

Oscar Wilde in Context edited by Kerry Powell and Peter Raby. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013. xxxiv, 402 pp. ISBN 978-1-107-01613-2. £62; \$99.95.

In Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Dorian famously "wonder[s] at the shallow psychology of those who conceive the ego in man as a thing simple, permanent, reliable, and of one essence" rather than as "a being with myriad lives and myriad sensations, a complex multiform creature." As if to underscore Dorian's belief, *Oscar Wilde in Context* "argues for many 'Oscar Wildes' that combine in revelations of his multiplex self and the turbulent period in which he lived," as Peter Raby and Kerry Powell write in their preface. Divided into four parts (on the major places Wilde lived and travelled to; the aesthetic and critical influences on his work; the cultural ideas and historical contexts that illuminate it; and the posthumous reception of his works and life), the 36 individual essays and the personal appreciation by playwright Mark Ravenhill also speak to one another across these broad sections, forming thematic networks that illuminate new and old facets of Wilde's life and work.

Wilde lived "myriad lives" in Dublin, Oxford, America, London, and Paris. His early home life in Dublin was shaped by his parents' middle-class careers and interests in reading, writing, politics, and cultural networking, as well as by Dublin's vibrant oral culture, as Sean Ryder's and Jerusha McCormack's essays illustrate. Oxford features prominently in Philip E. Smith II's and Joseph Bristow's chapters, which illustrate its formative influence on Wilde's intellectual development – Smith focussing on Oxford Hellenism and attendant concepts of male friendship, Bristow examining Wilde's poetic foundations and homoerotic interests more broadly via his studies of Aristophanes, the Pre-Raphaelites, and the Romantics (particularly Keats). The American tour brought out Wilde's knack for self-marketing of his work and persona, Leon Litvack writes, offering fresh readings of little-known newspaper reviews and cartoons as well as the famous Saroni photographs. Back in London, from 1877 to 1890, Wilde's fame helped propel his journalistic career, as he freelanced prolifically for a wide range of middle-class newspapers and magazines and edited *The Woman's World*. Matt Turner shows "he was both a media professional ... and a media personality." Matt Cook's fascinating discussion of Wilde's changing London addresses, intertwined with a larger history of London's urban development, highlights both the "personal geography" of a cosmopolitan mind in the making as well as they ways London's homosocial and homoerotic cultures shaped Wilde's personal desires.

French literature and Paris feature prominently in the volume. According to Peter Raby, *Dorian Gray* arguably constituted "something more French