealizing or sentimentalizing it. Pater’s comments on
Stephen's Aesthetics and Pater

*Dorian Gray* reveal kinship, not with Stephen the aesthete, but with the young Joyce who developed a similar aesthetic after he discovered Ibsen. The most "Joycean" aspect of *Dorian Gray*, the one that reflects the theories that Joyce propounds in the essay "Drama and Life," is the James and Sybil Vane interlude that Pater with deliberate irony calls the one "flaw" in Wilde's aesthetic novel.

Stephen's theories, like Wilde's, both resemble and differ from Pater's. Some aspects of Stephen's aesthetic theory recall Pater's throughout *The Renaissance* and "Style." Other pronouncements, however, which fall under the rubric of aestheticism, are distinctly unPaterian. Is Joyce indirectly mocking Pater by giving the bombastic Stephen some of the Victorian's theories? In Part V of *Portrait*, Joyce presents in Stephen a version of his younger self. The aesthetic theories in Part V come almost entirely from the Paris Notebook of 1903. The notebook reflects Joyce's wide-ranging reading at that time, and the various Paterian echoes in the notebook and in Part V reveal that the young Joyce certainly read Pater. Although the mature Joyce rejected as sterile and supercilious the self that Stephen represents, he nevertheless held fast to several of Pater's theories. A particular one is the reciprocal relationship between art and life and the notion that art's chief purpose is aesthetic pleasure. At the same time, Joyce could characterize Stephen as a pseudo-Paterian who, like Wilde and the young Yeats, misread Pater and formed a life-denying aesthetic. Thus, the mature Joyce is probably ridiculing Stephen's misprision of Pater rather than Pater himself.

Nevertheless, there are genuine Paterian aspects to Stephen's aesthetic theory that are intermingled with the self-indulgent misreadings. Stephen's view that the intellect and the imagination are analogous functions is nearly identical to Pater's important concept "the imaginative reason." His amoral and nonutilitarian idea of art recalls Pater's version of "art for art's sake," and his belief in relative rather than in absolute beauty is reminiscent of Pater's declarations in the "Preface" (1873). Finally, his three-part theory of artistic apprehension stresses the importance of the same formal qualities in art that Pater celebrates. In this regard, Stephen and Pater share a precursor in Flaubert, who is the wellspring for some of Stephen's theories and for Pater's own in the essay "Style."

An important element in Pater's aesthetics is his concept of "imaginative reason," a term that he borrows from Matthew Arnold. For Pater, a
sense/spirit synthesis occurs in the mind during an epiphanic moment: “art addresses not pure sense, still less pure intellect, but the ‘imaginative reason’ through the senses.” For Pater, this implies a fused perception of the sensible and the intelligible, whether it is between the form and the content of a work of art, or between a Platonic abstraction and its phenomenal counterpart:

the ideal examples of poetry and painting [are] those in which the constituent elements of the composition are so welded together, that the material or subject no longer strikes the intellect only; nor the form, the eye or the ear only; but form and matter, in their union or identity, present one single effect to the “imaginative reason,” that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol.

The aesthetic epiphany involves the interplay of the intellect and the senses. Once “art addresses not pure sense [only] but the ‘imaginative reason’ through the senses,” a sense/spirit synthesis occurs. At that moment, “every thought . . . is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol.” As in Stephen’s theory, this moment of aesthetic appreciation occurs for Pater after the stage of consonantia, in which one observes that “the constituent elements of a composition are . . . welded together.” Only when the imaginative reason perceives the synecdochic arrangement within the artwork does the epiphany occur.

Stephen argues along similar lines within the same sense/spirit framework. He sees the functions of the intellect and the imagination as distinct but analogous. For Pater, the synthesis between sense and intellect produces the imagination or “imaginative reason,” the faculty for aesthetic experience. Stephen may be building on this conception when he says that truth is to the intellect as beauty is to the imagination:

Plato, I believe, said that beauty is the splendour of truth. I don’t think that it has a meaning but the true and the beautiful are akin. Truth is beheld by the intellect which is appeased by the most satisfying relations of the intelligible: beauty is beheld by the imagination which is appeased by the most satisfying relations of the sensible. The first step in the direction of truth is to understand the frame and scope of the intellect itself, to comprehend the act itself of intellection. . . . The first step in the direction of beauty is to understand the frame and scope of the imagination, to comprehend the act itself of esthetic apprehension.

The question is whether, like Pater, Stephen believes that a sense/spirit synthesis occurs between the faculties of sensation and intellection during claritas. If so, Stephen would seem to be invoking Pater’s notion of “imaginative reason” here. For Pater and for the mature Joyce, the sense/spirit
processes ideally result in synthesis. The moment of claritas on the strand in Portrait, in which the bird-girl embodies both the sensual and the spiritual, and the symbiotic epiphany between “Stoom” and “Blephen” in “Ithaca” suggest that, like Pater, Joyce holds that a synthesis between sense and spirit occurs during claritas.

The theorizing Stephen in Portrait, however, does not envision this synthesis. He sees sensation and intellection as only analogous processes. Like Pater, Stephen holds that the aesthetic process of reception results in a purely subjective experience. James A. Druff is one who believes that claritas is for Stephen such a moment of sense/spirit synthesis. Druff inadvertently reveals that Pater’s concept of the imaginative reason and Stephen’s phase of claritas are so similar that they might be mistakenly regarded as identical. He maintains that Stephen “sees aesthetic [i.e. sensual] and intellectual cognition as moving along parallel tracts.” He later introduces the notion of claritas, this coincidence of direction and effect threatens to become an identity, whereby the two modes of perception, aesthetic and intellectual, merge in a grand and final stasis.” Here Druff’s comments are more applicable to Pater’s “imaginative reason” than to Stephen’s idea of claritas. He departs from both, however, when he adds that this fusion is the necessary result for Stephen because the perception of quiddity is an objective not a subjective moment of apprehension: “[Stephen] associates claritas with ‘the scholastic quidditas, the whatness of a thing,’ thereby underscoring what Father Noon asserts is Aquinas’s insistence that claritas is an existential property in the object rather than a ‘stage’ or ‘phase’ of the mind’s own act of knowing. In the final stage of esthetic apprehension, then, one confronts the truth of the object, undistorted by the act of perception.” The moment of radiant disclosure that Druff describes is neither Pater’s imaginative reason nor Stephen’s phase of claritas. His later assertion that the mind perceives an objective quidditas during the final phase bears no relation to either Pater or Stephen.

Contrary to Druff’s claims, Stephen, making a hairsplitting distinction, is careful to define aesthetic apprehension as the perception of beauty only, and to caution that its perception is relative to the viewer. For Stephen, beauty is not “truth, truth beauty,” and there is no Keatsian merger of these aspects of sense and intellect in the moment of claritas. Rather, claritas is the moment when the “supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the esthetic image” rather than an objective essence, “is apprehended luminously by the mind.” Stephen tells Lynch that these “relations of the sensible, visible to you through one form and to me through another, must therefore be the necessary qualities of beauty” [emphasis added]. He refers to “sensible” and not “intelligible” relations here, and, in his dualistic perceptual frame-


work, sensible relations refer to beauty, not to truth. Since they refer only to beauty and since they are "visible to you through one form and to me through another," the whole process is relative to one's own experiential aisthesis. The artwork, therefore, possesses no objectivity. Hence Druff's claim that at the moment of claritas "one confronts the truth of the object, undistorted by the act of perception," is implausible. In Stephen's theory, no less than in Pater's, the "distortion" of perception is the determining factor, and one perceives not the "truth of the object," but a (subjective) impression of it.¹⁵

Stephen and Pater both resist the notion of absolute beauty. The young Joyce himself argued against absolutes, and one of his earliest forays into Dublin literary society focused on the external conflict between the Absolute and relativity. Joyce told the neo-Platonist George Russell that "he abhorred the Absolute above everything else." Russell, as I mentioned earlier, concluded from this that Joyce was "infected by Pater's relative."¹⁶ In Portrait, Joyce has Stephen revise Aquinas's notion of claritas by removing the Platonic belief in an Absolute implicit within it:

[Quoted text]

Pater reveals his kinship with Stephen in his essay on "Coleridge" (1865, 1880): "Modern thought is distinguished from ancient by its cultivation of the 'relative' spirit in place of the 'absolute.' Ancient philosophy sought to arrest every object in an eternal outline, to fix thought in a necessary formula, and the varieties of life in a classification by 'kinds,' or genera. To the modern spirit nothing is, or can be rightly known, except relatively and under certain conditions."¹⁶ Both Pater and Joyce shun Platonic idealism: the "radiance" or beauty of an object is not the shadow of a Platonic universal, but an impression that one perceives at a certain moment in space and time. The mature Joyce, while typically affirming the Aristotelian real, would continue to exhibit his fascination with the relativist theories that Stephen and Pater advocate. Much of Joyce's work is an unresolved inquiry into the limits of both subjectivity and objective knowledge. The shifting subjectivity that pervades "Circe" and all of Finnegans Wake, in which, for instance, the wife of the protagonist, literally "in his own dream of a world," describes him through the prism of his own consciousness, is a lingering sign of the "infection" of Pater's relative on Joyce.
Joyce, however, does not believe that we are solipsists trapped within "the thick walls of personality." In "Proteus," Stephen's declaration that the material world is "there all the time without you: and ever shall be, world without end" reflects Joyce's Aristotelian preference. And, when in "Ulysses" Bloom tells Stephen to "lean on me" as they exit the tavern, Stephen feels "a strange kind of flesh of a different man approach him." Here Joyce's self-enclosed protagonist experiences an unmistakable moment of epistemological otherness. In the process, he moves from the abstract and the life-denying towards the physical, from the spirit of negation to that of earthly affirmation, both of which Molly and Bloom symbolize. Overall, Joyce suggests that each mind modifies a stable and affirmative object world. While he is rarely a thoroughgoing Aristotelian, a believer in "pure truth," neither is he a disciple of Berkeley or an extreme Paterian relativist.

Stephen also reveals a kinship with Pater in Part V when he argues in favor of "art for art's sake." He states that the aim of art is not to lead us towards action but towards contemplation. This is a belief that Pater shares with his devotees. When Stephen invokes Aristotle, he says that art should "induce" "an esthetic stasis, an ideal pity or an ideal terror." It is only "improper arts" that compel us towards action:

- The tragic emotion, in fact, is a face looking two ways, towards terror and towards pity, both of which are phases of it. You see I use the word "arrest." I mean that the tragic emotion is static. Or rather the dramatic emotion is. The feelings excited by improper art are kinetic, desire or loathing. Desire urges us to possess, to go to something; loathing urges us to abandon, to go from something. These are kinetic emotions. The arts which excite them, pornographical or didactic, are therefore improper arts. The esthetic emotion (I use the general term) is therefore static. The mind is arrested and raised above desire and loathing.

The passage echoes both Pater and Wilde. In "The Critic as Artist" (1891), Wilde asks whether "All art is immoral." "Yes. For emotion for the sake of emotion is the aim of art, and emotion for the sake of action is the aim of life, and of that practical organization of life that we call society." While "amoral" rather than "immoral" would be a better definition of Wildean art, Wilde's preference for "static" over "kinetic" emotion is implicit in his answer. Wilde's language throughout the passage so closely approximates Stephen's that one might conclude that the young Joyce developed his ideas (and perhaps his dialogue form) from Wilde's essay. Wilde states that "Yes, all the arts are immoral, except those baser forms of sensual or didactic art that seek to excite to action of evil or of good. For action of every kind belongs to the sphere of ethics. The aim of art is simply to create a mood."
Pater precedes both Joyce and Wilde in his assertion of the nonutilitarian nature of art. A passage from his essay on Wordsworth may be the source of these ideas:

That the end of life is not action but contemplation—"being" as distinct from "doing"—a certain disposition of the mind: is, in some shape or other, the principle of all the higher morality. In poetry, in art, if you enter into their true spirit at all, you touch this principle, in a measure: these, by their very sterility, are a type of beholding for the mere joy of beholding.... Wordsworth, and other poets... are the masters, the experts, in this art of impassioned contemplation. Their work is, not to teach lessons, or enforce rules, or even to stimulate to noble ends; but to withdraw the thoughts for a little while from the mere machinery of life, to fix them, with appropriate emotions, on the spectacle of those great facts in man's existence which no machinery affects, "on the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature..." [emphasis added]. (1874)25

Stephen would regard an "ideal pity" and an "ideal terror" as two of those "appropriate emotions" with which to view "the spectacle of those great facts in man's existence" that the artist mirrors in his work. His term for perfect aesthetic response is "esthetic stasis," while Pater's phrase is "impassioned contemplation"; but the goal is the same: to attain "the luminous silent stasis of esthetic pleasure" and "to withdraw the thoughts for a little while from the mere machinery of life."

Having defined art, with Pater and Wilde, as amoral, Stephen then attempts a definition of beauty. In the "Preface" to The Renaissance, Pater warns that "Many attempts have been made by writers on art and poetry to define beauty in the abstract, to express it in the most general terms, to find some universal formula for it."26 He concludes that these attempts are futile: "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."27 Stephen reaches a similar conclusion about the relativity of beauty. When he uses "woman" as an example, he tells Lynch that the "Greek, the Turk, the Chinese, the Copt, the Hottentot... all admire a different type of female beauty. That seems to be a maze out of which we cannot escape."28 Unlike Pater, he then suggests a partial route out of the labyrinth of relativity. He states that "though the same object may not seem beautiful to all people, all people who admire a beautiful object find in it certain relations which satisfy and coincide with the stages themselves of all esthetic apprehension."29 Hence "the most satisfying relations of the sensible must therefore correspond to the necessary phases of artistic apprehension. Find these and you find the qualities of universal beauty."30 While beauty
differs for individuals and cultures, there are certain formal relations of feature-to-feature that transcend local difference.

Stephen’s aesthetic here recalls Pater’s, but Pater would probably reject Stephen’s rather systematic approach to aesthetic apprehension and its assumption of shared stages of response. Pater insists that “to define beauty, not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible, to find, not its universal formula, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of aesthetics.”31 “Formula” is a key term here. Stephen presents a “formula”—a solution to the labyrinth—with the tripartite theory based on Aquinas. He believes that these can reveal the underlying “relations” that define beauty within a culture. Stephen’s three stages of “esthetic apprehension” are a remedy, but Pater would surely deny that such a system “expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of beauty.” He would probably dismiss it as an ineffectual “universal formula,” which he advises readers of the “Preface” to avoid.

Unlike Stephen, Pater offers no antidote; however, he implies on occasion that universal beauty does exist—even if it defies categorical definition. This is most evident in the celebrated Mona Lisa passage. Stephen notes that “the Greek, the Turk . . . all admire a different type of female beauty,”32 but Pater implies that there are “compartments” within the maze, certain qualities of female beauty that different generations admire in their own way and through their own aesthetic idiom. For some, the Mona Lisa is spiritual, “and, like St. Anne, [is] the mother of Mary.” For others, she is sensual, and, “like Leda, [is] the mother of Helen of Troy.”33 As an amalgam of the types of beauty that Pater “defines” in the passage, Leonardo’s portrait of female beauty remains relative, multi-faceted, and is consistent with Pater’s aesthetic. Unlike Stephen, Pater proposes no solution to the maze of subjectivism. He offers a gallery rather than a labyrinth: great works of art embody numerous aspects of female beauty that each culture or individual is drawn to because of a unique sensibility.

There are no systematic phases in this process of reception. Since Pater describes “imaginative reason” as a spontaneous disclosure, he would deny that the mind functions in the systematic way that Stephen outlines. Stephen presupposes that this three-stage faculty/apparatus for aesthetic experience is inherent in every consciousness, operating involuntarily. As Stephen explains it, the mind passes ineluctably from phase to phase in aesthetic perception. The mind first separates the aesthetic object from the rest of its environment, then discerns its parts as a unified pattern. After the mind realizes that the object is both a single thing and a unit that contains
component parts, it achieves an epiphanic vision of its unique “radiance.” This involuntary cognitive model is so contrived and long-winded that one must conclude that Joyce is parodying his own youthful aesthetic in his portrait of Stephen. While one intuits the presence of Pater throughout Stephen's triparte theory of integritas, consonantia, and claritas, Pater nowhere presents aesthetic appreciation as such an elaborately delineated process. Hence, there is no reason to believe that Joyce was dismissing Pater in his largely ironic treatment of Stephen in Part V of Portrait.

While Pater's work does not directly influence Stephen's three-part theory of aesthetic reception, circumstantial parallels exist. Stephen's integritas and consonantia both recall ascesis, a term that Pater uses to denote both restraint in Epicurean experience and a formal quality in art. Pater calls ascesis the process by which the artist purges away all that does not belong to the artwork. Like Aristotle, Pater states that there should be nothing extraneous or left over in an artwork. Everything must contribute to the integrity of the whole:

"Surplusage! he [the artist] will dread that, as the runner on his muscles. For in truth all art does but consist in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem- engraver blowing away the last particle of invisible dust, back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be, lying somewhere, according to Michelangelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone."

Pater says that the “true artist” must always remember that “as the very word ornament indicates what is in itself non-essential, so the ‘one beauty’ of all literary style is of its [“the ‘one beauty’”] very essence, and independent, in prose and verse alike, of all removable decoration.” Ornamentation, therefore, may violate the form and integritas of the artwork. Like Pater, Stephen is hyper-attentive to form. A similar purging of “removable decoration” occurs during Stephen's description of integritas, where the viewer's mind, rather than the artist's, separates the substance from the “surplusage” and apprehends “a boundary line drawn about the object to be apprehended.” Stephen continues: “the esthetic image is first luminously apprehended as self-bounded and self-contained upon the immeasurable background of space or time which is not it.” The artist “apprehends its wholeness. That is integritas.” This passage recalls Pater's concept of ascesis, wherein the artist distinguishes the artwork from the rest of its immediate environment.
In Stephen’s definition of *integritas*, the viewer performs this separating, but the effect is a similar sublime economy. Pater anticipates Stephen when he describes how Michelangelo cuts a statue from “the rough-hewn block of stone.” In Stephen’s phrase, the discarded work would be part of the “background of space and time which is not [the artwork].” During *integritas*, Stephen describes how the percipient appreciates the economy of design, the ascesis, that the Paterian artist employs in his work.

Aspects of Stephen’s second phase, *consonantia*, also have antecedents in Pater. *Consonantia* focuses on the internal structure of an artwork:

—Then, said Stephen, you pass from point to point, led by its formal lines; you apprehend it as balanced part against part within its limits; you feel the rhythm of its structure. In other words the synthesis of immediate perception is followed by the analysis of apprehension. Having first felt that it is one thing you feel now that it is a thing. You apprehend it as complex, multiple, divisible, separable, made up of its parts, the result of its parts and their sum, harmonious [Joyce’s emphasis].

In “Style,” Pater declares that “To give the phrase, the sentence, the structural member; the entire composition, song, or essay, a similar unity with its subject and with itself—style is in the right when it tends towards that. All depends upon the original unity, the vital wholeness.” Pater says that the “apprehending mind” focuses primarily on the “literary architecture” of a work, the internal arrangement of its parts that the artist has set forth. In “The School of Giorgione” (1877), Pater shifts from architecture to a less tangible medium: we find his famous statement that “all art constantly aspires to the condition of music,” for it is impossible in music “to distinguish the matter from the form.” Music, more than either narrative or architecture, is the ideal art because the structure is the content. In “Style,” Pater again stresses form as the most important aspect of an artwork:

The otiose, the facile, surplusage: why are these abhorrent to the true literary artist, except because, in literary as in all other art, structure is all-important, felt, or painfully missed, everywhere?—that architectural conception of a work, which foresees the end in the beginning and never loses sight of it, and in every part is conscious of all the rest, till the last sentence does but, with undiminished vigour, unfold and justify the first... [emphasis added].

While Joyce outgrew other aspects of Stephen’s aesthetic, he increasingly carried forth this early ideal of unified design. *Portrait* and *Ulysses* contain elaborately “harmonious” structural symmetries, and, in *Finnegans Wake*, “the last sentence”—as Pater says in the passage above—literally “unfolds and justifies the first.” Such intricacy of design would have gratified Pater, for whom “one of the greatest pleasures of really good prose literature is in
the critical tracing out of that conscious artistic structure, and the pervading sense of it as we read."

The final phase of perception in Stephen's model, *claritas*, is reminiscent of sections of the "Preface" to *The Renaissance*. Stephen's definition of *claritas* as the "luminous silent stasis of esthetic pleasure" echoes Pater's description of aesthetic "virtue." Pater states that

the function of the aesthetic critic is to distinguish, to analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair personality in life or in a book, produces this special impression of beauty. . . . His end is reached when he has disengaged that virtue, and noted it as a chemist notes some natural element, for himself and others.

Pater applies this process of "disengaging" or abstracting the "virtue" of an artist's work to the study of Wordsworth:

scattered up and down [his verse], sometimes fusing and transforming entire compositions . . . sometimes, as if at random, depositing a fine crystal here or there, in a matter it does not wholly search through and transmute, we trace the action of his unique, incommunicable faculty, that strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things, and of man's life as a part of nature. . . . Well! that is the virtue, the active principle in Wordsworth's poetry; and then the function of the aesthetic critic is to follow up that active principle, to disengage it, to mark the degree in which it penetrates its verse [Pater's emphasis].

This "tracing" "up and down [Wordsworth's] verse" to discover his "unique, incommunicable faculty" leads to a disclosure of "virtue" that is akin to Stephen's *claritas*. The uniquely distinguishing "whatness" of Wordsworth's poetry is the "strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things, and of man's life as a part of nature." Stephen regards the discovery of *quidditas* as an inductive and largely spontaneous operation. For Pater, it is both inductive and deductive: the critic first gleans "virtue" in a moment of spontaneous apprehension within a single work, and then goes on to "follow up that active principle [virtue or *quidditas*], to disengage it, to mark the degree in which it penetrates" an entire oeuvre.

What conclusions should we draw from these approximate and intermittent parallels? Although the structure of Stephen's theory comes from Aquinas, Joyce must have been aware that Pater said very similar things. If Joyce intended to satirize Stephen as a Dublin aesthete, he probably realized that such a figure would be saturated with the ideas found in the "Preface" and the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance* and in "Style." Joyce might have felt that he had to make his protagonist echo the Pater of these three famous pieces. One should consider, however, that Pater did not write in a critical
vacuum, and that he and the young Joyce/Stephen may have formed similar theories from the same sources. They both appear to be drawing from Aristotle in their concepts of "wholeness" and unity of design. (Aristotelian economy may have come to Joyce via Aquinas, who sought to baptize Aristotle for Christendom.) Aristotle stressed that the artist should strive for economy and that the finished product should possess an irreducible inter-dependency of the kind Stephen describes in consonantia. A more intriguing shared inspiration is Flaubert. While Joyce read the novelist's letters in French, he may have discovered Flaubert through Pater. Pater wrote the first review in English of Flaubert's letters (Sketches and Reviews). In "Style," he also quotes Guy de Maupassant, who uses the term "rhythm" in discussing Flaubertian form. Stephen uses the word in a similar formal context when he discusses consonantia. Although Joyce, like Pater, may have drawn directly from both Flaubert and Maupassant's notions of formal "rhythm," it is possible that Joyce developed his concept of rhythm from Pater's essay, which discusses Flaubertian impersonality, artistic form, and "rhythm."

Stephen's description of the rhythm of form in his discussion of consonantia and his concept of the necessary impersonality of the godlike artist have an antecedent in Pater's admiring discussion of Flaubert's form in "Style." Pater quotes Guy de Maupassant on Flaubert:

"For him, the form was the work itself. As in living creatures, the blood, nourishing the body, determines its very contour and external aspect, just so, to his mind, the matter, the basis, in a work of art, imposed, necessarily, the unique, the just expression, the measure, the rhythm-[emphasis added]- the form [Pater's emphasis] in all its characteristics."46

The term "rhythm" appears when Stephen discusses how the mind appreciates the form of an artwork during the second phase of aesthetic apprehension: "you apprehend it as balanced part against part within its limits; you feel the rhythm of its structure."47 Later, Stephen may be paraphrasing either Maupassant's essay or, more likely, Pater's quotation when he uses a metaphor of blood nourishing a body to describe his ideal of formalized impersonality: "The personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea."48 These ideas probably came as much from Joyce's reading of "Style" as they did from his reading of Flaubert. Whether Joyce was conscious of these appropriations from "Style" when he was writing Portrait is unclear. Stephen's aesthetic theories in Part V are, almost verbatim, those of the young Joyce in 1903, and Joyce included in his novel these theories from the Paris notebook with little revision. Hence Part V reflects the meditations of the younger Joyce, who, at the turn of the century, was developing an aesthetic compounded of Aristotle
and Aquinas, Flaubert, and Pater. Although Joyce distances himself from his younger self in Portrait, this does not necessarily mean that the older Joyce rejected Pater in the process. Rather, he may have rejected his earlier [mis]readings of Pater and the contribution of fin-de-siècle appropriations of Pater to Stephen’s life-denying aesthetic. If Joyce did come to reject Pater, then we must account for the fact that Patér’s influence nevertheless pervades his work.

Such a paradox might validate Harold Bloom and Perry Meisel’s suggestions that Joyce suffered from “influence anxiety.” Bloom states that “to know Pater, and to apprehend his influence not only on Stevens and Yeats, but on Joyce, Eliot, Pound, and many other writers, we need to place Pater in his Oedipal context in the cultural situation of his own time.” Bloom says that Pater’s chief father/precursor is Ruskin, “his only begetter.” Meisel applies this notion to the Moderns and argues that “what Arnold wants—and what Pater will forbid no matter his similar desires—is what defines the will to modernity in all its aspects and all its eras: the clearing away of that inescapable wake of precedence or influence . . . .” Using Bloom’s Oedipal paradigm, one may infer that Joyce needed to kill off the “father”—here the formative literary influence of Pater—in order to achieve artistic autonomy. Meisel notes that this ideal of creative autonomy is impossible. He argues that, beginning with Portrait (which he calls “a lengthy rewriting of Pater’s first imaginary portrait, ‘The Child in the House’”), Joyce continuously reveals the pervasiveness of Pater’s influence. This influence renders Portrait and even Ulysses, in Meisel’s estimation, anachronisms rather than Modernist texts. For Meisel and for Bloom, pure originality, no less than pure impersonality, is impossible, and Joyce is unable to cast off a major precursor, that undeniable father—Pater.

Unlike Stephen, who paraphrases Flaubert without attribution, Pater maintains that total impersonality in art is an impossible ideal: “Impersonality in art, the literary ideal of Gustave Flaubert, is perhaps no more possible than realism. The artist will be felt [Pater’s emphasis]; his subjectivity must and will colour the incidents, as his very bodily eye selects the aspects of things.” For Pater, the artist does not “refine himself out of existence” in the structure and substance of an artwork. The form, the “‘style, is the man,’ complex or simple, in his individuality, his plenary sense of what he really has to say, his sense of the world.”
The artist's "sense of the world," for Stephen, is more important than the world itself. To Stephen, beauty is not only relative but separate from and an improvement upon life. This is a characteristic aesthetic doctrine of the *fin de siècle*, but not necessarily one inherent in Pater. Stephen's life-denying aesthetic emerges more clearly when one reads *Portrait* in the light of the novel's epigraph from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as Hugh Kenner does. The complete line from the epigraph, which is from Ovid's section on Daedalus and Icarus, translates as "Then to new arts his cunning thought applies,/And to improve the work of nature tries." For Kenner, the passage constitutes Joyce's coded announcement that he intends Stephen to be a sterile aesthete:

Stephen does not, as the careless reader may suppose, become an artist by rejecting church and country. Stephen does not become an artist at all. Country, church, and mission are an inextricable unity, and in rejecting the two that seem to hamper him, he rejects also the one on which he has set his heart. Improving the work of nature is his obvious ambition ("But you could not have a green rose. But perhaps somewhere in the world you could"), and it logically follows from the aesthetic he expounds to Lynch. It is a neo-Platonic aesthetic.54

This is the aestheticism of Wilde, who states in *Intentions* that "Art finds her own perfection within, and not outside of, herself. She is not to be judged by any external standard of resemblance. She is a veil, rather than a mirror. . . . Hers are the 'forms more real than living man, and hers the great archetypes of which things that have existence are but unfinished copies."55 This last point expresses the Platonic coloring of Wilde's notion that art is a model for life and that life imitates art—a wry application of the idea that life is an imitation of Platonic forms. Joyce's reference on the first page of *Portrait* to a green rose also invokes Wilde, who made famous the green carnation. Wilde found nature to be entirely inadequate for not having created a green carnation, so he colored one daily for himself. Ehmann says that "with a hint of decadence, the flower blended art and nature";56 but for Wilde, it is a symbol of the aesthete's desire to improve upon nature.

In "Style," Pater departs from both Wilde and Stephen on this point. The relation between art and life remains reciprocal throughout his critical writings from *The Renaissance* to *Appreciations*. In "Style" he writes:

For just in proportion as the writer's aim, consciously or unconsciously, comes to be the transcribing, not of the world, not of mere fact, but of his sense of it, he becomes an artist, his work a *fine* art; and good art (as I hope ultimately to show) in proportion to the truth of his presentment of that sense; as in those humbler or plainer functions of literature also, truth—truth to bare fact, there—is the essence of such artistic quality as they may have.
Truth! there can be no merit, no craft at all, without that. And further, all beauty, is in the long run only fineness of truth... [Pater’s emphasis].

This emphasis upon the “truth” of the artist’s experience contrasts with Wilde. Whereas he extols the craft of masking truth in art in “The Decay of Lying,” Pater more closely resembles the mature Joyce, whose artistic mission is to mirror truth and all the frankness of life, something which both Dublin’s middle-class and the “dreamy” aesthetes of the Irish Literary Revival found distasteful. The Stephen who champions Ibsen in *Stephen Hero* is closer to the mature Joyce than the dandified Stephen of *Portrait*. Within the sense/spirit dialectic that shapes his experience, Stephen in Part V inhabits a phase of pure “spirit.” As Kenner points out, his desire to fly by the “nets” of family, religion, and nationalism distances him from the world. In Part V, he returns to an abstract phase, where he tries “to build a breakwater of order and elegance against the sordid tide of life without [around] him.”

Such is Stephen’s attitude towards Dublin by the end of the novel. For Joyce, Stephen’s theories more closely resemble the “neo-Platonic aesthetic” of those aesthetes who misconstrued Pater than Joyce’s (and Pater’s) belief in the importance of the stream of life in art.

The separation of art and life is also central to Stephen’s division of art into “lyrical,” “epic,” and “dramatic” forms. The lyrical form is the most personal and thus for Stephen the least Flaubertian mode of literary creation. The epic form results when the artist’s personality passes into the action he describes and “the narrative is no longer purely personal.” The dramatic form results when the artist’s personality disappears entirely from the work (“refines itself out of existence”). Within the drama, the artist’s voice is nowhere directly expressed. As characters speak, the artist, “like the god of creation,” is an “invisible” presence “beyond or above his handiwork.” The audience cannot identify any character with the author. This diminishes their capacity for “impure” kinetic responses. Joyce himself employed the lyrical form with *Portrait*, since the young Joyce is clearly recognizable in Stephen. His aesthetic mode in *Ulysses* approximates the epic form, since Joyce’s personality “flows around” such figures as Stephen, Bloom, and Buck Mulligan. Yet the artist’s personality is still clearly visible in these protagonists. They persist even in late episodes such as “Eumaeus” and “Ithaca,” where the narrative voice strives for inhuman detachment. With the Flaubert who would confess “Madame Bovary c’est moi,” Joyce in *Ulysses* reveals that the achievement of absolute impersonality in art is impossible.

Pater says as much when he states that “the artist will be felt; his subjectivity must and will colour the incidents.” Pater feels that this is not only true in art but even in criticism, a seemingly more objective medium. Unlike
his descendants Pound and Eliot, Pater felt that self-effacement in any discursive medium is impossible. His disciple Wilde seized upon this notion and fabricated the figure of “the critic as artist,” for whom the existing artwork becomes the material from which the critic shapes new creations. Far from being an Eliotic “escape from personality,” Wildean art is a continual creation of personality—or personalities. For Pater, and still more for Wilde, no artist or critic ever transcends the lyrical stage, even if he is producing a work of drama. The self is either expressed or invented, never successfully negated.

Stephen contends that the artist achieves invisibility once he reaches the dramatic stage, while for Pater, both “impersonality” and “realism” are impossible in art because a mutually dependent relationship between reality and the imagination always exists. Stephen holds that “the esthetic image in the dramatic form is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination.” The “life” that Stephen refers to is probably the artist’s, but within the escapist context of aestheticism, it suggests life in general. On one level, Stephen’s view that the artist “purifies” and “reprojects” life recalls the “neo-Platonic aesthetic” of Wilde in “The Decay of Lying.” Both Stephen and Wilde might have found inspiration in Pater—but only by appropriating some of his pronouncements outside their broader philosophical context. Although Stephen’s concept of impersonality in art differs from Wilde’s theory of art as personality, both share an aesthetic desire to idealize life. Stephen’s desire to purify and reproject life echoes a disturbing passage in Pater’s essay “Winckelmann”: “the basis of all artistic genius lies in the power of conceiving humanity in a new and striking way, of putting a happy world of its own creation in place of the meaner world of our common days, generating around itself an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction, selecting, transforming, recombining the images it transmits, according to the choice of the imaginative intellect.” At first glance, this sounds like the escapist aesthetic that Kenner criticizes in Stephen, and the mature Joyce might have said that it exemplifies the distortions of his Panglossian narrator in “Cyclops” and the dreamy idealism of the Dublin aesthetes. Like Stephen, Pater seems to be calling for the “purification” and the “reprojection” of life in art. Later in the passage, however, Pater states that art has the power to create “a special situation which lifts or glorifies a character, in itself not poetical.” This re-establishes Pater’s belief in a reciprocal relationship between life and art rather than championing an art that glosses over the mundane. Joyce, in his definition of epiphany, echoes this when he states that during epiphanic moments “a sudden spiritual manifestation” emerges from what Pater calls a “character in itself not poetical.”
“Style” more clearly reveals Pater’s notion that art is the result of the interaction of the imagination with reality: “the writer’s aim ... comes to be the transcribing, not of the world, not of mere fact, but his imaginative sense of fact.”64 Pater also emphasizes that “truth to bare fact”65 as subjectively felt by the artist is essential in artistic creation. How can a relativist like Pater speak of “bare fact”? Pater qualifies this by stating that art is the saturation of “fact” with the artist’s personality: “Literary art, that is, like all art which is in any way imitative or reproductive of fact-form, or colour, or incident—is the representation of such fact as connected with [the] soul of a specific personality.”66 The source of art is the interaction of the artist’s personality (through imagination) with an underlying but manifold reality. For Pater, therefore, art and life, the artwork and the artist’s personality, are mutually dependent. His statement about “truth” in art distinguishes the actual Pater from the high priest of escapist beauty that Wilde and the Dublin aesthetes constructed. Ultimately, Pater has as much in common with the mature Joyce and follower of Ibsen as with Wilde, his most famous disciple.

Stephen’s concept of the dramatic form as life purified and reprojected from the imagination derives from his ideal of artistic depersonalization, and he draws upon Pater in questionable ways to develop this theory. In Portrait, he states that “the personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea.”67 Later, in Ulysses, Stephen says that “as we, or Mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies ... from day to day, their molecules shuttled to and fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image.” As we have seen, this passage owes much to Pater’s metaphor in the “Conclusion” to The Renaissance. Stephen borrows Pater’s phrase “weaving and unweaving of ourselves,” and, like Pater, he applies the Heraclitean flux to both “sense” and “spirit”: Stephen says that not only the body but also the spirit or personality is fluid.

In the first paragraph of the “Conclusion,” Pater describes how “our physical life is a perpetual motion ... [of] the passage of the blood, the waste and repairing of the eye, the modifications of the tissues of the brain. ...”68 The second paragraph applies Heraclitus’s model of change to personal identity: “Or if we begin with the inward world of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid....”69 In a passage that appeared in the original version of the essay in the Westminster Review (1868), Pater uses a Flaubertian metaphor nearly identical to Stephen’s when he speaks of the unstable nature of the personality. The Heraclitean flux that governs the spirit creates “the image of one washed out beyond the bar in a sea at ebb, losing even his personality, as the elements of which he is composed pass into new combinations. ... it is himself that he loses at every moment.”70 For Stephen and
Flaubert, the “new combinations” into which the artist’s personality passes are the characters within an artwork. And in the artwork, to use Pater’s words, “it is himself [the artist] that he loses at every moment.”

Another _Portrait_ passage that echoes Pater paradoxically illustrates Stephen’s unPaterian desire to separate art from life. The scene reveals not the Ibsenist Stephen who, like Pater, embraces actual experience, but the aesthete Stephen, the pseudo-Paterian who seeks to purify and reproject life in order to put “a happy world of [his] own creation in place of the meaner world of [his] common days.” The scene appears in Part IV, where Stephen is caught in a “spirit” phase which abstracts him from life. The aesthetic in the scene corresponds to the pious Stephen’s spirituality in the same chapter, since from two perspectives—first spiritual and then artistic—Stephen rejects sense experience. That Stephen returns to this theory of art in Part V indicates that his epiphany on the strand, which embodies a sensual/spiritual aesthetic, produces only a short-lived resolution. Like his theory of art in Part V, this moment in Part IV reveals a life-denying aesthetic:

He drew forth a phrase from his treasure and spoke it softly to himself:

—A day of dappled seaborne clouds.

The phrase and the day and the scene harmonized in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? He allowed them to glow and fade, hue after hue: sunrise gold, the russet and green of apple orchards, azure of waves, the greyfringed fleece of clouds. No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour? Or was it that, being weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycoloured and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose?\(^{11}\)

The style of the meditation is worthy of _Marius_, and one wonders if, at this point, Joyce is presenting Stephen as a _fin-de-siècle_ aesthete. The phrase “to glow and fade” recalls the famous phrase from the “Conclusion,” “to burn always with a hard, gem-like flame.” In general, Stephen’s entire meditation reflects a _fin-de-siècle_ sensibility, beginning with the blurring of interior and exterior worlds, which is the signature of Symbolist poetry. The highly mannered, florid writing style is itself Paterian, as is the hyper-sensitivity to the sound of language: the lingering over a “rhythmic rise and fall” in feeling and sound produced by a period after the phrase “a day of dappled seaborne clouds.” No more accurate description of Pater’s own style exists than the phrase “lucid supple periodic prose.” Stephen’s ambitions here to become a prose stylist recall Pater’s advice to Wilde: “Why do you always write poetry?
Why do you not write prose? Prose is so much more difficult”—and more precious, Pater would probably say.

Despite these hints and echoes, the underlying substance of this passage from Part IV of Portrait is unpaterian. Stephen realizes that he “drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycoloured and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions. . . .” Drawing pleasure from the “glowing sensible world through a prism of language manycoloured” is a fitting summary both of Pater’s aesthetic and of the epiphany Stephen is about to experience. As we have seen in “Style,” Pater speaks of the necessarily complementary relationship between truth and the artist’s subjective, “imaginative sense of fact.” For Pater, the “glowing sensible world” that Stephen shuns offers an invitation to each subjective mind that apprehends it. Nothing is more Paterian than “the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycoloured and richly storied.” Each subjective ego luxuriates in the sensual splendors of its own multi-coloured “dream of [the] world” behind the “thick wall of personality.”

By contrast, the “green rose,” which invokes Wilde’s green carnation and links Stephen with the aesthetes, emerges as a fitting symbol of Stephen’s life-denying aesthetic. Ironically, Stephen chooses as an aesthetic symbol the flower and color that represents Ireland and that he recalls from a song in his childhood. He lisps “his song” about “the green wothe” as an infant, but later reflects that “you could not have a green rose.” Already dreaming of an escape from quotidian life, the adolescent Stephen adds that “But perhaps somewhere in the world you could.” Wilde would respond that in the world of art you can, and, in Wildean fashion, young Stephen increasingly seeks to escape from what he sees as Dublin’s sordid and crude environment through the green rose of art. Nowhere does Stephen register the irony that he has chosen as an artistic emblem the symbolic color and flora of the land from which he desires to escape. Joyce’s point here is that the artist cannot separate art from life or improve on life through art, even when he believes he is doing so. Stephen takes this green rose aesthetic with him to Paris at the end of the novel, and it leads to his Icarian fall into artistic sterility. We find him in this state at the beginning of Ulysses, where the green rose has been replaced by the “snot green” Irish sea that laps at his tower.

In Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts (1964), Maurice Beebe discusses two contrasting sense/spirit aesthetics: one that embraces experience and one
(the neo-Platonic aesthetic described by Hugh Kenner) that rejects it. The artist who inhabits an ivory tower is divorced from life, while the one who goes to the “sacred fount” uses life as his material:

What I call the Sacred Fount tradition tends to equate art with experience and assumes that the true artist is one who lives not less, but more fully and intensely than others. Within this tradition art is essentially the re-creation of experience. The Ivory Tower tradition, on the other hand, exalts art above life and insists that the artist can make use of life only if he stands aloof—“The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, paring his fingernails.”

Within the sense/spirit paradigm I have been employing, Beebe’s commentary reflects the difference between the sense-loving Pater, who advocates immersion in the stream of life, and the abstract Stephen, who shuns the “sordid tide of life.” Beebe’s assertion that “the true artist is one ... who lives more fully and intensely than others” echoes the famous passage in the “Conclusion” that “not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen by the finest senses? ... To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life.” Pater restates this aesthetic in *Marius* in the chapters “Animula Vagula” and “The New Cyrenaicism,” where Marius begins to develop his Epicurean philosophy. As in the earlier “Conclusion,” Pater acknowledges the Heraclitean flux of experience, and his hero seeks to adapt himself to it: “It was as if, recognizing in perpetual motion the law of nature, Marius identified his own way of life cordially with it, ‘throwing himself into the stream,’ so to speak. He too must maintain a harmony with that soul of motion in things, by constantly renewed mobility of character.” Thus, as an evolving artist, Marius visits the sacred fount and “[throws] himself into the stream” so that his art might become, as Beebe says, “essentially the re-creation of experience.” Marius is drawn to the idea of becoming an artist precisely because he loves the sensual world: “Could he but arrest, for others also, certain clauses of experience, as the imaginative memory presented them to himself! In those grand hot summers, he would have imprisoned the very perfume of the flowers. To create, to live. . . .”

Stephen pays rhetorical homage to the same activity at the close of Part IV of *Portrait*, but it is more a posture than a felt commitment. As Part V reveals, he is far from “creating life out of life.” This maxim emerges in Pater’s essay “Style,” and it is ironic that those who followed him, such as Wilde and Yeats, insisted that art was above and beyond the stream of life (which, like Stephen, they find “sordid”). It is fitting that Beebe feels that “the Ivory
Tower tradition equates art with religion rather than experience. The frequency with which the authors of artist-novels describe the creation of art as 'divine,' the sanctuary of the artist as 'holy,' or the nature of the artist as 'godlike' or 'priestly,' is an inheritance from the classic analogy of creator with Creator.  

Stephen, the "eternal priest of the imagination," who conceives of himself as the "god of his creation," makes this analogy comically explicit. Unlike God, however, the artist cannot create ex nihilo. Hence, as Pater also advises, he must drink from the sacred fount of experience. The religion of art that Stephen has concocted in Part V reveals only the abstract "spirit" phase that he inhabits in Joyce's sense/spirit framework. Both Kenner and Beebe imply that, because he tries to "fly by the nets" of family, religion, nationalism, and Dublin life, Stephen shuns the sacred fount and remains enclosed in the ivory tower. It is there, in Martello Tower, above the ebb and flow of the life-giving sea, that we find him at the start of Ulysses.

Such a view of Stephen emerges from Richard Poirier's "Pater, Joyce, Eliot," which reveals a Pater who is far removed from his descendants (including Stephen) who created an escapist aesthetic. Rather than describing Pater as the father of fin-de-siècle escapism, Poirier examines the importance to Pater of the immersion of the self in the flux of sensation. Pater's love of sensate reality was so strong that he feared the dangers of valuing it to excess. Arguing that Pater advises how to avoid "spontaneous combustion" while burning with a "hard, gem-like flame," Poirier notes that Pater "feared getting lost altogether in the flood of free sensation that he recommends.... Pater is famous for recommending the maximum degree of intensity in response to experience, and yet you will notice that he is equally insistent that to produce and sustain this intensity requires a high degree of calculated self-curtailment."  

Ascesis "curtails" the flood of experience that can be overwhelming. Despite Pater's belief that the aim of life is to "get as many pulsations" as possible out of intense moments, he cautions that the self may be obliterated by the flow of sensations from the outside world. In this regard Pater anticipates Eliot's Prufrock and Joyce's Stephen, who fear a dissolution of being in a sea of subjective phenomena.

Several of Pater's protagonists welcome the flood of sensation; Poirier, like Beebe and Kenner, however, notes that the Stephen of Portrait does not. Joyce's symbol for sensual reality is often the sea or water, an element in which Stephen refuses to bathe. Noting that Joyce echoes Pater's idea of eternal flux within our personalities as well as our bodies in a passage from Part II, Poirier argues that this is merely part of Stephen's futile attempt at maintaining a solipsistic existence. Stephen tries to "build a breakwater of order and elegance against the sordid tide of life" both within himself and
in his environment. The attempt is futile because the world of sensation cannot be wished away. The material world may be unverifiable, but his own phenomenal existence is not: “From without as well as from within the water had flowed over his barriers.” Poirier contrasts Pater’s sense of “delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat” with Stephen’s reactions to “the sordid tide of life.” This attitude makes his Icarian falls into Dublin’s mire intensely painful. Stephen’s potential rebirth occurs during his baptismal experiences with Bloom, the hypostatic waterbearer, in the final chapters of *Ulysses*.

Stephen is far from this transformation in Part V of *Portrait*. The villanelle that Stephen writes in this chapter reflects an ivory tower aesthetic and his preference for “contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions” over the “glowing sensible world.” The poem’s sense of world-weary exhaustion and emphasis upon pure rhythmic sound owes much to Mallarmé and the *fin de siècle*; and its mixture of the sacred and the profane recalls Baudelaire. One thinks especially of his poem “Harmonie du Soir” (1857), which similarly employs religious iconography within an erotic context. (Stephen’s temptress is herself “une fleur du mal.”) The poem is also in the tradition of the poetry of pseudo-Paterians like the youthful Yeats, who celebrates the rose of the world in sundry tones of enervated longing and life-denying prayers. The rose, like Stephen’s temptress, symbolizes a transcendent female principle that does not correspond to any specific woman. The villanelle was also a favorite form of the *fin-de-siècle* poet Ernest Dowson, whom Yeats later numbered among the “tragic generation.” Curiously, Stephen’s poem itself was inspired by an intense sensory experience: a wet dream he seems to have had on the night after he saw E.C. “flirting” with a priest. Unlike the wet dream that follows his vision of the bird-girl at the end of Part IV, this one carries no celebration of the joys of sensate life. Stephen begins composing the villanelle moments after the dream. Although E.C. might have precipitated the dream, she does not figure prominently either in the dream or the poem, whose shadowy temptress is a transcendent archetype. Robert Scholes maintains that the temptress represents a typological synthesis between Eve and Mary, but her identity seems less clearly circumscribed. She does not correspond to a particular female, nor is she a composite of the women in Stephen’s life. While the poem may owe its unacknowledged inspiration to Stephen’s dreamy immersion in the “sacred fount” of his own libido, it offers only “the ecstasy of seraphic life” not the ecstasy of Eros. Although Joyce here suggests a hidden analogy between artistic creation and sexuality, which he will later elaborate in *Ulysses*, Stephen’s “spiritual copulation” with the temptress, which leads to the creation of the villanelle, falls short of the real thing. The self-indulgent emptiness of the poem hints that
if Stephen is to be a creative poet rather than a sterile aesthete, he must experience sexual love.

The danger of artistic sterility resulting from minute attention to form in art emerges as an issue in Pater as it does in Joyce. The mature Joyce, for all of his emphasis upon sensate life, was sometimes tempted to labors of Flaubertian impersonality and elaborate structuring that sometimes threaten the mimetic world of *Ulysses*. This emphasis on depersonalized structure in art has led some to question whether Joyce's end-products are organic or merely contrived. D. H. Lawrence believed that any formal self-consciousness in art was deadening, and in *Ulysses*, he found only a "long-drawn-out fourteen-volume death-agony." As the Linati schema indicates, the structural elaborations in *Ulysses* become increasingly obsessive. Does this lead Joyce to the sterility that he satirizes in Stephen? In composing *Ulysses* Joyce employed Homeric and Viconian parallels, felt compelled to make an organ and a color predominate in each chapter, organized the chapters into triads, and made the third chapter a synthesis of the two preceding ones. For Lawrence, such a form-making novelist is a prisoner of self-conscious design, and such an attitude towards art reveals a self-destructive sensibility rather than a creative one. Lawrence perhaps overlooks the abundant life of Joyce's narrative, and Bloom certainly embodies "blood intimacy"—a characteristic valued by Lawrence—almost as much as any of Lawrence's gamekeepers. As James Maddox suggests, "this deep level which Joyce points toward in Bloom's being may seem unnecessarily vague, but this level of being is as indefinable and ungraspable as Lawrence's states of blood consciousness. A major difference between the two writers lies in their presentation of this deep self." Lawrence attempts to describe the unconscious self directly; yet he must revert to metaphor in one way or another: an animal often serves to symbolize a character's primordial identity. The unconscious self of Joyce's characters, however, emerges "synecdochically": various details of a character's deeper nature appear throughout the narrative. An unconscious identity emerges after the gradual unfolding of the "details of character." Despite Joyce's shared concern with a deeper primordial self, Lawrence's critique challenges the appropriateness of his literary form, a principal concern of both Joyce and Pater.

Pater offers two ways of looking at artworks that reveal intricate form. One way is to view the artwork as a machine-like creation that possesses a superhuman symmetry provided by a force beyond the artist's consciousness. Another way is to view it as a complex but spontaneous, always evolving structure akin to the human body. Stephen says that "art is the 'human' disposition of sensible and intelligible matter for an esthetic end." Pater's
Stephen's Aesthetics and Pater

Coleridge, who holds to this first way of viewing at art, disagrees. In his essay on Coleridge, Pater recalls the Romantic longing to connect with the spirit of Necessity in the universe. For Coleridge, artistic creation is the collaboration of the individual mind with the universal mind, the "divine ventriloquist" who speaks through inspired poets. The end-product is a prescribed creation that is neither evolving nor genuinely spontaneous. Pater states that Coleridge "supposes a subtle, sympathetic co-ordination between the ideas of the human reason and the laws of the natural world." When "the laws of the natural world" rise to the surface of consciousness by "a sort of Platonic recollection," the artist becomes capable of inspired creation. Pater finds this notion in Coleridge's Shakespeare criticism:

The first suggestion of Shakespeare is that of capricious detail, of a waywardness that plays with the parts careless of the impression of the whole; what supervenes is the constraining unity of effect, the ineffaceable impression, of Hamlet or Macbeth. His hand moving freely is curved round as if by some law of gravitation from within: an energetic unity or identity makes itself visible amid an abounding variety. This unity or identity Coleridge exaggerates into something like the identity of a natural organism, and the associative act which effected it into something closely akin to the primitive power of nature itself [emphasis added].

Shakespeare's art contains no "capricious detail"; yet Pater sees something "constraining" in Coleridge's notion of an "energetic unity": "What makes his view a one-sided one is that in it the artist has become almost a mechanical agent. Instead of the most luminous and self-possessed phase of consciousness, the associative act in art or poetry is made to look like some blindly organic act of assimilation." The paradox here is that, although Coleridge posits an "organic act" of creation, he presupposes the determining forces of Necessity or some transcendent force in artistic creation. For Coleridge, the artist is only a medium through which this force works. Thus, creation becomes more mechanical transmission than spontaneous execution.

Both Stephen and Pater discuss the forces of creative Necessity on various occasions. Stephen adapts Pater's belief in the "Conclusion" to The Renaissance that our "physical life" and "the inward world of thought" are "but a combination of natural elements" and impressions. Contemplating his Shakespeare theory a moment later, Stephen speculatively amends his view: it is not "we" who perform this process psychologically, but rather a larger force of energy: "As we, or mother Dana [emphasis added], weave and unweave our bodies. . . ." Physical change and pattern in the world are not the result of "human disposition" (arrangement) but of higher Necessity. For Joyce, Mother Dana (Necessity) weaves and unweaves our bodies, but, unlike
Pater's Coleridge, he does not suggest that a universal mind similarly shapes works of art. The "artist weaves and unweaves his image" throughout the artwork.

In the concluding paragraph of "Winckelmann," the last study in The Renaissance, Pater states that "for us, necessity is not, as of old, a sort of mythological personage without us, with whom we can do warfare. It is rather a magic web woven through and through us, like that magnetic system of which modern science speaks, penetrating us with a network, subtler than our subtlest nerves, yet bearing in it the central forces of the world." At first, this sounds like a version of Coleridge's divine ventriloquist. Pater emphasizes that "Natural laws we shall never modify, embarrass us as they may; but there is still something in the nobler or less noble attitude with which we watch their fatal combinations." In Pater's view, however, the imagination can act upon these "fatal combinations." In art, therefore, one obtains freedom from formal necessity: "What modern art has to do in the service of culture is so to rearrange the details of modern life, so to reflect it, that it may satisfy the spirit. And what does the spirit need in the face of modern life? The sense of freedom."

In "Style," Pater defines his notion of organic form in art, which differs from Coleridge's transpersonal formal necessity. The artwork is not a machine that works harmoniously to transmit the music of the spheres; it is not a product of the collaborative expression of the "universal" mind through the "individual." Its form is not perfect; it has an element of spontaneous growth: "For the literary architecture, if it is to be rich and expressive, involves not only foresight of the end in the beginning, but also development or growth of design, in the process of execution with many irregularities, surprises, and afterthoughts; the contingent as well as the necessary being subsumed under the unity of the whole." Thus the "contingent" and the "necessary" combine to determine the shape of the end-product. Pater says of the artist that "the house he has built is rather a body he has informed." Even Lawrence, the high-priest of organic form and expressive spontaneity, would embrace such a formulation. The art-work is not a machine with perfect symmetry but rather a structure with a degree of subjective freedom and arbitrariness in its willed composition.

Does Ulysses conform to this Paterian model? Although Joyce remains attracted to Stephen's Flaubertian ideal of form, he does not put it into practice very thoroughly. Bloom, Stephen, Buck Mulligan, and other characters are distillations of Joyce's own dynamic history and personality, a fact that makes the novel as "lyrical" as it is "epic" and "dramatic." Through Stephen and Bloom, aspects of Joyce's personality and history emerge
distinctly, and through them "the artist is felt" in every chapter. Therefore, in *Ulysses*, Joyce has not refined himself totally out of existence as a precondition for pure formal arrangement. As Ellmann argues, Joyce, in structuring the book, felt "that it was best not to plan everything in advance, so that good things would be free to emerge in the course of composition." Joyce intended the form to be "organic" and spontaneous, even in its seemingly mechanical elaborations:

It is the epic of two races (Israel-Ireland) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). . . . My intention is not only to render the myth *sub specie temporis nostri* but also to allow each adventure (that is, every hour, every organ, every art being interconnected and interrelated in the *somatic scheme of the whole*) to condition and even to create its own technique. Each adventure is so to speak one person although it is composed of persons—as Aquinas relates of the heavenly hosts [emphasis added].

Joyce's "somatic scheme" implies that he did not desire to achieve clockwork perfection in *Ulysses*. His wish for each organ, hour and art "to condition and even create its own technique" suggests a desire for organic spontaneity within the novel's increasingly elaborate development. While *Ulysses* is a highly wrought novel whose intricacies grow denser and more systematic as the narrative progresses, Joyce's goal at the outset was the same as Pater's, who says of the artist that "the house he has built is rather a body he has informed." In Joyce's "literary architecture," there must be some "loose scaffolding" in the beginning. For Pater and for Joyce, the end-product is more a body than a cathedral.