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An Inquiry into Juan Ramon's Interest in Walter Pater

Abstract

The evidence for Juan Ramon's interest in Pater, which began around 1920 and was still active twenty years later, is discussed in this paper. Pater's view of death and dying and his attitude toward the decadent persona are described in so far as they indicate the spiritual affinity that exists between him and Juan Ramón. Pater's aesthetic idealism, and the presence of similar ideals in Juan Ramon's own work are then examined. The second part of the paper concentrates on the great interest Juan Ramón took in Pater's evocation of the Mona Lisa. The potential impact of the aesthetic idealism inherent in this passage, its Platonism in particular, receives special analysis in the light of *Espacio*, and in consideration of Juan Ramon's 1943 remark: "I am, have been, and always will be a Platonist."

Keywords

Juan Ramón Jiménez, Walter Pater, English literature, Spanish poetry, death, dying, decadent persona, spiritual, aesthetic idealism, Mona Lisa, Platonism, Espacio

AN INQUIRY INTO JUAN RAMÓN JIMÉNEZ' INTEREST IN WALTER PATER

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Walter Pater's influence as a critic, teacher, and spokesman for aesthetic idealism in England at the turn of the century requires no comment. His presence, however, in the Hispanic world has been largely a matter of surmise until a recent study by Howard T. Young documented Juan Ramón Jiménez' considerable awareness of Pater's work.¹

A brief summary of some of the pertinent facts Young has brought to light is essential for our present purposes. Around 1907 Luisa Grimm de Muriedas recommended three of Pater's works to Juan Ramón: the historical novel *Marius The Epicurean*, the historical cameos in *Imaginary Portraits*, and the essay "Leonardo da Vinci," which appears in *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*. Then in 1916, on their honeymoon in the United States, Juan Ramón and Zenobia purchased Pater's complete works which include, in addition to the three volumes recommended by Luisa, *Gaston de Latour*, *Appreciations*, *Plato and Platonism*, *Essays from 'The Guardian'*, *Greek Studies*, and *Miscellaneous Studies*.² In addition, we learn that in his copy of *The Renaissance*: "Juan Ramón checked with his small 'x', as was his wont, the chapters he had read which included those on Botticelli, Michelangelo's poetry, and Leonardo da Vinci." Moreover, Professor Young has established that Juan Ramón devoted considerable attention, in the late 1930s, to Pater's evocation of the Mona Lisa, which is found in the essay on Leonardo. Yeats had cast Pater's prose into verse without changing a word, and he had chosen it to open his 1936 *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*. Juan Ramón, who was soon to be engaged on his long prose-poem "Espacio," was fascinated by the fact that prose had been brought to such a pitch that it was already poetic.³

These are Howard Young's pertinent insights, and this paper hopes to extend them by discussing Pater's potential interest to Juan Ramón. First we shall point to some of the more intriguing parallels encountered in the works of these writers; second, we propose to explicate Pater's analysis of the Mona Lisa, by presenting its assumptions as a part of the aesthetic idealism prevalent throughout his work, and by linking this briefly to "Espacio." In addition to citing from the works Luisa recommended, we shall quote from some of the other works, especially a few of the essays collected in *Appreciations* and from *Plato and Platonism*. Though there are no markings in these texts, the fact that they remained in Jiménez' library throughout his life (they must have been shipped from Spain) is sufficient to arouse this reader's curiosity.

There is much in Juan Ramón's early work that is reminiscent of the *fin-de-siècle* English don, and enough echoes in Juan Ramón's mature work to require comment and consideration. We shall be presenting thanatopsistic and aesthetic concerns, that is, showing parallel responses to death and decline, and to aesthetic ideals. Pater gradually emerges as an ancestor in Juan Ramón Jiménez' spiritual and literary quest.

Pater alludes to death and dying at times in terms that recall Juan Ramón's. In his 1890 essay on Edmund Gosse, "Mr. Gosse's Poems," Pater cited (EG, p. 117) the fourth stanza of Gosse's "Lying in the Grass":

For I should pass, but all the world would be
Full of desire and young delight and glee,
And why should men be sad through loss of me?

This of course parallels "El poeta ha muerto," from *Pastorales*, whose second and fourth stanzas are:

Their lips full of roses,
the children will go to the garden,
golden dreams of maidens
and lillies broken. . . .
Good day! Good day!
You, happy and flowering village,
you'll keep on filling up with
sun, white smoke, idylls,
and the sound of bells. . . .

*Llenos los labios de rosas, / saldrán al jardín los niños, / roto el oro de sus sueños / de vírgenes y de lirios . . . / —Buenos días. — Buenos días. / Tú, pueblo alegre y florido, / te irás llenado de sol, de humo blanco, de humo blanco, / de campanas y de idilios*⁴

This equanimous attitude, not typical of the early Jiménez, is found elsewhere in Pater. In his essay on Wordsworth, in *Appreciations*, Pater depicts the *anima mundi* as “the mother of all things and their grave, in which some have desired to lose themselves . . .” (A, p. 56). This recalls another of Jiménez’ equanimous reactions to dying, “Death is an ancient mother of ours, / our first mother,” which is found in *Belleza* and whose last lines are:

[a] mother who awaits us, / like the last of all our mothers, with an immensely open embrace, / which must, one day, brief and hard, / descend upon our shoulder, forever.

madre que nos espera,
como madre final, con un abrazo inmensamente abierto,
que ha de cerrarse, un día, breve y duro,
en nuestra espalda, para siempre.⁵

In addition, in *Marius the Epicurean*, Marius must adjust to his father’s death, and Pater suggests that the living endow the dead with a subjective immortality by caring for them (ME, vol. I, p. 20). This is an attitude, more latent than manifest, that appears in a number of Jiménez’ poems concerned with the death of friends. As an example we cite the first two stanzas of “La paz”:

Early this morning when
the scarlet flowers open
to the golden moon,
you’ll be at home no longer,
white and naked shadow.

—You will be nobly
becalmed and full of cheer
in the gay new state,
happy with your fate
that after life
makes you indifferent to death.

Cuando esta madrugada / abran las campanillas granas / a la luna dorada, / tú no estarás ya en casa, / sombra desnuda y blanca. / —Estarás noblemente / sosegada y risueña entre la novedad alegre, / contenta de tu suerte / que te hace indiferente, / tras la vida, la muerte.—(LP, p. 1001)⁶

It should perhaps be noted that *Belleza* was written between 1917 and 1923, which is after Juan Ramón had purchased Pater's complete works. However, we have no knowledge that Juan Ramón read these books and are merely content here to point out the parallels. If nothing else, they substantiate the spiritual affinity that exists between these two writers.

A second interesting parallel is that Pater would subtly depict the shortcomings and limitations of the decadent *fin-de-siècle* persona, whenever he had occasion in his work to evoke that type of personality. In *Imaginary Portraits* Pater describes a literary Watteau and comments: "He has been a sick man all his life. He was always a seeker after something in the world that is there in no satisfying measure, or not at all" (IP, p. 44). This is reminiscent of the prologue Juan Ramón wrote for *Laberinto* (published 1913), where he exclaims: "If only everyday living had its garden fronds . . .!" (PLP, p. 1173).⁷

Similar unsatisfied longing is found elsewhere. Pater notes that in Winckelmann's plans of foreign travel "there seems always to be a rather wistful sense of something lost to be regained, than the desire of discovering anything new" (R, p. 179). Also, he observes that Heraclitus' thoughts have "the characteristic melancholy of youth when it is forced suddenly to bethink itself, and for a moment feels already old" (P&P, p. 13). Such melancholia is a salient characteristic of the early Juan Ramón who, in 1903, at the age of twenty-three, was bemoaning "the autumn of my life" (*Arias tristes*, PLP, p. 237), and whose portrait by Sorolla, painted that same year, is that of a morose man twice the age.⁸

The poet of the *Diario*, however, would have fully appreciated Pater's gentle criticisms on the limitations of the decadent persona, and he would also have sympathized with Pater's aesthetic views, to which we shall now turn.

Pater presents the poet as one who isolates himself from the everyday world in order that he might better express the "essence" of his "soul." That is just what Marius does: "to get that precise acquaintance with the creative intelligence itself . . . without which

certainly, no poetry can be masterly" (ME, vol. I, p. 116). So does Wordsworth: "the meditative poet, sheltering himself, as it might seem, from the agitations of the outside world" (A, p. 51-52). In *Plato and Platonism*, and also in his essay "Style"—which Juan Ramón certainly must have read in some version or other—Pater insists that the artist needs such peace in order to remain attuned to his soul, to master the expression of his innermost feelings. "Literary art," he writes in "Style," is the representation . . . connected with soul, of a specific personality . . . ; it will be good literary art . . . in proportion as its representation of that sense, that soul-fact, is true" (A, pp. 10-11). Elsewhere, he warns the stylist: "You yourself must have an inward, carefully ascertained, instituted hold over anything you are to convey with any real power to others" (P&P, p. 116).⁹

Pater insists on the need for intensity, conviction, concentration—for the condition of *ensimismamiento* for which Jiménez was ridiculed—and he also argues that clarity and precision in artistic expression are absolutely indispensable. Marius, "constructing the world for himself from within," associates "poetic beauty" with "clearness of thought," and he finds "aesthetic charm" in the "cold austerity of mind" (ME, vol I, pp. 24 & 124). In "Style," Pater stresses that there is "beauty" in "a skillful economy of means," and he urges the stylist to make "the most of a word," to exact "from sentence . . . a precise relief" (A, p. 17). At this point in his essay he begins discussing what he terms "surplussage," which is equivalent to the "fastuosa de tesoros" (replete with treasures) stage in Juan Ramón (*Eternidades*, LP, p. 555); Pater's emphatic conclusion is that "all art does but consist in the removal of surplussage" (A, p. 19). The author of the "Notas" for the *Segunda antología poética* wholeheartedly agreed: "The only art is: that which is spontaneous subjected to conscious [reflection]."¹⁰

Pater's essay on "Style" is interesting with respect to another canonical poem in *Eternidades*, "Intelligence, give me / the exact name of things!" (LP p. 553). In discussing Flaubert, Pater stresses the French stylist's belief in "The one word for the one thing, the one thought, amid the multitude of words, terms that might just do . . . the unique word, phrase, sentence . . . absolutely proper to the single mental representation of vision within" (A, p. 29). This parallels Jiménez' well known plea expressed in "Intelijencia, dame" that his word become the thing itself and serve as a means of enlightenment to those who are ignorant of its meaning (LP, 553).

On an aesthetic level Juan Ramón's poem signifies a desire to

discover *le mot juste*; philosophically, it assumes the Platonic system of "Eternal Ideas." In fact, in his essay Pater immediately goes on to discuss the "philosophic idea" in this aesthetic belief. He explains that it implies "some pre-existent adaptation, between a relative, somewhere in the world of thought, and its correlative, somewhere in the world of language,"—each desiring the other "somewhere in the mind of the artist"—"meeting each other, with the readiness of 'soul and body reunited,' in Blake's rapturous design" (A, p. 30). Pater was therefore as aware as the poet of "Intelijencia" of the aesthetic and metaphysical dimensions to this idealism. (Elsewhere, in point of fact, Pater notes the tension such ideals entail, between nominalist and conceptualist philosophies.¹¹)

We have been discussing parallels in the early and mid periods of Jiménez' work. Let us now turn to Juan Ramón's late period, to the poetry and prose written after his move to the United States in 1936, which is when he became intrigued with Yeats's free verse rendering of Pater's "Mona Lisa."

It is in the expression of spiritual ideals, especially as Juan Ramón voiced them in *Animal de fondo*, that parallels are found.

In Pater the bird is a symbol for the soul (ME, vol. I, p. 22; & GL, p. 24).¹² In discussing Pascal, he refers to God as a being who is *desired* (MS, p. 81). He remarks that God is "at every moment of infinite time, in every atom of matter, at every point of infinite space" (GL, p. 141). He explains that the thoughts of the "divine consciousness [. . .] are themselves actually God in man" (GL, p. 142). Referring to a human being's strenuous endeavor, he describes the goal as: "To unite oneself to the infinite by largeness and lucidity of intellect, to enter, by that admirable faculty into eternal life" (GL, p. 147).

All the above recall concerns of *Animal de fondo*, and we also find the "frozen wave" used by Pater to indicate arrested energy. The context is worth noting as its place in Juan Ramón's *obra* has been discussed by different critics.¹³ In explaining the historical development of Plato's philosophy, Pater notes that from Heraclitus to Pythagoras the belief in movement and rhythm—the dynamic—disappeared from philosophical deliberations. It was Pythagoras who restored the dynamic to prominence and by so doing allowed Plato access to it. Pater explains that instead of holding that air, fire, water, or unity of being were at the center of all things, Pythagoras maintained it was number: "the dominion of number everywhere, the proportion, the harmony, the music, into which number as such

expands." Pater adds that Pythagoras "set the frozen waves in motion" in his philosophical attempt to realize unity in multiplicity (P&P, p. 51).¹⁴

"La ola detenida" appears in "Río—mar—desierto," and an observation, in *Marius the Epicurean*, regarding Heraclitus is perhaps relevant to a reading of that poem. For Heraclitus, Pater remarks, the world was full of animation: "the one true being is perpetual energy, from the restless stream of which, at certain points, some elements detach themselves, and harden into nonentity and death" (ME, p. 129). Likewise, the lyrical voice of "Río—mar—desierto," hardening into death ("my detained movement,") is conscious of separation from a restless stream: "that was restless, restless, restless" (LP, p. 1325).

The affinities between Juan Ramón's lectures and Pater's writings are few but worthy of note. Like Jiménez, Pater insisted that: "the true 'classic' must be of the present, the force and patience of present time" (GL, p. 57). Both writers believed that true aristocracy was an inner quality. "Those who value highly the concentrated presentment of passion," such "humble children" as Wordsworth's Michael and Ruth, belong, wrote Pater, "to the true aristocracy of passionate souls" (A, p. 52).

In addition, Pater's belief in the unity of ethics and aesthetics parallels Juan Ramón's ideals. In "Style," Pater emphasized that there can be no good art without truth: "all beauty is in the long run only fineness of truth, or what we call expression, the finer accommodation of speech to that vision within" (A, p. 10). Moreover, he concludes his two essays on the English Romantics, Wordsworth and Coleridge, with reflections on art and the "higher morality." "To treat life in the spirit of art," he wrote, "is to make life a thing in which means and end are identified: to encourage such treatment, the true moral significance of art and poetry" (A, p. 62).¹⁵

* * *

We should now like to explicate the aesthetic idealism latent in a passage of prose in which Pater, as Howard Young remarks, "so successfully evoked the mystery of the Mona Lisa." Juan Ramón had been so fascinated by "Yeats's decision to give a segment of Pater's prose in free verse" that, "in his copy of Pater's essay" on Leonardo he "drew slant lines to indicate the divisions Yeats had made."¹⁶

In his essay, Pater is concerned with the type of beauty Leonardo

captured in La Gioconda's "unfathomable smile," and he suggests that it embodies "what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire" (R, p. 124).

In lines immediately preceding those Juan Ramón marked, Pater specifies this beauty. It is:

wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit . . . of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions . . . beauty . . . into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animation of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. (R, p. 125)

There then follow the lines Juan Ramón had marked, which Yeats cast into free verse (—the virgules correspond to the latter's divisions—):

She is older than the rocks among which she sits; / Like the Vampire, / She has been dead many times, / And learned the secrets of the grave; / And has been a diver in deep seas, / And keeps their fallen day about her; / And trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants; / And, as Leda, / Was the mother of Helen of Troy, / And as St. Anne, / Was the mother of Mary; / And all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, / And lives / Only in the delicacy / With which it has moulded the changing lineaments, / And tinged the eyelids and the hands. (R, p. 125).

Howard Young has established that Juan Ramón would have been reading this passage at about the time he began working on the long prose poem "Espacio," and we shall keep this in mind throughout our explication. Juan Ramón liked the fact that Pater's style transcended the limitations traditionally imposed on prose. He was intrigued by *prosa poética*, by the notion that a poem can free itself from the dictates of strophe and "the tyranny of rhyme," as he later called it.¹⁷ There is little doubt that the author of *Españoles de tres mundos* and "Espacio" would have been in complete agreement with Pater's

pronouncements on this issue. In "Style," Pater protested that prose need not be "something very tame and narrowly confined to mainly practical ends" (A, p. 6); and he argued that "imaginative prose" is "the special and opportune art of the modern world" (A, p. 11).

The manner in which Pater pursues this thought—the transformation of prose into poetry—prompts us to consider its philosophical as well as its aesthetic dimensions. What does such a transformation signify? In a well known passage—in "The School of Giorgione," which follows the essay on Leonardo—Pater advances the theory that "all art constantly aspires to the condition of music" (R, p. 135). This condition, of constantly aspiring toward some other state, Pater terms "the great *Anders-streben*," which he explains as a genre's "partial alienation from its own limitations" (R, p. 134). One form is seen as gravitating toward its other; the artistic spirit desires to penetrate fully every part of the matter (R, p. 135).¹⁸

Though his terms are narrowly aesthetic, his implicit claims are more far-reaching. We glimpse their purport more immediately in other works. He noted that "throughout Greek art there is a struggle, a *Streben*, as the Germans say, between the palpable and limited human form, and the floating essence it is to contain" (GK, p. 34). This transformation is of the material toward the spiritual. Moreover, he presents Abelard as "the humanist, with reason and heart and senses quick [who] reaches out toward [and who] attains modes of ideal living beyond the prescribed limits of [the] system" (R, p. 7). This transformation is of the human toward the human divine.¹⁹ There is undoubtedly an ethical underlay to Pater's ostensibly aesthetic claims, and it is even implicit in the "Mona Lisa" passage. Allusions to Leda and Mary suggest the apocalyptic transformation of divine into human. Also, in the lines that precede the prose poem, references to beauty's having corporeal form and to the mind's attaining an "outward form," focus on further transcending of boundaries: of inner into outer, spirit into body.

Pater is concerned, therefore, with literary and spiritual (human and divine) modes of transformation, and perhaps this caught Jimenez' attention. The artist in *Espacio* is experiencing a constant *Anders-streben*, as he stretches beyond the limits of the system that had hitherto circumscribed his vision; in transcending his self, new vision emerges with a new form.

A second, though closely related preoccupation in this deliberation on the Mona Lisa is that celestial beauty has taken on corporeal form; it "lives / only in the delicacy" of her "changing lineaments." It is

beauty “wrought out from within upon the flesh,” Pater claims in lines immediately preceding the prose-poem.

Earlier in his essay Pater remarked, on other faces of women done by Leonardo, that in them “one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature,” of “all those finer conditions wherein material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual” (R, p. 116). Moreover, in his essay on Rossetti, he claims that in both Rossetti and Dante: “the material and the spiritual are fused and blent: if the spiritual attains the definite visibility of a crystal, what is material loses its earthiness and impurity” (A, p. 212).²⁰ Juan Ramón was concerned with such an interfusion in parts of “Espacio.” In the “Fragmento tercero” he exclaims:

Autumnal woman; tree, man! How you shout the joy of living to the blue that rises up with the first cold! They want to ascend higher into the furthest reaches of blue that is more pure, incomparable blue nakedness. The full and deep nakedness of autumn in which one more readily sees that soul and flesh are merely one.

¡Mujer de otoño; árbol, hombre! ¡cómo clamáis el gozo de vivir al azul que se alza con el primer frío! Quieren alzarse más, hasta lo último de ese azul que es más limpio, de incomparable desnudez azul. Desnudez plena y honda del otoño, en la que el alma y carne se ve mejor que no son más que una.²¹

In addition, we cannot forget that in the “Notas” to *Animal de fondo* Juan Ramón wrote of “[the] awareness, [the] understanding of ‘up to what’ divine point could the human in the grace of man arrive” (LP, p. 1343–44).

Both Pater and Juan Ramón are concerned, therefore, that the material rise to the spiritual, or in terms of the *Anders-streben*, that the human stretch its limits until it contain what is divine. And it should be noted, perhaps, that for Pater “Platonism” allowed the sensual and material to be incorporated into the Ideal state. In Pater’s reading of Plato, perfection resides in each one of the “Eternal Ideas” (Justice, Equality, Beauty etc.), but it is especially “visible beauty” that allows man access to the ideal, perfect state (P&P, pp. 168, 171). Man is definitely excluded from Parmenides’ philosophy of the One True Being, but not from Plato’s ideal state, although the latter is often confused with the former. Pater maintains. For Pater, Plato combines

the ideal with the human, which is something that could have interested the Juan Ramón of "Espacio," who believed that "The gods had no more substance than what I have" (TA, p. 851).

A third concept implicit in the Mona Lisa prose-poem concerns the maturation of beauty. Pater believes that beauty that has taken centuries to emerge is a distinguishing feature of that enigmatic smile: "She is older than the rocks upon which she sits." In contrast to this, we might say that Michelangelo's David idealizes an immature form of beauty, one that is stunningly innocent and youthful but not mysterious. In concluding his deliberations on the Mona Lisa, Pater in fact suggests that "Lady Lisa" embodies a mature form of beauty that sums up in itself "all modes of thought and life . . . a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences" (R, pp. 125-6). We mention this briefly as it does seem to us that the beauty achieved in "Espacio" is one in which "all modes of thought and life" have been swept together.²²

Finally, we must comment on Pater's sensuality, especially as the sexual manifestation of man's sensual being disturbed Juan Ramón so much in "Espacio," as Young has noted (*Line*, pp. 214 ff).

Pater considered the Mona Lisa's to be a sensuality "men had come to desire." Her sensuality, however, we observe, is not in the least provocative. In the passages cited, Pater is observed using sensual terms ("flesh," "exquisite passion," "lust"), alluding to sexual activities (Vampires, Leda and Zeus), and evoking Lisa's feminine allure ("lineaments," "eyelids"). But none of this is allowed to become provocative, perhaps because it is integrated into a larger symbolic framework. This would undoubtedly have appealed to Juan Ramón, who required, as Young observes (*Line*, p. 87 ff), that natural impulses be modified "in an aesthetically acceptable manner."

In relation to this, the figure of the Mona Lisa can be seen as emerging from the sea. The juxtaposition of an ethereal, intellectually attractive woman with the waves of the sea could have intrigued Jiménez, for, as Young has discovered (*Line*, p. 217), he believed that the female figure (albeit nude) together with the movement of the waves on the sea contributed to the gestation of his "verso desnudo." He in fact wrote down this thought in 1942, the year when he was writing "Espacio" and reading Pater.

We believe, therefore, that Jiménez encountered in Pater a writer conscious of balancing the sensual with the ideal. In his works Pater recommends philosophies in which the senses are developed in conjunction with all other aspects of human nature (GL, pp. 54, 111), and he expresses admiration for Rossetti on this account. Jiménez,

too, had for many years admired Rossetti. Pater also advocated that Plato was a sensual being: his abstract "philosophy of the unseen" was predicated on "the control of a variously interested, a richly sensuous nature" (P&P, p. 126). In addition, he adds, later in the same study, that "the ways of earthly love" provided for Plato "a true parallel" for the "ascent of the soul into the intelligible world" (P&P, p. 169). Such thoughts would have taken Jiménez' mind back to his reading of Shelley's prose and poetry, begun a quarter of a century before the initial inspiration for "Espacio" (see *Line*, esp. pp. 37-90, 99-106). By the 1940s, however, it is surely safe to assume that the predominantly puritanical influence of *krausismo* would have abated somewhat, allowing Juan Ramón to be more responsive to a form of platonism in which a highly developed sensual awareness has been subjected to aesthetic modification.

Pater's platonism is more human and vital; it is less "colourless, formless, impalpable" (Pater's words), less incorporeal than the idealism usually associated with Plato's name. We wonder if this might have been in Jiménez' thoughts, in 1943, when he wrote to Luis Cernuda, "I am, I have been, and I always will be a Platonist."²³

Pater's thought tends to gravitate toward the center. Gaston envisaged a state in which his sacred and profane loves would flourish in harmony (GL, p. 72). In *Marius*, the ideal of the "Good Shepherd" is recommended in which there is "a harmonious development of all the parts of human nature, in just proportion to each other" (ME, vol. II, p. 121). Pater was a realist as well as an idealist: in "Coleridge," he wrote, "experience gives us, not the truth of eternal outlines ascertained once for all, but a world of fine gradations and subtly linked conditions, shifting intricately as we ourselves change" (A, p. 68). Juan Ramón was aware of a similar tension in his own ideals: one of his aphorisms reads, "Have I not made vagueness concrete?" and in *El trabajo gustoso* he characterized poetry as imagination fused with evidence.

In the famous "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance*, Pater half laments that "we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more" (R, p. 238). Though it is unlikely that Juan Ramón would have responded to such an exaltation of the relative and the ephemeral, there are in Pater's works, nevertheless, certain basic and recurrent preoccupations which could have confirmed and strengthened, possibly modified, Jiménez' own idealism. We suggest that it was for reasons such as these that he was led to purchase not one volume but the entire set of Pater's works.²⁴

NOTES

1. *The Line in the Margin: Juan Ramón Jiménez and His Readings in Blake, Shelley, and Yeats* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1980). See also, "Anglo-American Poetry in the Correspondence of Luisa and Juan Ramón Jiménez," *HR*, 44 (1976), 1-26; "Luisa and Juan Ramón," *RevL*, 6 (1974), 469-486.

2. See, Young, *Line in Margin*, p. 6; & "Anglo-American," p. 4ff. Citations will be from the ten-volume "New Library Edition of The Works of Walter Pater," London: Macmillan, 1910: The following abbreviations are used: ME: *Marius The Epicurean* (2 vols.); IP: *Imaginary Portraits*; R: *The Renaissance*; GL: *Gaston de Latour*; A, *Appreciations*; P&P: *Plato and Platonism*; EG: *Essays from 'The Guardian'*; GK: *Greek Studies*; MS: *Miscellaneous Studies*.

3. See, Young, *Line in Margin*, pp. 144-46; "Anglo-American," pp. 14-15. In the essay on Botticelli, Pater focuses on the artists's search for a middle ground "between heaven and hell," and "with men and women in their mixed and uncertain condition" (R, p. 55). In "The Poetry of Michelangelo," he refers to the poet's desire to "tranquilize and sweeten life by idealising its vehement sentiments" (R, p. 86); Jiménez' *Sonetos espirituales* may be read as doing such.

4. *Primeros libros de poesía*, ed. Francisco Garfias. 3rd ed. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1967), p. 619; abbreviated hereafter to PLP. For further poems on the poet's death, see PLP, pp. 130, 219, 257, 872, 889, 893, 1260.

5. *Libros de poesía*, ed. Agustín Caballero, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1967), p. 1028; abbreviated hereafter as LP.

6. In *Belleza*, see also "Estatua," (LP, p. 1010); "La muerte" (LP, p. 1014); "El olor de tu alma, rosa ida" (LP, p. 1019);

7. For Watteau in Juan Ramón, see; Graciela Palau de Nemes, *Vida y obra de Juan Ramón Jiménez: La poesía desnuda*. 2nd ed. (Madrid: Gredos, 1974), pp. 418, 419, 436. In the prologue to *Laberinto*, Juan Ramón distinguishes between "a literary Watteau" and "the pictorial Watteau," the former being "a little more interior and less optimistic."

8. Pater's description in *Imaginary Portraits* (p. 103) of Sebastian Van Storck could be read as gentle satire on one of the Jiménez' personae of the middle years: "making the 'Infinite' his beginning and his end, Sebastian had come to think of all definite forms of being, the warm pressure of life, the cry of nature itself, no more than a troublesome irritation of the surface of the one absolute mind."

9. He also claims (P&P, p. 120) that "all artistic beauty is expression," which is "the line, the colour, the word, following obediently [. . .] the conscious motions of a convinced intelligible soul." And in Gaston it is explained that Montaigne believed that

“whatever truth there might be” will be discovered in “that wonderful microcosm of the individual soul” (GL, p. 106).

10. *Segunda antología poética (1898–1918)*. 1920; rpt. (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1969), p. 262.

11. Plato, he says, is the father of all realists, and Realism holds that the abstract term (e.g. Beauty) is not “a mere name [. . .] nor a mere subjective thought [. . .] but a *res*, a thing in itself, independent of the particular instances which come into and pass out of it, as also of the particular mind which entertains it” (P&P, p. 151).

12. For the bird in J.R.J., see: Young, *Line*, pp. 136–37; and Ceferino Santos-Escudero, *Símbolos y Dios en el último Juan Ramón Jiménez* (Madrid: Gredos, 1975), Chap. xiv, pp. 270–323.

13. For *frozen wave*, see: Leo R. Cole, *The Religious Instinct in the Poetry of Juan Ramón Jiménez* (Oxford: Dolphin, 1967), p. 177ff; John C. Wilcox, “W.B. Yeats and Juan Ramón Jiménez: A Study of Influence and Similarities and a Comparison of the Themes of Death, Love, Poetics, and the Quest for Fulfilment-in-time.” Diss. Univ. of Texas (Austin), 1976, p. 95; Young, *Line*, p. 29.

14. For Pythagoras, see: Ricardo Gullón, “Pitagorismo y modernismo,” *Mundo Nuevo*, 7 (1967): 22–32.

15. See also *Appreciations*, p. 103ff, for the “relative” spirit’s intellectual finesse developing into ethical criticism. Pater also notes that Plato stressed that art must be ethical and that a good life is indispensable for creating it (P&P, p. 275).

16. See: Young, *Line*, p. 145; “Anglo-American,” p. 15.

17. See: Young, “Anglo-American,” pp. 15–16; *Line*, p. 145, p. 52, respectively.

18. He believes music and lyrical poetry do this best. In their “consummate moments the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression; they inhere in and completely saturate each other” (R, p. 139).

19. He also describes the antinomianism of the late 12th, early 13th centuries, that “spirit of rebellion and revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the time.” He notes that in searching for pleasure and “in their care for beauty, in their worship of the body, people were impelled beyond the bounds of the Christian ideal” (R, p. 24).

20. For *crystal/diamante* in J.R.J., see: Paul R. Olson, *Circle of Paradox: Time and Essence in the Poetry of Juan Ramón Jiménez* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), pp. 39–65; Santos-Escudero, *Símbolos y Dios*, pp. 232–45; Joseph A. Feustle, *Posía y mística (Darío, Jiménez, Paz)*, (Xalapa, Ver. Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana, 1978), pp. 29–44.

21. *Tercera antología poética (1898–1953)*, (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1957), p. 875; abbreviated to TA.

22. A further description of such a totalizing experience also recalls “Espacio.” He says “it presents us with a kind of profoundly significant . . . wholly concrete moment—into which, however, all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have

condensed themselves, and which seem to absorb past and future in an intense consciousness of the present" (R, p. 150).

23. *La corriente infinita: Crítica y evocación* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1961), p. 178. For Pater's discussion of the ascetic/sensual dichotomy in Plato's thought, see: P&P, pp. 33, 41; A, p. 68. Pater condemns that side to Plato that is abstract, devitalized, ascetic; he explains it as the malign influence of Parmenides' One Absolute Being, which is "a mere algebraic formula for nothingness." This dehumanized One was revived by the Neo-Platonists in the 2nd century A.D.; by Eckhart and Tauler; by Aquinas and Spinoza; then, by Descartes, Leibniz, Berkeley (P&P, pp. 37-40). In his works, Pater scorns ascetic philosophies of life, such as monasticism (R, p. 184), Puritanism and Manicheism (P&P, p. 144). His approval is for men like Goethe, something Juan Ramón would have liked: "Who would change the colour or curve of a rose leaf for that colourless, formless, intangible being Plato put so high? The true speculative temper is not the Hindoo mystic, lost to sense, . . . but one such as Goethe . . . by whom no touch of the world of form, colour, and passion was disregarded" (A, p. 68; see also, P&P, p. 41).

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