

*The Collected Works of Walter Pater. Vol. III: Imaginary Portraits* edited by Lene Østermark-Johansen. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2019. xlvii, 359 pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-882343-8. £115.00; \$149.95.

Finally! A new, and, for the first time, scholarly edition of Walter Pater's writings. With the ongoing publication of the ten volumes of *The Collected Works of Walter Pater* (2019 –), Oxford University Press has begun making available the long-awaited critical edition of Pater's exquisite, idiosyncratic, influential, varied, and often surprising works. For over a century, scholars have had to make do with the 1910 Macmillan "Library Edition," which Lawrence Evans once noted is "not critical, not complete, and – in some cases – not accurate" (326). As Lesley Higgins and David Latham note in their "General Editors' Preface," this new critical edition is also the occasion for a reevaluation of Pater's *oeuvre*: "too much has been made of a cautious Pater withdrawing his controversial 'Conclusion' from the second edition of *The Renaissance*, and not enough credit is given to the courageous Pater who restored it in the subsequent editions." By reprinting the 1893 fourth edition as its primary text (along with textual variations from other editions) rather than the more famous 1873 first edition, Donald Hill's critical edition of *The Renaissance* (1980) helped challenge the pervasive myth of a later Pater betraying the earlier Pater. Unfortunately, until relatively recently, the lonely figure of Hill's critical edition also reinforced the sense that *The Renaissance* was Pater's one important book, its infamous "Conclusion" the only needed statement of Pater's aesthetic philosophy, and its message of art for art's sake all that the modern reader need know of this supposedly increasingly conservative writer, whose subversive homoerotic essays in his youth only found their bolder and fuller development in the aesthetic movement's younger generation, by writers such as Oscar Wilde and the Michael Fields.

*The Collected Works* may constitute the best argument yet against this univocal Pater by showing the range of Pater's intellectual and cultural interests, his mastery of varied literary forms, and the complexity of his genre critique. In this sense Pater scholarship has at last stepped back to provide the textual foundation for the interpretive structure it has been building up for more than four decades. Volume III – *Imaginary Portraits* – superbly edited by Lene Østermark-Johansen, already holds a microcosm of this argument. Pater himself gave the title *Imaginary Portraits* to the 1887 book comprised of the first four of the nine short fictional pieces collected here; Pater's correspondence and titles clearly show that he considered the remaining five also belonged in the genre of imaginary portraits. Taken together, these nine short pieces comprise a museum-like sampling of Western European culture from classical Greece through the Middle Ages and Enlightenment to contemporary