

Being so caught up,  
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,  
Did she put on his knowledge with his power  
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

No less were Pater's syntheses of antitypes, antinomies, and contraries into equivalences and identities -- the very unity of being in Mona Lisa -- a source of inspiration to Yeats' creation of a new mythology in A Vision. And perhaps, too, Pater's theme of renaissance or rebirth contributed in some measure to Yeats' developing notions of reincarnation.<sup>6</sup>

In its ever-changing, exquisitely intricate unity, Pater's The Renaissance has quietly taken its place with some excellent work done after Goethe and Hugo. His Mona Lisa stands as the modern symbol of artistic rebirth or rejuvenescence, for if she has died many deaths, she has continually been reborn, recreated as Yeats' Leda, Joyce's Molly Bloom, Eliot's Tiresias, and Woolf's Mrs. Ramsay. Suspended in orphic song between discord and unity, between the very weaving and unweaving of self, she smiles the ultimate ironic smile of modernity -- ever reflecting upon modern life the vibrant breadth and serenity of Pater's noble vision.

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#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Baudelaire, Selected Writings on Art and Artists, trans. P. E. Charvet (Harmondsworth, 1972), pp. 54-55.

<sup>2</sup>Victor Hugo, The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, trans. Walter J. Cobb (New York, 1965), pp. 136-138.

<sup>3</sup>Pater frequently uses this phrase from Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress; for example, in the "Postscript" of Appreciations he speaks of the "House Beautiful, which the creative minds of all generations... are always building together, for the refreshment of the human spirit...."

<sup>4</sup>Gerald Monsman, Walter Pater (Boston, 1977), pp. 53-54.

<sup>5</sup>Frank Kermode, The Romantic Image (London, 1957), p. 61.

<sup>6</sup>Some aspects of Pater's influence on Yeats are noted in the introduction to Selected Writings of Walter Pater, ed. Harold Bloom (New York, 1974), pp. vii-xxxi.