e-ISSN 2420-823X

English Literature
Vol. 12 – December 2025

"A Romantic in Sirius" Virginia Woolf's Post-Wordsworthian Autobiography

Paolo Bugliani
Università di Pisa, Italia

Abstract This article explores the influence of Wordsworth's spots of time on Woolf's moments of being. Building on an early review by Edwin Muir that highlighted *Mrs Dalloway*'s deep engagement with Wordsworth's poetic vision, it examines two key aspects of *The Prelude* that Woolf may have inherited: the transcendental and anamnestic quality of remembrance and the epiphanic nature of recollection. These elements contribute to a reassessment of Woolf's impressionism, understood as the complex foundation of her aesthetic vision. Situating moments of being within Romantic autobiography, the article considers how they reflect the self's attitude towards memory, and it also shows how Woolf first developed epiphanic recollection in her 1920s novels and impressionism in her 1920s short fiction. She later reframed both strands in her autobiographical writings.

Keywords Romantic poetry. Modernist autobiography. Moments of being. Spots of time. Literary impressionism.

Edizioni Ca'Foscari

Peer review

Submitted 2025-05-24
Accepted 2026-02-01
Published 2026-05-11

Citation Bugliani, P. (2026). ""A Romantic in Sirius"". *English Literature*, 12(1), 175-196.

DOI 10.30687/EL/2420-823X/2025/01/009

For most of us, there is only the unattended
Moment, the moment in and out of time,
The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,
The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning
Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply
That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
While the music lasts.
(Eliot 1941, 44)

1 Introduction

Despite the notorious anti-Romantic sentiment that pervades Anglo-American Modernism, William Wordsworth's poetic voice emerges as a particularly significant echo in Woolf's autobiographical writings. Woolf enjoyed a familiar and untroubled relationship with the literature of the early 19th century,[1] a feature also apparent to her contemporaries, who often remarked upon it when assessing her work. In 1928, Raymond Mortimer, for one, called Woolf a "romantic poet" (Mortimer 1995, 309), and even Lytton Strachey, one of Bloomsbury's least ardent admirers of Romantic poetry, while speaking of *Jacob's Room*, labelled her as

> very romantic – which alarms me slightly – I am such a Bonamy. Once or twice I thought you were in danger of becoming George-Meredithian in style – or was that a delusion? Something of the sort certainly seems to me the danger for your genre. But so far you're safe. You're a romantic in Sirius, I fancy – which after all is a good way off from Box Hill. (Strachey 1975, 93)

Despite its provocative tone, the passage does not constitute a rebuke. Woolf herself notes that her friend has "put his finger" on "the spot – romanticism", which she describes as the aesthetic result of her "effort of breaking with complete representation" (Woolf 1975, 586). The choice of Sirius is not casual. In classical myth and ancient astronomy, Sirius is the Dog Star and the brightest star in Canis Major, long associated with the "dog days" and a feverish brilliance. Its Greek name *seirios* ("glowing", "scorching") stresses intensity

1 See, for instance, Fernald's interpretation of Lord Byron's role in Woolf's fictional treatment of personality and impersonation (Fernald 2006, 118-69). For other explorations of Woolf's allegiance with Romanticism, see Harris 2010 and Beer 1993. While several studies address Woolf's connection with her early nineteenth-century poetic forebears primarily in terms of 'loans' and 'debts', this article aims to offer a broader discussion of Wordsworth's agency in Woolf's aesthetic treatment of memory. I pursue this argument through a historicising outlook indebted to J.M. Rabaté's encouragement and to his account of Romantic affiliations within broader debates on modernism (Rabaté, Spiropoulou 2022, 10-11).

rather than detachment. Yet Sirius is also a fixed point at an immense remove: sharply visible, but beyond reach. Strachey's "Romantic in Sirius" thus suggests a Romanticism that is radiant and potentially overheated, yet displaced to a distant, stellar plane. In other words, held at a critical distance from the "earthbound" Romanticism of Jane Austen's Box Hill.

Among the many possible threads, I follow the insight of Edwin Muir, who, in an early review, remarked upon the affinities between Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* and the poetry of Wordsworth. Muir noted that *Mrs Dalloway* represented a milestone in the history of the British novel because it achieved a singular and untried mixture of literary registers, eventually configuring itself as

> less akin to anything else attempted in the novel than to certain kinds of poetry, to poetry such as Wordsworth's, which records not so much a general judgment on life as a moment of serene illumination, a state of soul. What nature is in The Excursion, London is in Mrs Dalloway, a living presence, a source of deep pleasure. (Muir 1975, 184)

Despite the distinctly post-Victorian tone of Muir's review, his insight is sharp. In his reading Wordsworth appears here as a revolutionary aesthetic innovator, especially in his capacity to capture personal moments and to establish a deep connection with the living world. The literary affordances granted by his poetic example should be accounted for in any exploration of Woolf's 'poetic prose', which is too often reduced to a personal animadversion against a male-dominated poetic tradition. Woolf, much like George Eliot before her (Mann 1980), demonstrated a great facility in absorbing and adapting Wordsworth's example to her own purposes and is thus to be considered one of the most generous and subtle agents in Wordsworth's afterlife in the English tradition.

As a Romantic in Sirius, Woolf could draw openly on Wordsworth without compromising her modernist commitments, incorporating Wordsworthian themes of elevated memory and revelatory recollection into her autobiographical work.

2 Autobiographical Wordsworth

Reappropriating Wordsworth in Woolf's era was not a casual nod to a bygone poet but a deliberate, subversive engagement with a vast body of Victorian criticism. These Victorian and Edwardian mediations matter because they shape the available Wordsworth for Woolf: what she inherits is not only the poet, but a critical tradition that has already framed him as ethical authority, philosophical

mind, and autobiographical prototype. Wordsworth had undergone successive phases of acceptance, rejection, and mystification – phases a twentieth-century writer could hardly ignore when drawing inspiration from his legacy. Cast alternately as a rebellious, rural, and visionary, by 1850 he had secured his status as one of – if not *the* – preeminent English poets of his age.

By the century's end, he had accrued the gravitas of a philosophical poet (Cronin 2015, 63), due in part to the interventions of Woolf's father, Sir Leslie Stephen. In his essay "Wordsworth's Ethics", Stephen opposed Matthew Arnold's moral idealism and instead celebrated Wordsworth's philosophical acuity, his capacity to articulate "the deepest truths" (Stephen 1907, 129). A notable facet of this philosophizing was the privileged role granted to childhood: it was precisely the "mysterious efficacy" of the poet's "childish instincts" (143) that, according to Stephen, endowed him with unique power.

From the posthumous publication of *The Prelude* in 1850 to its first critical edition by Ernest de Sélincourt in 1926, yet another essential aspect emerged: Wordsworth's foundational place in the genealogy of autobiography (Marcus 1994, 35-7). An autobiographical Wordsworth had already been adumbrated in Walter Pater's essay "Wordsworth", later included in *Appreciations*. There, Pater underscored the "bold trains of speculative thought" (Pater 1910, 53) that permeate Wordsworth's poetry, with a particular focus on the recurrence of "sudden memories" and "strange reminiscences and forebodings" (53) throughout his oeuvre. Crucially, Pater illuminated the self-reflexivity of Wordsworth's poetic consciousness – its power to shape and reconstitute outer reality (54) – a process he famously theorized in the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance*, where he defined aesthetic experience as the refining of "rough reality" into "a tremulous wisp constantly re-forming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression" (Pater 1980, 118). In this sense, Pater's reading of Wordsworth functioned as a practical instantiation of his aesthetic criticism (Wong 2018), and stands as one of the most nuanced reconfigurations of Romantic legacy at the fin de siècle (Mahoney 2023).

For Woolf, deeply invested in the interplay between memory and self-fashioning, these ideas resonated powerfully. In her late-1930s autobiographical turn, she drew on the Wordsworthian practice of capturing singular, revelatory instants – "spots of time" (Wordsworth 2008, 565, 1. 258) – capable of illuminating the self episodically, even as she distanced herself from the sentimentalism often associated with Romantic recollection. By absorbing Wordsworth's poetics of interiority and temporal disjunction, Woolf adopted a model of life-writing that – despite its nineteenth-century provenance – retained a potent formal novelty. Seeking a mode of expression centred on the "ecstasy of experience, rather than […] the fruit of experience"

(Saunders 2010, 32), she remained alert to the temporal and philosophical experimentation of Wordsworth's autobiographical verse (Sherry 2015, 61). Wordsworth's poetic innovation thus became a vital and conscious intertext for Woolf's redefinition of biographical form in the late 1920s and, more radically, for her own self-writing in the following decade.

A Sketch of the Past, Woolf's unfinished autobiographical experiment, was undertaken at Vanessa Bell's urging amid the psychic strain of World War II and Woolf's own ambivalence about autobiography as a male-dominated genre (McIntire 2008, 150). Despite these tensions, Woolf evidently felt liberated to venture into the terrain of personal narrative. Her foray into autobiography, though belated, stands as one of her most daring life-writing experiments, as it allowed her to transpose into self-reflection the techniques previously honed in the writing of the lives of others (152).

Wordsworth, despite his symbolic association with patriarchal authority, was one of the few male poets with whom Woolf maintained an untroubled intellectual rapport – especially, as Emily Kopley documents, after her father's death (Kopley 2021, 67-106). She referred to *The Prelude* as "one of the greatest works ever written" (Woolf 1975, 469), and in the summer of 1940, Wordsworth's poetry became, by her own admission, a kind of "drug" (Woolf 1985, 295). In one diary entry, she revels in Book VII of *The Prelude* and transcribes the following passage:

> The matter that detains us now may seem,
> To many, neither dignified enough
> Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by them,
> Who, looking inward, have observed the ties
> That bind the perishable hours of life
> Each to the other, & the curious props
> By which the world of memory & thought
> Exists & is sustained (Woolf 1981, 247-8)[2]

This record is significant on several fronts. First, it confirms that Woolf was reading the 1850 posthumous edition of *The Prelude*. More importantly, her selection of this particular passage suggests a keen responsiveness not merely to the events recounted – such as

2 Wordsworth's actual verses read: "The matter that detains us now may seem | To many neither dignified enough | Nor arduous; and is, doubtless, in itself | Humble and low; yet not to be despised | By those who have observed the curious props | By which the perishable hours of life | Rest on each other, and the world of thought | Exists and is sustained" (Wordsworth 2008, 480, ll. 489-96). Despite Woolf's preference for the 1850 edition, I have decided to quote the 1805 edition as it is now the standard in Wordsworth studies.

Wordsworth's entry into London – but to the metapoetic reflections embedded within. The lines she isolates foreground the poet's own theorization of autobiography as a form of transcendental awareness, sustained by the interconnection of temporal fragments through memory.

This Romantic *Streben* – a striving for spiritual unity – animates the autobiographical impetus of *The Prelude*, even as the poem's fragmentary nature resists the finality it seeks. *The Prelude* is, in fact, only a proemial gesture towards *The Recluse*, the masterwork Wordsworth never completed. Like Woolf's *Sketch*, *The Prelude* remains a fragmentary life-writing project – perpetually provisional, feeding upon its own textual past as material to be reworked (Wilner 2015, 147). Both works evince a tension towards an "enigmatic mode of totality", which becomes a distinctive "way of inhabiting the language" (148) of autobiography – particularly in a cultural moment, such as Modernism, when self-narration was often met with scepticism or disdain (Marcus 2016, 298).

3 Romantic Memory

The Prelude's focus on the act of remembering, rather than on the remembrance itself, might explain Woolf's decision to shape her autobiography in diary form, a practice that she had been engaged in all her life. With its inherent fragmentariness and discontinuity, this form mirrors Wordsworth's "spots of time" in their being isolated moments that stand out in themselves, and not for their immersion into a cohesive flow. Wordsworth, in this respect, echoes a wider tendency of European Romanticism elevating fragments as the aptest products of an ontological friction "between the desire for unity and the recognition of the difference" (Rajan 2000, 231).

Because of their immediacy, "spots of time" offered an alternative to the stereotype of autobiography as a narcissistic narrative act of self-scrutiny, characterised by an egotistical superfetation of intimate foibles. Later critics found this procedure compelling because it reshaped life-writing: it preserves the cradle-to-grave frame, but grants priority to singular instants with exceptional illuminative force. This emphasis on the instant implies a model of literary creation as a rhapsody of subjective embryos – a precursor, albeit an imperfect one, to modernist fragmentary poetics (Janowitz 2017, 479). In *The Prelude*, the spots of time become harbingers of a "renovating Virtue" (Wordsworth 2008, 565, l. 260), and they eventually nourish and repair the mind burdened by "trivial occupations, and the round / Of ordinary intercourse" (565, ll. 263-4). Wordsworth describes their power as follows:

> This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
> Among those passages of life in which
> We have had deepest feeling the mind
> Is lord and master, and that outward sense
> Is but the obedient servant of her will.
> Such moments worthy of all gratitude,
> Are scattered everywhere, taking their date
> From our first childhood. (565, ll. 269-76)

Woolf's *Sketch* likewise concentrates the attention of the prospective reader on singular accidents of special significance and presents her remembering self as constructing a vision of the past as a fragmentary thread of "ecstasies and raptures" (*MB* 82),[3] all prompted by a peculiar psycho-physical condition Woolf describes as a "shock" (*MB* 84). Although not systematic, Woolf tries to clarify the sensation and value of such experience:

> I only know that many of these exceptional moments brought with them a peculiar horror and physical collapse; they seemed dominant; myself passive. This suggests that as one gets older one has a greater power through reason to provide an explanation; and that this explanation blunts the sledgehammer force of the blow. I think this is true, because though I still have the peculiarity that I receive these sudden shocks, they are now always welcome; after the first surprise, I always feel instantly that they are particularly valuable. And so I go on to suppose that the shock-receiving capacity is what makes me a writer. (*MB* 84)

Woolf concludes with the hint at a proper philosophy, whose core idea was that "behind the cotton wool is a hidden pattern" conjoining "all human beings", eventually metamorphosing "the whole world" into a "work of art" (*MB* 85). These figures under her own cotton wool carpet she labelled "moments of being" (*MB* 83), and described as some unexpected jolts suddenly striking the conscious mind and the unaware body, provoking a sensation similar to bodily pain. Although initially traumatic, these moments represent the prime motor of her writing, as she avows they triggered a desire to find an explanation, "to make [them] real by putting [them] into words" (*MB* 85).

The epistemology behind Woolf's moments has been outlined by Gabrielle McIntire as consisting of "an emotional blow […] disrupt[ing]

3 *A Sketch of the Past* was written under the solicitation of Woolf's sister Vanessa Bell, and never actually finished. The text is taken from the collected edition put together by J. Schulkind in the 1970s under the title of *Moments of Being*. Further references to Woolf's autobiographical writings are to her edition and cited parenthetically as *MB* followed by page number.

the ordinary flow of perception" and providing sentient beings with "a brief moment of illumination" through which they become able to "know who we are" (McIntire 2008, 167). Moments of being bear significance not by virtue of their content, but of their ability to ignite the creative act and to process past traumas, presenting themselves as both a physical response to the disturbance and a means of explanation of being itself. This medicinal quality echoes Wordsworth's concept of the "renovating Virtue", and conversely suggests the importance of integrating a post-Wordsworthian perspective to Woolf's autobiographical endeavour in her *Sketch*.

As Aleida Assmann has illustrated, Wordsworth's recuperative paradigm is configured as a modern take on the classical *anamnesis* (Assmann 2011, 100), that is, a creative process partly distinct from mere remembrance on the basis of its ecstatic and mystical nature. *Anamnesis* treats recollection as a solemn retrieval of memories capable of restoring the "wound of time" through something like divine possession. Wordsworth stages this in "Tintern Abbey", where remembrance lifts the "burthen of the mystery" and lets him "see into the life of things" (Wordsworth 2008, 133, l. 49). In *The Prelude* he recast a similar experience as a "sentiment of Being" that although "lost beyond the reach of thought | and human knowledge" resists and "liveth to the heart" (Wordsworth 2008 402-3, l. 420, ll. 422-3).

This paradigm, devoid of a certain amount of overt mysticism, represents a further point of connection between the psychophysical situation experienced by Woolf during her moments of "sudden violent shock" (*MB* 84) and Wordsworth's own in his "gentle shock of mild surprise" (Wordsworth 2008, 444, l. 407). Even before the *Sketch*, in *Reminiscences*, a text written between 1907 and 1908 and addressed to her nephew Julian Bell, Woolf seemed prone to describe reminiscing as a passive yielding to a force that positively possessed the remembering mind, thus producing a written memory out of a mystical process of conglomeration. In *Reminiscences*, the space under the nursery is redolent of a dark "mystery" (*MB* 1). Virginia and Vanessa drift "like ships in an immense ocean" (*MB* 2), where sounds, colours, and smells arrive through "impersonal things" (*MB* 2) that possess "innumerable associations" and the power "to flood the brain in a second" (*MB* 2). These moments, which Woolf describes as the "pinnacles of life" (*MB* 10), are clearly an early attempt to single out what she would later define more precisely as the moments of being.

Via her own version of anamnesis, Woolf is also designing a cult of childhood: a recuperative paradigm of what, borrowing Wordsworth's phrase, we might call "chance collisions and quaint accidents" (Wordsworth 2008, 390, l. 617), which a maturer self is able to call forth "to impregnate and to elevate the mind" (l. 624). These "gleams like the flashing of a shield" (l. 164) in *The Prelude* may be read as an imagistic template for Woolf's later emphasis on sudden illuminations

wrested from the flux of experience. This early Romantic attempt, however, is marked from the outset by a form of disillusionment that recalls the only partially attainable achievement of remembrance in "Tintern Abbey", at least as it appears to Wordsworth in 1798. Just as Wordsworth, before the more emotionally invested and openly autobiographical *Prelude* composed decades later, expresses some reserve about the possibility of fully attaining the very "life of things" (133, l. 49), so Woolf is explicit in her acceptance of the limits of autobiographical writing when she observes that "[w]ritten words of a person who is dead or still alive tend most unfortunately to drape themselves in smooth folds annulling all evidence of life" (*MB* 8).

It is only with the later autobiographical attempt of the late 1930s – after a lifetime of formal experiment in prose and, as I have argued elsewhere, a calmer accommodation of Freud's lesson (Bugliani 2020)[4] – that Woolf sounds genuinely confident about the possibility of writing down her own past. At this stage she diverges from Freud in a crucial respect. Where Freud's psychoanalytic project excavates in order to unearth gloomy, obscure buried traumas, Woolf's aesthetic investigation of the past does the opposite. It foregrounds, and aims to celebrate, the radiance and formal intensity of the moments she recovers. Her reluctance fully to acknowledge her relationship with "the Austrian" suggests a selective appropriation of psychoanalytic discourse rather than straightforward discipleship (see *MB* 116; Woolf 1985, 248). In Woolf's early years, memory functions less as a continuous narrative faculty than as a principle of selection: it sifts fragments and returns them as charged intensities. Read alongside Wordsworth's Romantic practice, this becomes a mode of reappropriation that refuses the more defensive anti-Romantic and

4 On Woolf's ambivalent engagement with Freud – at once marked by proximity, through the Hogarth Press's role in publishing his work, and by persistent reservations about psychoanalytic "dissection" – see Abel's account of Woolf's creative reworking of psychoanalytic motifs (1989) and especially Gabrielle McIntire's recent account of Bloomsbury as both "receptacle" and "conduit" for Freud's ideas in Britain, not least through the Woolfs' Hogarth Press, which became the first English-language publisher of Freud and of the *International Psycho-Analytical Library* (2025). As critics have noted, her engagement is therefore less that of a straightforward disciple than of a writer who selectively appropriates psychoanalytic concepts and debates (Kleinian as well as Freudian) into an aesthetics of illumination, memory, and ethical "unknowing", rather than into a clinical project of uncovering buried trauma (Sklar 2023).

anti-Victorian gestures often associated with modernist polemic.[5] As Alexandra Harris puts it, the past returns "not as a series of authoritative texts, but as a remembered store of phrases and ideas, altered by each owner and still evolving" (Harris 2010, 134), and thus her liberal assimilation of Wordsworth's could easily transcend the limitations of her Modernist milieu.

This post-Romantic reconfiguration of memory as a vital, aestheticized, and psychically reparative act opens the door to understanding Woolf's literary experimentation as a continuation – not a rejection – of Romantic epistemologies. Just as Wordsworth's "sentiment of Being" evokes the durability of affective impressions beyond intellectual grasp, so Woolf's moments of being disclose an enduring substratum of felt experience that animates her fiction and life-writing alike. Their shared sensibility – centred on intensity, intermittence, and embodied perception – suggests a continuity of philosophical concerns about selfhood and temporality rather than a clean break between literary epochs.

Woolf's reticence towards monumentalizing the self – her recurring fear that writing "annuls all evidence of life" – recalls Wordsworth's own paradoxes surrounding poetic self-display. In both, autobiography becomes less an act of self-construction than an ongoing negotiation between presence and absence, memory and loss. Thus, Woolf's *Sketch* may be read not only as a modernist experiment, but as a continuation of a Romantic poetics of memory, filtered through the techniques and tensions of twentieth-century prose.

4 Epiphanic Memorials

This attraction to the illuminating power afforded by such moments aligns with one of Modernism's most enduring legacies: the celebration of the epiphanic power of memory. Modernist epiphanies furnish yet another direct link to Wordsworth, as his poetical model has long been identified as the prototype for the representation of that phenomenon in literature, most notably by Morris Beja (1971, 32-8)

5 Early twentieth-century anti-Romanticism crystallised around conservative figures such as Irving Babbitt, the Harvard New Humanist moral philosopher, and T.E. Hulme, the poet-critic who opposed Romantic 'spilt religion' with a rhetoric of classical limit and restraint. Their polemics against Rousseauist individualism and emotional excess helped shape the climate in which male High Modernists (above all Pound and Eliot) fashioned ideals of impersonality, discipline, and formal austerity in explicit opposition to a caricatured Romanticism (see Hadjiyiannis 2018 for an overview of this complex field). An exemplary exploration of T.S. Eliot's own ambivalent stance is made by Michael O'Neill (2007, 61-83).

and Wim Tigges (1999, 14-16). In subsequent studies of modernist epiphany, Woolf has usually been treated only in passing, and often without any direct connection to Wordsworth. A more recent foray into the matter by Nigel Fabb has highlighted the corporeality of epiphanies, a distinctive trait which further strengthens the Wordsworth-Woolf line, as opposed to its traditional analysis as a purely transcendental and thus abstract elevation (2022, 87).[6]

What is interesting about Woolf's case is that her absorption of Wordsworth for her 1930s autobiographical endeavour was thoroughly prepared by creative explorations of the emergence and significance of isolated temporal intensities in her 1920s fiction. At that point, borrowing a phrase from a poem by Thomas Hardy revolving around a "strange mirror" capable of absorbing human thoughts and of "making of man a transparency" (Hardy 2001, 96), she would term those episodes "moments of vision" (Woolf 1987, 145). She employed the same expression in reviewing Joseph Conrad's ability to fill his novels with special instants which were still, at that stage, insufficient "to serve as well as steady lamplights to illuminate the ripple of life" (Woolf 2008, 232).

The very phrase 'moments of vision' elicits a meditation on the difficulty of seeing through the life of things, and bears at least some instinctive similarities with Wordsworth's meditations. Hardy's poetry forcibly conjoined the concept of moment with that of memory, and consequently yoked together the figure of the artist and that of the retriever of past experiences in a manner that creatively avoided the risk of narcissistic self-centredness. In "Modern Fiction", Woolf turns the exploration of the moment into a kind of report on the "luminous halo" that breaks across experience and disrupts the uniformity of "gig-lamps" (Woolf 2008, 160). She nonetheless binds this aesthetic project to remembrance. Reflecting on the composition of Mrs Dalloway, she describes the "tunnelling process" by which she retrieved the past "in instalments" (Woolf 1978, 272). One of the novel's most celebrated segments – Clarissa's recollection of her past love for Sally Seton – translates this concern into narrative form and is, in fact, instrumental in articulating an early version of the moments of being. In Woolf's words:

6 This is also notable in Woolf's case, since her 'moments of being' are consistently characterised as physical in their earliest phase**.** James Joyce in *Stephen Hero* linked these moments to the banality of everyday life and its "vulgarity of speech and gesture" (Joyce 1963, 211), marking the whole phenomenon as recognizably post-Wordsworthian. Despite extensive secondary literature on modernist epiphany, there remains a noticeable lack of sustained investigation into Woolf's specific adoption and reworking of Wordsworth's concept. Avrom Fleishman's seminal study gestures towardsthis connection (Fleishman 1975, 227), but more in-depth analyses of Wordsworth's shadow and Woolf's reconfiguration of it are often treated as milestones within a wider discourse rather than as central objects of inquiry (see, for example, Lee 1986, 22).

> It was a sudden revelation, a tinge like a blush which one tried to check and then, as it spread, one yielded to its expansion, and rushed to the farthest verge and there quivered and felt the world come closer, swollen with some astonishing significance, some pressure of rapture, which split its thin skin and gushed and poured with an extraordinary alleviation over the cracks and sores. (Woolf 2000, 27)

Rather than this dazzling milieu, in *A Sketch* the moments seem to coagulate around gloomy experiences of death, a situation again aligning with *The Prelude*, where death often becomes the core of a spot of time. The first example that Wordsworth gives of a spot of time in Book XII revolves precisely around the experience of loss. Young William, on an ordinary Christmas day, on a "day | Stormy, and rough, and wild" (Wordsworth 2008, 567, ll. 357-8), waits in vain for his father's return. The apprehension of his death fatally imprints on the scenery a sentiment of appeasement that he is ever after able to summon in the event of a storm. Nature thus becomes a sort of mystic mediator, able to rekindle memories in the best tradition of Proustian involuntary memory. A similar equation is depicted in *A Sketch*, when Woolf recounts her first acquaintance with death – specifically, the suicide of Mr Valpy, an acquaintance of the Stephenses in St Ives. The impact of such news is reported by Woolf not *per se*, but through the proxy of an epiphanic moment in the garden at night, "walking on the path by an apple tree" and gazing "at the grey-green creases of the bark" (*MB* 84). The episode, fictionally reframed in *The Waves*, centres the aesthetic experience around the same apple tree, whose leaves become "fixed in the sky" while "the mood glared" (Woolf 2011, 17). Thus, like Wordsworth's storm, the apple tree becomes a recurrent symbol, capable of reenacting and reviving the original feeling.

When shifting to her mother's death, Woolf resorts to another objectual catalyst – this time an inanimate object – to catalyse the shock of her realisation. Rather than occurring in the vicinity of the corpse, the moment takes place outside the mourning house in Hyde Park Gate 22, and precisely in Paddington Station. Virginia, upon meeting her brother Thoby returning home for the funeral, is struck by the incomparable brilliance of the public station's glass dome, in contrast to the gloom of her house. This moment, discussed by Hermione Lee, turns on the archetype of the reflecting glass – an object Woolf, like the Romantics, repeatedly "travestied and altered" (Lee 1986, 19) until it becomes a gateway to emotion and recollection rather than a device of faithful reflection. Julia Stephen is transfigured into architectural terms as "the very centre of that great Cathedral space which was childhood" (*MB* 93). Her presence seems to disseminate itself across the glass, presenting the young

Virginia with glowing colours that "impressed and exalted" her and, more importantly, reactivated the shock of bereavement – "unveiled and intensified […] as if a burning glass had been laid over what was shaded and dormant" (*MB* 103). The ceiling of the train station retains a similar function to the apple tree in the Valpy moment, as Woolf's unconscious mind fuses it with the very feelings stirred by her mother's death, in a manner very similar to how young Wordsworth fatally coalesces the sight of a "Gibbet-mast" (Wordsworth 2008, 566, l. 291) where a convict had been left to die. The gibbet, like a beacon on the summit of the hill, revisited many years later, rekindles a past intensity, and once on them "fell | The spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam" (567, ll. 322-3); the poet feels the need to "enshrine the spirit of the past | For future restoration" (ll. 342-3).

The gibbet and the beacon, more than for their mnemonic value, are explored by Wordsworth as symbols of the elusive communicability of inner experience. This epistemological challenge is showcased in the same passage, when young Virginia is seen conversing with her sister Vanessa in Hyde Park, in a scene that revolves around the moment of consciousness when Virginia feels she has grasped the meaning of a poem for the first time. Albeit unnamed, the poem comes from *The Golden Treasury*, an anthology where the Romantics held pride of place. Woolf's description of internalising the poem's message echoes the reflective imagery in her Paddington Station episode. She describes an inner metamorphosis that

> made me suddenly develop perceptions, as if a burning glass had been laid over what was shaded and dormant. Of course its quickening was spasmodic. But it was surprising – as if something was becoming visible without any effort. […] for the first time I understood the poem (which it was I forget). It was as if it became altogether intelligible; I had a feeling of transparency in words when they cease to be words and become so intensified that one seems to experience them; to foretell them as if they developed what one is already feeling. (*MB* 103)

Virginia tries to explain the "queer feeling" (*MB* 103) to Vanessa, who seems incapable of grasping her meaning. The *Treasury* included the "Intimations of Immortality" ode, where the struggle to "admit the notion of death" (Wordsworth 2008, 297)[7] is integrated

7 This passage appears in a note Wordsworth dictated to Isabella Fenwick in 1843. The idea had already been proposed in the 1802 Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, where Wordsworth briefly states the purpose of the most important poems in the volume, including – in a slightly modified form – the formulation 'to attend our notion of death' (Wordsworth 2008, 598). The child's struggle with the idea of death can thus be considered a *leitmotif* of Wordsworth's work.

by Wordsworth into his anamnestic attempt to retrieve the gaze of the Child – a poetical entity who is "glorious in the might / Of untamed pleasures" (300, ll. 124-5) and ultimately able to free the adult from the "inevitable yoke" (300, l. 127) of "sleep and forgetting" (299, l. 58). The ultimate acknowledgement of nature as a force able to penetrate into the self's consciousness through the projection of sensorial impressions that are to be rekindled as embers of a lost, fugitive state of illumination brings to the fore the primacy of individual impressions as aesthetic triggers. Ceasing to be feared as "incommunicable, solipsistic" (Lee 1986, 23), these impressions begin to gain soundness and dependability in the eyes of an artist confronting the inhospitable, chaotic nature of the outside world – a world filled with objects potentially able to trigger acts of remembrance, but ultimately recognised as an unstable and flickering whirlpool of fragmentary images.

5 Impressions of Being

Recognising the Romantic roots of Woolf's epiphanic reconstruction of the past matters for more than her autobiographical urge alone. It also clarifies her larger understanding of literature and consciousness (*MB* 85). Her ability to turn the "state of despair" into a "state of satisfaction" that she explicitly connects to the illumination of having "made a discovery" (*MB* 84), and thus the threads I have here analysed – of anamnesis and epiphany – all concur in a redefinition of her ampler outlook on the relationship between literature and consciousness.

Such a reappraisal of the role of impression in Woolf's memorial enterprise – a critical insight inaugurated by Hermione Lee's seminal investigation – calls for wider contextualisation. Literary Impressionism, often isolated as one of the prodromic phenomena of Modernism (Bowler 2016), was for Woolf a much more vivid intellectual presence by virtue of her familiarity – both personal and intellectual – with Roger Fry's cult of artistic Post-Impressionism in the 1910s (Banfield 2000, 245 and passim). Fry's critical incursions into (Post-)Impressionist techniques were instrumental to Woolf's heated critique of Edwardian materialism and informed the pronounced visual quality of her early works, especially her short stories. Being a close friend of Roger Fry, and one of the first witnesses of his notoriously pioneering Post-Impressionist exhibition, Woolf was no novice with regard to the full implications of the term. Fry's interpretation of Impressionism as a tendency in art emphasised its ability to reduce objects to ephemeral sensations, at the risk of collapsing them into mere "coloured blobs" (Fry 1996, 384) devoid of the capacity to "deliver any intelligible message" (73). As Banfield

suggests, Woolf saw this as a limitation, prompting her to supplement Impressionism's insights with other aesthetic stimuli, in order to liberate modern fiction from conventional narrative constraints while retaining Impressionism's innovations (Banfield 2003, 478).

This reflective engagement with Impressionism, much like her negotiation of epiphany, formed the crucible of Woolf's early aesthetic experiments. The 1920s marked a phase of intense experimentation in short fiction, which served as a form of groundwork for her late-1930s engagement with autobiography. Additionally, the 1930s proved crucial for her renewed engagement with Fry's theories, as Woolf was absorbed in the writing of his biography. While re-reading Fry's essays in that period, she confided to her sister: "I realise that he's the only great critic that ever lived" (Woolf 1982, 285). The difference between the painterly and somewhat flimsy impressions of the short stories and the intricate tapestry of memories in the autobiographical writings becomes even more discernible when the recuperation of Wordsworth and Pater is brought into the picture. The Romantic process of achieving self-consciousness through anamnesis, when fused with Modernist epiphanies, acquires additional complexity and coherence via the theoretical reflections provided by Fry.

In his comprehensive survey of Woolf's literary Impressionism, Jesse Matz describes how she was consciously elaborating an informed approach to the subject, which testifies to her "effort to adumbrate a new faculty, one that has the freedom perceptually to range" (Matz 2001, 178). This same note might have come to Woolf's mind while, in the earliest stages of her new autobiographical adventure, she mused on how she could process brute personal data into an interlacement of visions. By resorting to the image of the painter tracing her "impressions" to "make a picture that was globular; semi-transparent" (*MB* 79-80), she seems to be reaching towards what Wordsworth calls "visionary power". In an early passage of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth describes it as that which

> Attends upon the motions of the winds
> Embodied in the mystery of words;
> There darkness makes abode, and all the host
> Of shadowy things do work their changes there,
> As in a mansion like their proper home;
> Even forms and substances are circumfused
> By that transparent veil with light divine;
> And, though the turnings of intricated Verse,
> Present themselves as objects recognized,
> In flashes, and with a glory scarce their own. (Wordsworth 2008, ll. 619-29)

This hazed, prismatic perception supports a model of autobiography that refuses teleology. Rather than organising a life into a continuous arc, it reconstructs the past through fragments that are deliberately selected and arranged into a pattern on the page. And if, in her own autobiography, Woolf was to escape the "damned self-conscious susceptibility" (Matz 2001, 183), she would need to take a step further and devise an enhanced Impressionism.

In this respect, Pater's lesson about aesthetic intensity re-emerges. It has often been claimed that the infamously amoral "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance* is to be ranked alongside the manifestoes of literary Impressionism (Bowler 2016, 127) for its depiction of human minds caught in the act of accounting for worldly objects as entities "loosed into a group of impressions" (Pater 1980, 187). In addition to this theoretical scrutiny, Pater devised a fictional analogue to his aesthetic principles in the *Imaginary Portraits*, which can be read as "demonstrations of how problematic it is to distinguish fact from fiction" (Saunders 2010, 47), effectively postulating an irreconcilable split between the object of the portrait and the portrait itself. Thus, autobiographical life-writing could represent, for Woolf, a domain in which Wordsworth's poetic insights could be metamorphosed into modern prose with the aid of Pater's critical and creative remodelling of them.

The recognition of such a split and its causes bestowed upon Woolf a new mode of interpreting the life of the artist and its transposition into literary form, enabling her to formulate a model of life-writing that escapes the framework of purely confessional self-centredness. *The Child in the House*, for instance, is an exercise not only in the staging of a semi-autobiographical product untainted by narcissism – by virtue of a celebration of a self whose inherent quality is the capacity to resist dissolution in the flux of impressions – but also a "subtle reworking" of Wordsworth's iconic "Intimations Ode", where Pater offers his own prose version of Wordsworthian epiphanies (Losey 1986, 304). Freed from the triviality of biographical life, the writer could sift through memory, giving sustained attention only to those specific moments that carried the power to restore the immediacy typical of childhood, when impressions were unmediated and accepted as they deposited on the consciousness. In this carefully interlaced critical constellation, Woolf could thus bring together Roger Fry's theory of art, Strachey's practice of new biography, and Pater's philosophical outlook on the crucial instance of human self-perception and its literary rendering.

A case in point is the short story *Slater's Pins Have No Point*, later re-titled *Moments of Being*, where Woolf describes the aesthetic moment of receiving an impression and interweaves it with personal recollections – namely, her lessons with Clara Pater, sister of Walter and, for a period, Woolf's private tutor of the classics. The narrator

Fanny Wilmot concludes that the remark by Julia Craye about the pins is but the surface of a deeper and more complicated state of mind, tinged with reminiscences of her late brother and intertwined with the present. After much reflection – forming the body of the story – Fanny realises that she:

> had surprised her [Julia] in a moment of ecstasy [… she] seemed to emerge out of the London Night, seemed to fling it like a cloak behind her. It seemed in its bareness and intensity the effluence of her spirit, something she had made which surrounded her, which was her. Fanny stared. All seemed transparent for a moment […] She saw back and back into the past behind her. (Woolf 1989, 220)

It is not hard to detect, behind many of the images in the final passage, the spectral imprint of Pater's reformulation of Wordsworth's *spots of time* philosophy. Fanny embodies the child's gaze, so crucial in both *The Prelude* and the *Sketch*, while the recurring motif of transparency – underscored by the image of glass throughout the story – recalls Pater's praise of diaphaneity in *The Renaissance*. A similar ideal of translucency is also adumbrated in Book 5 of *The Prelude*, where the poet recalls how actual poetic creation emerges from youthful "ecstasy" (Wordsworth 2008, l. 614), accompanied by "visionary power" (l. 619) "Embodied in the mystery of words" (l. 621), and articulated through flashes of insight.

Pater's ambitious ideal diverged from Eliot's notion of impersonality, aiming instead at the dissolution of the personal – impersonal divide into a new unitary entity. This entity blurs the line between fact and fiction, elevating memories to "the unreality of dreams" (Saunders 2010, 56). Modernists, including Eliot, attempted to move away from Pater's project of blending genres to create a "hybrid genre in which fiction, auto/biography, history, essay, and criticism weave together and enweave each other, in an allegory of ecstatic subjectivity" (70) – a project which was in many respects Wordsworthian in nature. Understanding Woolf's prose within this constellation reveals her ongoing exploration of selfhood in relation to a transient, refracted world. Her treatment of "moments" becomes emblematic of her engagement with modern consciousness, culminating in a philosophy whose boldest tenet is that "to retrieve the matter of memory, we must simply (re)discover the correct 'trace' of emotion to reconnect [itself] to the past and make it again conscious of the present" (McIntire 2008, 169).

6 Conclusion

This article has argued that Woolf's blueprint for autobiography in *A Sketch of the Past* is not grounded in a repudiation of tradition. It emerges instead from a composite interlacing of inherited Romantic and Victorian elements, which Woolf re-reads under the sign of creative reappropriation. In this respect her stance is markedly less defensive than that adopted by many of her male contemporaries. A cohort of friendly ghosts ensured she was able to craft a novel view of autobiography, which unfortunately she did not have the opportunity to practice consistently or to further scrutinize with fully fledged essayistic reflections. Her forefathers dissected Wordsworth and clarified aspects of his work that she could freely reassemble and reshape in order to attune them with her own needs. Outside her fiction, Wordsworth's treatment of the past offered Woolf a workable model for autobiography. In The Prelude, the individual past is shaped into a kind of poetic monument, and ecstatic elevation is repeatedly triggered by epiphanic moments. Woolf could therefore use Wordsworth's procedure as a practical instrument for conceiving her own autobiographical enterprise. Thanks to Wordsworth being almost the perfect representative, in *The Prelude* at least, of this feature, we can further characterize the aforementioned exchange with Strachey about *Jacob's Room*: Woolf did answer her friend that Romanticism was a way out, a "breaking with representation" (Woolf 1978, 568), and that she considered Romantic tenets as possible tools to process her Modernist prose. Thus, the autobiographical in Wordsworth was surely a prized token.

Fuelled by a sort of irenic counterpart to the 'anxiety of influence', Woolf seemed interested in crafting a complex thread of grateful allusions, which all concur in forming a wider, welcoming perspective. To look back on Wordsworth's lesson on the art of sketching the past did not entail a Freudian spiral of literary Oedipal frictions, but rather offered an opportunity to interweave it into her own version of autobiography, enriching her life-writing with a powerful post-Romantic trait. The rigid vertical framework of influence is substituted by a more unbroken stream of "fluxes and refluxes" (Beer 1993, 5), or, to borrow once again, an interplay of "strong Sensations" (Wordsworth 2008, 505, l. 752) that were able to find in her the exact "capaciousness and amplitude of mind" (l. 759). Ultimately, Wordsworth's poetry and its lyrical autobiography can and must be accounted as one of the underlying frameworks influencing and concurrently shaping Woolf's aesthetic landscape.

Woolf does not steal from Wordsworth, nor does she camouflage her debts through misreading, limitation, debasement, or counter-creation. Instead, she summons the poet of *The Prelude* openly, alluding to the 'spots of time' in a tone that is appreciative and

conciliatory. Paradoxically, this overt acknowledgement sharpens rather than dilutes her modernity (O'Neill 2007, 11-12), because it answers the trenchant rebuttals that Wordsworth and other Romantics suffered in Woolf's times. Through a thoughtful interiorization of the critical legacy that Wordsworth's poetry had generated, Woolf is not only echoing his words but also "spending […] an inheritance" (Ricks 2002, 9) cumulated by (more or less) sympathetic readers of the poet, to create her own grammar of a 'post-Romantic Modernist autobiography'. The many spectres – both of the poet and of his critics – preside over her creation without the faintest power to force their doctrine on her, since her own critical appropriation of the poetic tradition has earned her a voice as authoritative as theirs. Wordsworth's *Prelude* is thus a sort of rich bequest that Woolf was able to appropriate and mould according to her aesthetic needs, without the weight of the patriarchal mortgage, but with the exuberance of the inheritance which can be liberally expended to craft something new.

Romantic ancestors like Wordsworth resurface in Woolf's prose as peculiarly familiar ghosts, able to haunt the text in a benign manner, becoming the occasion for an enrichment of its epistemic and semiotic background. Their presence in Woolf's works matters because it is not merely a fleeting set of fragmentary and unrelated appearances and disappearances, but an underlying framework influencing and concurrently informing her aesthetic landscape. Like the ghosts portrayed by Henry James, Woolf's manifestations of the Romantic poets seem to be summoned more effectively "whenever the significant overflows our powers of expressing it" (Woolf 1988, 324), and the author needs a recognizable catalyst upon which to wreathe together multiple threads of sense.

Read against this background of grateful inheritance and creative reappropriation, Strachey's descriptive image of Woolf as a "Romantic in Sirius" does more than diagnose a residual Romantic strain in Woolf. It evokes a Romanticism that has been driven outward and upward – condensed into a single, exceptionally bright point in the modernist firmament. Sirius is, after all, the brightest star in the night sky, outshining all its neighbours and long serving as a navigational marker and seasonal signal. To call Woolf "Romantic in Sirius" is therefore to acknowledge both the intensity and the critical distance of her engagement: Romantic energy persists in her work not as a diffuse atmosphere but as a concentrated, guiding luminosity, at once a legacy and a compass, brilliant enough to be unmistakable yet sufficiently remote to avoid the epigonism her male modernist peers so anxiously repudiated.

Bibliography

Abel, E. (1989). *Virginia Woolf and the Fictions of Psychoanalysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Assmann, A. (2011). *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Banfield, A. (2000). *The Phantom Table: Woolf, Fry, Russell, and the Epistemology of Modernism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Banfield, A. (2003). "Time Passes: Virginia Woolf, Post-Impressionism, and Cambridge Time". *Poetics Today*, 24(39), 471-516. https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-24-3-471.

Beer, J. (1993). *Romantic Influences: Contemporary-Victorian-Modern*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Beja, M. (1971). *Epiphany in the Modern Novel.* London: Peter Owen.

Bowler, R. (2016). *Literary Impressionism. Vision and Memory in Dorothy Richardson, Ford Madox Ford, H.D. and May Sinclair.* London: Bloomsbury. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474269087.

Bugliani, P. (2020). "'Reduced to a Whirlpool': War, Sigmund Freud and Virginia Woolf's (Late) Non-Fiction". *e-Rea*, 17(2). https://doi.org/10.4000/erea.9654.

Cronin, R. (2015). "The Critical Reception, 1819-1850". Bennett, A. (ed.), *William Wordsworth in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 61-8. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139236188.011.

Daley, K. (2001). *The Rescue of Romanticism: Walter Pater and John Ruskin*. Athens: Ohio University Press.

Eliot, T.S. (1941), *Four Quartets*. London: Faber and Faber.

Fernald, A. (2006). *Virginia Woolf. Feminism and the Reader.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fabb, N. (2022). *A Theory of Thrills, Sublime and Epiphany in Literature*. London: Anthem Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2rr3hg6.

Fleishman, A. (1975). *Virginia Woolf, A Critical Reading*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Fry, R. (1996). *A Roger Fry Reader.* Edited by C. Reed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hadjiyiannis, C. (2018). *Conservative Modernists: Literature and Tory Politics in Britain, 1900–1920*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108550895.

Hardy, T. (2001). *Poems*. Edited by T. Paulin. London: Faber & Faber.

Harris, A. (2010). *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists & the Imagination From Virginia Woolf to John Piper.* London: Thames and Hudson.

Janowitz, A. (2017). "The Romantic Fragment". Wu, D. (ed.), *A Companion to Romanticism*. Hoboken: Wiley, 479-88. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165396.ch44.

Joyce, J. (1963). *Stephen Hero*. Edited by T. Spencer, J. Slocum and H. Cahoon. New York: New Directions.

Katz, T. (2023). "Woolf's Malleable Objects: Impressionism and the Material World". *CUSP: Late Nineteenth-/Early Twentieth-Century Cultures*, 1(2), 317-32. https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/cusp.2023.a902873.

Kopley, E. (2021). *Virginia Woolf and Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lee, H. (1986). "A Burning Glass: Reflection in Virginia Woolf". Warner E. (ed.), *Virginia Woolf: A Centenary Perspective*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 12-27. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-17489-8_2.

Losey, J.B. (1986). "Epiphany in Pater's Portraits". *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 29, 297-308.

Mahoney, C. (2023). "Pater on Coleridge and Wordsworth". Martindale, C.; Østermark-Johansen, L.; Prettejohn, E. (eds), *Walter Pater and the Beginning of English Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 216-38. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108869447.017.

Mann, K.B. (1980). "George Eliot and Wordsworth: The Power of Sound and the Power of Mind". *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 20(4), 675-94. https://doi.org/10.2307/450377.

Marcus, L. (1994). *Auto/Biographical Discourses: Criticism, Theory, Practice*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Marcus, L. (2016). "Experiments in Form: Modernism and Autobiography in Woolf, Eliot, Mansfield, Lawrence, Joyce and Richardson". Smyth, A. (ed.), *A History of English Autobiography.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 298-312. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139939799.021.

Matz, J. (2001). *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maxwell, C. (2009). *Second Sight: The Visionary Imagination in Late Victorian Literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. https://doi.org/10.7228/manchester/9780719071447.001.0001.

MB = Woolf, V. (2002). *Moments of Being: Autobiographical Writings*. Edited by J. Schulkind; with an introduction by H. Lee. London: Pimlico.

McIntire, G. (2008). *Modernism, Memory and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511485176.

McIntire, G. (2025). "Bloomsbury and Psychoanalysis". Ryan, D. (ed.), *A History of the Bloomsbury Group*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009423632.021.

Mortimer, R. (1995). "London Letter". Rosenbaum, S.P. (ed.), *The Bloomsbury Group: A Collection of Memoirs and Commentaries.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 309-12. https://doi.org/10.3138/9781487573768-056.

Muir, E. (1975). "Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway".* Majumdar, R.; McLaurin, A. (eds), *Virginia Woolf: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge, 178-85.

O'Neill, M. (2007). *The All Sustaining Air: Romantic Legacies and Renewals in British, American, and Irish Poetry Since 1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199299287.001.0001.

Pater, W. (1910). *Appreciations; with an Essay on Style*. London: Macmillan.

Pater, W. (1980). *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry.* Edited by D. Frame. Berkeley: U of California P.

Rabaté, J.M.; Spiropoulou, A. (2022). "Introduction". *Historical Modernisms: Time, History and Modernist Aesthetics.* London: Bloomsbury, 1-30. 10.5040/9781350202993.ch-I

Rajan, T. (2000). "Theories of Genre". Brown, M. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*. Vol. 5, *Romanticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 226-49. https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521300100.013.

Ricks, C. (2002). *Allusion to the Poets*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199250325.001.0001.

Saunders, M. (2010). *Self-Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199579761.001.0001.

Sklar, J. (2023). "Bloomsbury and the Early Evolution of British Psychoanalysis". Wolf, E.; Antonis, B. (eds), *Independent Women in British Psychoanalysis: Creativity and Authenticity at Work*. New York: Routledge, 35-46. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003296690-4.

Sherry, V. (2015). *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139941570.

Stephen, L. (1907). "Wordsworth's Ethics". *Hours in a Library*, vol. 3. London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 127-78.

Strachey, L. (1975). "Letter to Virginia Woolf, 9 October 1922". Majumdar, R.; McLaurin, A. (eds), *Virginia Woolf: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge, 93-4.

Tigges, W. (1999). "The Significance of Trivial Things: Towards a Typology of Literary Epiphanies". Tigges, W. (ed.), *Moments on Moment: Aspects of Literary Epiphany.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 11-35. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004484245_003.

Wilner, J. (2015). "Autobiography". *William Wordsworth in Context.* Edited by A. Bennett. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 145-51. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139236188.021.

Woolf, V. (1982). *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 6. Edited by N. Nicolson and J. Trautmann. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woolf, V. (1975). *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 1. Edited by N. Nicolson and J. Trautmann. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woolf, V. (1977). *The Letters of Virginia* Woolf, vol. 2. Edited by N. Nicolson and J. Trautmann. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woolf, V. (1978). *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 2. Edited by A. Olivier Bell and A. McNeillie. London: The Hogarth Press.

Woolf, V. (1981). *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 3. Edited by A. Olivier Bell and A. McNeillie. London: The Hogarth Press.

Woolf, V. (1985). *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 5. Edited by A. Olivier Bell and A. McNeillie. London: The Hogarth Press.

Woolf, V. (1987). *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 2. Edited by A. McNeillie. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woolf, V. (1988). *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 3. Edited by A. McNeillie. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woolf, V. (1989). *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf.* Edited by S. Dick. New York: Harcourt, Inc.

Woolf, V. (2000). *Mrs Dalloway.* Edited by D. Bradshaw. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Woolf, V. (2008). *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 4. Edited by A. McNeillie. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woolf, V. (2011). *The Waves.* Edited by M. Herbert and S. Sellers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wong, A. (2018). "Introduction". *Walter Pater, Selected Essays*. Edited by A. Wong. Manchester: Carcanet Press, 9-39.

Wordsworth, W. (2008). *The Major Works.* Edited by S. Gill. Oxford: Oxford University Press.