## ABBREVIATIONS

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INTRODUCTION


7. Citations of Schlegel are, except as otherwise noted, from the *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel Ausgabe*, ed. Ernst Behler et al. (Munich, Paderborn, and Vienna: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1958—); hereafter cited as *KA*. For the translations I have consulted and been guided by those of Peter Firchow, *Lucinde and the Fragments* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), and of Ernst Behler and Roman Struc, *Dialogue on Poetry and Literary Aphorisms* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968). Quotations from the *Lyceum* and *Athenaeum* and of the *Ideen* are identified by *L*, *A*, and *I* respectively and by fragment number. The quotation here is from *I* 69, *KA* 2:263. It should be noted that Schlegel did not use the term “romantic irony” in his published works.

8. All quotations from the *Dialogue on Poetry* are from the Behler and Struc translation; hereafter cited as *DP*. The quotation here is from *DP*. p. 54.


10. Quoted by Handwerk, p. 43.


CHAPTER 1

1. See Furst, chap. 2, for the development of the term and its applications. As her title suggests, she applies the term only to works of fictional narrative (mainly prose).


4. See Mellor, p. 135.


9. White does not allow the possibility of Carlyle's romanticizing history and his simultaneously making fun of it: "Romance and Satire would appear to be mutually exclusive ways of emplotting the process of history" (*Metahistory*, p. 8).

10. Reading various memoirs of the Revolution, Carlyle found that "it was all to me like the grandest Drama I had ever assisted at" (*CL* 6:447).

11. Charles F. Harrold, "Carlyle's General Method in *The French Revolution*, *PMLA*, 43 (1928):1150, notes that of the work's approximately seventeen hundred paragraphs more than five hundred are devoid of historical material but express Carlyle's reaction to events of the Revolution. H. M. Leicester, "The Dialectic of Romantic Historiography: Prospect and Retrospect in 'The French Revolution,' " *Victorian Studies*, 15 (1971):5–17, notes that Carlyle's entry into and removal from the narrative is one means by which the author aims to "inform the individual with the infinite" (p. 7).
12. Mill noted Carlyle's "mode of writing between sarcasm or irony and earnest" and wondered whether it "be really deserving of so much honour as you give to it by making use of it so frequently." Carlyle replied: "I have under all my gloom a genuine feeling of the ludicrous" (CL 6:449). The French Revolution is filled with puns, many for comic effect.

13. Rosenberg properly calls attention to the fact that the work is not called The History of the French Revolution but The French Revolution: A History.


16. See the narrator's final sympathy with Robespierre (4:285-86), who is also regarded as one of the chief villains.

CHAPTER 2


5. Echoing Paradise Lost, the first chapter ends: "The world is before the two young ladies." (p. 18).
6. For the parody of "fashionable" fiction, chivalric romance, and neoclassical conventions, see John Loofbourow, *Thackeray and the Form of Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 14–72. Jack P. Rawlins, *Thackeray's Novels: A Fiction That is True* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1974), sees the novel as an attempt to mix dramatic action, satire, and apologue, which is a "formal impossibility" (p. 266). Robert E. Lougy, "Vision and Satire: The Warped Looking Glass in *Vanity Fair*," *PMLA*, 90 (1975):256, agrees that the generic mixture results from a lack of authorial control, for Thackeray starts out to write a comedy but ends by "calling into question the efficacy of laughter as an artistic device." Nearly all commentators on the novel find the generic mixture uneasy, unsettling, and (though they do not all explicitly say so) unsatisfactory. My point is that Thackeray knew exactly what he was doing and remained in full control of his novel as it evolved.


10. Thackeray allowed that "the unwritten part of books would be the most interesting" (Ray, *Letters*, 3:391).


14. Cf. Rawlins: “That the novel appears to be about fictional characters in action proves to be an illusion; the novel begins to look like a grand rhetorical machine to bring the reader unawares face to face with himself. [A] trap [is] laid to encourage us to make pure moral judgments which turn out to condemn us, and to leave us to resolve the conflict. There is a joke based on the difference between the way we read and the way we live. We read romantic novels with an easy moral absolutism and live according to a more pragmatic creed. By casting us as the characters of his novel, Thackeray asks us to account for the discrepancy” (p. 13).


CHAPTER 3


2. For Browning as a romantic ironist, see Ryals.

3. See, for example, William O. Raymond, *The Infinite Moment*. 

4. Although the resemblances are obvious, I do not believe that anyone has hitherto noted that the machinery of “Christmas-Eve” owes a good bit to Dickens’s Christmas stories of the 1840s. As I have pointed out in “Browning’s Christmas-Eve and Schleiermacher’s Die Weihnachtsfeier: A German Source for the English Poem,” *Studies in Browning and His Circle*, 14 (1986):28–31, Schleiermacher’s book (1806) is a Christmas dialogue representing many of the points of view on Christianity that Browning treats in his poem. Linda H. Peterson, “Rereading Christmas-Eve, Rereading Browning,” *Victorian Poetry*, 26 (1988):363–80, contends that the poem is primarily “about the problem of determining meaning, about hermeneutics broadly conceived” and also (without citing the earlier SBHC article) that Schleiermacher’s book, which “focused on the significance of the religious event and self-reflexively on the means by which significance can be determined,” was a likely source for Browning (pp. 364, 365).

5. See, for example, the *Essay on Shelley and Dearest Isa: Robert Browning’s Letters to Isa Blagden*, ed. Edward C. McAleer (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1951), p. 220. Like Schlegel, Browning regarded the artist’s chief business as the portrayal of the Absolute, putting the Infinite in the finite. Irony is a means to renewed creation of signification of the Absolute, and its goal is to raise the reader’s attention from the particular to the Absolute lurking behind it. Since, as Schlegel says, irony is informed by the Absolute which it cannot attain, the result must be that the poet, who “has the sense for the infinite, speaks nothing but contradictions” (A 412, KA 2:243).


ing's poem and Kierkegaard's religious dialogues, especially the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (1846).

CHAPTER 4

1. Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972; also his earlier *Matthew Arnold* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1939; 2nd ed., New York: Columbia University Press, 1958). Douglas Bush, *Matthew Arnold: A Survey of his Poetry and Prose* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 24. J. Hillis Miller was one of the first critics to note the essential ironic stance displayed in Arnold's verse, although he did not discern its radical irony: "Arnold is a skillful ironist, but his irony is not, as with the great ironists, turned on himself. Irony, like the stance of disinterestedness, is for Arnold a way of not being swallowed up by the world" (*The Disappearance of God* [paperback ed.; New York: Schocken, 1965]). More recently Miller has come to view Arnold "as problematic and as equivocal, in his own view, as is Wallace Stevens" (J. Hillis Miller, *The Linguistic Moment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 43. During the last decade several critics have noted the ironic posture evidenced in some of Arnold's poems, the most notable of these being Alan Grob, "Arnold's 'Mycerinus': The Fate of Pleasure," *Victorian Poetry*, 20 (1982):1–20. However, no one has, so far as I can discover, linked Arnold with romantic irony.


CHAPTER 5


4. In the manuscript of *Bleak House* preserved in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum there are ten slips of paper recording Dickens’s search for a suitable title for his novel published in parts in 1852–53. On nine of these slips the author chose “Tom-All-Alone’s” and “The Ruined House” or “Tom-All-Alone’s” and “The Solitary House” or variants thereof as the joint titles (or perhaps title and subtitle) of his work. Only on the tenth and presumably last slip did he select “Bleak House” as the name by which his novel would henceforth be known. It is instructive to take note of these tentative titles because they provide a clue to Dickens’s own attitude about the conflicting points of view of the two narrators who tell the story of *Bleak House*. They seem to suggest that the author privileged neither of the two narratives. The slips are reproduced in an appendix to the Norton Critical Edition of
Bleak House, ed. George Ford and Sylvère Monod (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), from which all quotations of the novel are taken.

5. Q. D. Leavis's chapter on Bleak House in F. R. Leavis and Q. D. Leavis's Dickens the Novelist (New York: Pantheon, 1970), pp. 118–86, is a good example of traditional criticism that, taking little notice of the manner of narration, sees the novel as the expression of a unified point of view. Most recent critics, however, have noted the contradictory visions of the two narrators and for the most part have concluded that Esther's point of view wins out, expressing Dickens's belief that a sick society can be redeemed; see, for example, H. M. Daleski, Dickens and the Art of Analogy (New York: Schocken, 1970), and Edwin M. Eigner, The Metaphysical Novel in England and America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 193–202. On the other hand, a few critics find the clashing perspectives of the two narratives persisting unreconciled to the end; see, for example, Peter K. Garrett, The Victorian Multiplot Novel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 59–71, who maintains that "Bleak House presents an instance of dialogical form precisely as Bakhtin presents it, an unresolved opposition between 'independent and unmerged voices as consciousnesses'" (p. 30). Another concern of critics since the mid-1960s has been the character of Esther Summerson and her reliability as a narrator; see William Axton, "The Trouble with Esther," Modern Language Quarterly, 25 (1965):545–57, for an early example, and Joseph Sawicki, "'The Mere Truth Won't Do': Esther as Narrator in Bleak House," Journal of Narrative Technique, 17 (1987): 209–24, for a recent one.


9. The question has perplexed many commentators. One of the most ingenious answers—that "these pages" refer to the part of the novel that the reader creates—is provided by Bert G. Hornback. "The Other Portion of Bleak House" in The Changing World of Charles Dickens. ed. Robert Giddings (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble, 1983), pp. 180-95.


12. Many commentators have noted Dickens's use of theatrical effects in his novels, the most notable being Robert Garis, The Dickens Theatre: A Reassessment of his Novels (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), and William Axton, Circle of Fire: Dickens' Vision and Style and the Popular Theater (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1966). My concern is different in that I am less interested in theatrical conventions and their influence on Dickens than on the characters' conceptions of themselves as dramatis personae, of their world as a play crafted by a master dramatist, and of themselves acting under the direction of other characters in the novel.


16. In this novel Dickens seems consciously to exploit the dialectic
between meaning and contradiction in narrative that has been so much the concern of narratologists. See, for example, Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination*, pp. 289ff; and Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, ed. L. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 35–63.

CHAPTER 6

1. "Oi ὃντες" ["All thoughts, all creeds"]). All quotations from Tennyson’s verse are from *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Longmans, 1969). Tennyson’s comments on his poems as well as those by his family are, except as otherwise noted, also taken from this edition, cited in the text as Ricks. The titles of the individual idylls of the *Idylls of the King* will be cited in the text by the following abbreviations: “The Coming of Arthur” as CA; “Gareth and Lynette” as GL; “The Marriage of Geraint” as MG; “Geraint and Enid” as GE; “Balin and Balan” as BB; “Merlin and Vivien” as MV; “Lancelot and Elaine” as LE; “The Holy Grail” as HG; “Pelleas and Ettarre” as PE; “The Last Tournament” as LT; “Guinevere” as G; and “The Passing of Arthur” as PA.

and London: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 150–213. While Kincaid holds that Tennyson's irony is expressed in terms of balanced but unreconciled opposites, he is more interested in irony as a form, a narrative pattern coincident with Northrop Frye's "mythos of winter" (p. 5), and further, he concludes that the Idylls comes to "a bitter and entirely pessimistic close" (p. 210).


7. Reed, Perception and Design in the Idylls, pp. 69–70.

8. The poet associates Kay with the autumnal imagery pervading "The Last Tournament": the seneschal would come "blustering upon them, like a sudden wind / Among dead leaves" (GL, ll. 504–5). The poet describes him as "wan-sallow as the plant that feels itself / Root-bitten by white lichen" (GL, ll. 443–44). The description and indeed the characterization of Kay are without counterpart in the source, the Morte d'Arthur, although Tennyson does say that "in the Roman de la Rose Sir Kay is given a pattern of rough discourtesy" (Ricks, p. 1493n). It is as if Tennyson went out of his way to make Kay a discordant note in this early idyll, an early type of "Tristram the courteous [who] has lost his courtesy" (Ricks, p. 1710n). It has long been noted that the Idylls are structured on the cycle of the year, beginning in spring and ending in winter.

9. It is worth comparing what seems to be Tennyson's view of music as the embodiment of the will with Schopenhauer's. In The World as Will and Idea, bk. 3, the German philosopher defined music as "the copy of the will itself, whose objectivity the Ideas are" (The Philosophy of Schopenhauer, ed. Irwin Edman [New York: Modern Library, 1928], p. 201). For a study of Tennyson's ideas concerning the will, not unlike


12. A. Dwight Culler, *The Poetry of Tennyson* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 240. Culler also notes that “Tennyson has written an entire poem on King Arthur and his knights without one single instance of magic or the supernatural offered on the poet’s own authority” (pp. 34–35).


14. David Shaw says that “the Idylls are, in their wide embrace of styles, Tennyson’s most ambitious attempt to resolve the growing conflict between facts and values in post-Romantic culture” (*Tennyson's Style*, p. 222). Few of Tennyson’s readers have overlooked or not been attracted by the style of the Idylls. Carlyle found the “lollipops superlative,” masking the “inward perfection of vacancy” (*Correspondence of Emerson and Carlyle*, ed. Joseph Slater [New York: Columbia University Press, 1964], pp. 552–53). Ruskin felt “the art and finish in these poems a little more than I like to feel it” (quoted by H. Tennyson, *Memoir*, 1:453). George Meredith saw the incongruity of Tennyson’s “fluting”: “The Euphuist’s tongue, the Exquisite’s leg, the curate’s moral sentiments, the British matron and her daughter’s purity of tone . . . Why, this stuff is not the Muse, it’s Musery. The man has got hold of the Muses’ clothes-line and hung it with jewelry” (*Meredith's Letters*, ed. W. M. Meredith [London: Constable, 1912], 1:197).
15. Tennyson’s characters are, Hopkins said, engaged in “fantastic charade-playing trumpery. . . Each scene is a triumph of language and of bright picturesque, but just like a charade—where real lace and good silks and real jewelry are used, because the actors are private persons and wealthy, but it is acting all the same and not only so but the make-up has less pretence of correct keeping than at Drury Lane” (Correspondence of G. M. Hopkins and R. W. Dixon, ed. C. C. Abbott [London: Oxford University Press, 1935], p. 24).

16. The word “fantasy” occurs seven times in the *Idylls* and twice elsewhere in Tennyson’s poetry, “fantastical” once in the *Idylls* and once elsewhere. “Fancy” as a noun occurs twenty times, as a verb thrice, and as the verbal “fancying” once, far more frequently than elsewhere in Tennyson.

CHAPTER 7

1. All quotations from Pater are from the Library Edition of The Works of Walter Pater, 10 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1910). The quotation here is from The Renaissance, p. 233. Hereafter volume and page numbers will be cited parenthetically in the text. The original edition (1873) of The Renaissance was entitled Studies in the History of the Renaissance. The second edition, with the title changed, was published in 1877.

2. Mrs. Humphry Ward was the first to note the connection. In her review of Marius in Macmillan's Magazine in 1885 she said that Marius, “as a young man, starts in life on the principles expressed in the concluding pages of the ‘Studies’” (in Walter Pater: the Critical Heritage, ed. R. M. Seiler [London, Boston, and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980], p. 131; hereafter cited in the text as Seiler). Wolfgang Iser’s remark on the connection is representative of that of most subsequent critics: the novel “brings to life a decisive feature missing or perhaps even deliberately omitted from the ‘Conclusion.’ There he had put forward the aesthetic moment as a theoretical guideline for conceiving human life, whereas in Marius he spotlights the spiritual problems arising from such an aesthetic conceptualisation of life by revealing the moment as the genesis of longing and anxiety” (Walter Pater: The Aesthetic Moment, trans. D. H. Wilson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], p. 141).
3. There is unfortunately no study of Browning’s influence on Pater. But for his great admiration of the poet see Pater’s essay on Browning in which he reckons “Browning, among English poets, second to Shakespeare alone” (Essays from ‘The Guardian’, p. 42).


5. Michael Levey. Introduction to Marius the Epicurean (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), p. 18. Recognizing the author behind the persona, Germain d’Hangest, Walter Pater: L’Homme et l’oeuvre (Paris: Didier, 1961), sees the book not so much as a novel as a “journal intime” (1:333). Gerald Monsman, the most thoroughgoing of Pater’s biographical critics, maintains that Pater felt guilt and shame for having somehow caused or willed the deaths of his parents. Pater dealt with this guilt “by a textual sublimation or displacement, exorcising his conflicting emotions through the act of autobiography. There, in the text, the paternal figure, reembodied as any preexisting work or critically conservative dogma, is slain so that the younger, as the autobiographical author of his life, might endow himself with that paternity for which as a child he had insatiably yearned” (Gerald Monsman, Walter Pater’s Art of Autobiography [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980], p. 4).

6. Monsman remarks: “A representational art that copies an exterior reality rather than mirrors an inner vision is an art of entrapping walls, an art of only illusory openings” (p. 64).

7. It is to be noted that the actors whom Marius most admires are those whose performances seem to be of a reserved nature, as though the actor were keeping something back. The actor, like other artists, must not yield to the impetuous desire to tell all but must restrain himself. Cf. Schlegel’s remarks on self-restriction (L 37; KA, 2:151) cited in the Introduction. Addressing the theatricality of Marius, which like most critics he sees as a mere undesirable effect rather than as an organic part of the novel. Lord David Cecil says: “The impression left in the memory by Marius, and the rest of them, is that of tableaux, in which in front of an elaborate and beautiful background are posed figures beautifully and elaborately clothed, but who are faceless, speechless and incapable of


9. In all his fictional works Pater carefully avoided closure. Of "The Child in the House" he said: "I call the M.S. a portrait, and mean readers, as they might do on seeing a portrait, to begin speculating—what came of him?" (Letters, p. 30).

10. Monsman says that for Pater "any ground of reality will lie not in elements material or spiritual but in the relationship objectively established between them—ultimately for Pater by the text" (pp. 67–68).

11. Cf. Monsman, who maintains that "Marius is a novel about the hero's development from a state of pretextual dreaming to the diaphanous condition of artistic exercise" (p. 60).

12. The form of the novel has been of great concern to its critics. "The one artistic fault of the book is the introduction of alien episodes, of actual documents into the imaginary fabric; and these give the effect, so to speak, of pictures hung upon a tapestry," says A. C. Benson, Walter Pater (New York and London: Macmillan, 1906), pp. 112–13. This judgment is frequently echoed. See, for example, Graham Hough, The Last Romantics (London: Methuen, 1961): The novel's "defect is that Pater found it difficult to fill the larger canvas, and had therefore to incorporate a good deal of translated and extraneous matter" (p. 145). Even Iser, among the most perspicacious of Pater's critics, finds "that at times the novel is taken over by theoretical discussion which evidently cannot be coped with by the narrative" (p. 129).


in Marius Pater "rejected the Heracliteanism of The Renaissance by yielding halfway to the morality of his time.'

15. In so far as commentators have touched on the question of irony in Marius, they have concentrated on the ending. D'Hangest sees Marius's embrace of Christianity as an example of the "ironie du destin, certes, ou de la nature" (1:325). William E. Buckler, Walter Pater: The Critic as Artist of Ideas (New York: New York University Press, 1987), agrees that, there being "nothing ambiguous about Marius's end," "the ironies are the traditional irony of fate and the dramatic irony of our awareness of the peasants' misunderstanding" (p. 267). Knoepflmacher finds that the "irony of Marius' passive absorption of this final [Christian] 'atmosphere' informs the novel's entire meaning," the irony residing in the fact that Marius sees Christianity as but another voice to be listened to (Religious Humanism, pp. 218–19). Although not using the word "irony," F. C. McGrath, The Sensible Spirit: Walter Pater and the Modernist Paradigm (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1986), echoes Knoepflmacher in finding Christianity one of Marius's "fancies" (p. 94). On the other hand, Jerome H. Buckley, Season of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), finds "little that is ironic either in Pater's depiction or in Marius's view of Christian faith" (p. 161). Harold Bloom, The Ringers in the Tower (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971) is puzzled by the novel's irony: "Whether Pater earns the structural irony of the . . . concluding pages, as a still-pagan Marius dies a sanctified Christian death, is quite legitimately questionable" (p. 182).

AFTERWORD

1. Meredith has in fact already been so considered, in Handwerk, pp. 91–124.


3. "I am going to write—Nonsense. It is on 'Clothes.' Heaven be my comforter" (Two Note Books, p. 176).
4. Letter of 18 March 1857, trans. from *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Conard, 1927), 14:164. Compare this remark with Dickens’s (discussed at the end of the chapter on *Bleak House*) about the “shadow” that would pervade the periodical he was envisioning in 1849. For Flaubert’s remark, “Madame Bovary, c’est moi,” and his aiming at total objectivity in the novel, see Francis Steegmuller, *Flaubert and Madame Bovary: A Double Portrait* (1939, 2nd ed. 1950; paperback ed.: New York: Vintage, 1957).