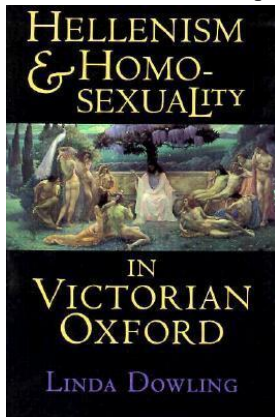


*Somewhere there's Music: John Meade Falkner's The
Lost Stradivarius*
Nicholas Daly

The discourse of aestheticism, as it develops in the late nineteenth century, comes to offer, *inter alia*, a language for the articulation of subjected sexualities. In fact, it is probably not overstating it to say that the first modern gay male subculture is that of the aesthete. There is more at stake here of course than some cliché of the gay man as a connoisseur of pretty things, or as a creator of the house or



apartment beautiful: aestheticism's cult of art and artifice, and its deconstruction of the 'natural', provide a means of understanding identity, and within that sexual identity, as something constructed, as a formal rather than a moral entity. Linda Dowling in her study, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*, has traced the prehistory of the gender politics of aestheticism, locating its origins in the attempts by Benjamin Jowett and others to reform the

programme of undergraduate study at Oxford, with a view to training a cadre of men able to lead Victorian England through a disorienting period of modernization (cf. Matthew Arnold's advocacy of Hellenic culture for the ills of modern England). To put it crudely, this involved a shift from the study of Latin grammar to Greek culture, as well as a new emphasis on the personal tutorial and self-development. But as Dowling points out, this celebration of Greek culture and *Bildung* also provided writers like J.A. Symonds and Walter Pater with the basis for a Hellenistic counter-discourse in which they could appeal to the authority of the classics to defend the 'spiritual procreancy of male love.'¹ The 'wider intensification of sensuous culture', and the emphasis on individual development that Dowling shows as linking the different liberal projects of such figures as Arnold, Jowett and J.S. Mill, thus places male love at the very heart of the tradition of European art. The cult of experience

advocated by Pater in the famous 'Conclusion' to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, with its injunction 'to be forever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions'² (read at the time in the light of rumours circulating about Pater's private life) would in turn come to underwrite both a more strident variety of aestheticism – 'decadence' – and a new variety of male homoerotic culture.³ Oscar Wilde has come to act as a sort of shorthand symbol for both of these tendencies.

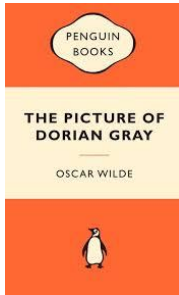
With aestheticism came the aesthetic (or perhaps more accurately, anti-aesthetic) novel, beginning with W.H. Mallock's satirical portrait of Oxford Hellenic culture. *The New Republic* (1877), and even the aesthetic operetta, Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience* (1881), which pokes fun at those 'anxious for to shine in the high aesthetic line.'⁴ However, the two *fin-de-siècle* novels which most explicitly deal with the links between aestheticism and love between men are written not in the mode of social satire, but in what I will call, with some reservations, late Victorian gothic, this convergence of Gothicism and aestheticism providing one possible gloss on the term decadence.⁵ Both Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) and John Meade Falkner's *The Lost Stradivarius* (1895) explore the perils and pleasures of following Pater's aesthetic injunction in *The Renaissance* to 'grasp at any exquisite passion' in a world where 'all melts under our feet', and both use a distinctly gothic register to trace the connections between aestheticism and male-male relationships.⁶ I will read Falkner's novel – with frequent cross-references to Wilde's – as a way of exploring the sexual politics of the decadent novel. I particular I want to stress the ways in which the representation of sexuality in *The Lost Stradivarius* is routed through two rather different entities: music, and national identity.

John Meade Falkner is scarcely a forgotten figure – his novels are, after all, available in paperback from Oxford University Press – but a brief introduction to the man and a short summary of *The Lost Stradivarius* may be useful at this point.⁷ The son of an Anglican clergyman, Falkner obtained a mediocre degree at Oxford before becoming a tutor in the household of Andrew Noble, an important figure in the armaments firm of W.G. Armstrong and Company. Falkner's duties changed from those of tutor to John and Philip

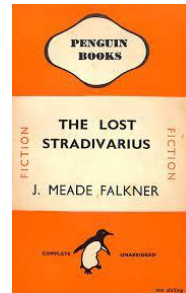
Noble to secretary to Andrew Noble himself, and later to secretary of the firm. He rose steadily in the company, becoming by 1915 Chairman of what was by then Armstrong Whitworth. Between his assumption of the role of secretary and that of Chairman he also wrote three novels: *The Lost Stradivarius* (1895), *Moonfleet* (1898) and *The Nebuly Coat* (1903). He married Evelyn Adye in his forties, and, while he worked in the arms industry at Tyneside all his life, he and his wife lived in the quiet cathedral town of Durham, where Falkner was actively involved in the affairs of the Cathedral.⁸ He became a well-known collector of, and expert in, incunabula, and was later in life made Reader in Paleography at the University of Durham. It would scarcely be an exaggeration, then, to say that Falkner led a peculiarly modern double life that looks forward in some ways to that of T.S. Eliot, or of Wallace Stevens.

The success of *Moonfleet* has meant that Falkner is often remembered as a children's author, but his two other novels are very different from that tale of smugglers and lost treasure. *The Nebuly Coat* is an intriguing and indeed haunting work, but it is Falkner's first novel that concerns us here. Published in 1895 (the year, of course, of Oscar Wilde's three trials), *The Lost Stradivarius* tells the story of Sir John Maltravers, an Oxford undergraduate and keen amateur musician, whose life is altered irrevocably when his college friend, William Gaskell, gives him a piece of seventeenth-century Italian sheet music. The novel is in the form of two first-person narratives, written in the 1860s, some twenty years after the principal events of the story. The first narrative is that of the late Maltravers's sister, Sophia, and is addressed to her nephew, Sir Edward Maltravers, now in his turn an Oxford student.⁹ In accordance with his late father's wishes she is giving Sir Edward, upon his coming of age, this account of his father's life. Painful though it has been to write she feels that he should hear the truth from her rather than 'garbled stories from others.'¹⁰ The second narrative is a note by Mr Gaskell, giving his version of the events leading up to the early death of Sir John.

Like *Dorian Gray*, *The Lost Stradivarius* is a tale of a handsome youth led astray by an older man, but in this case the older man is quite some years older than Lord Henry Wotton. The spirit of

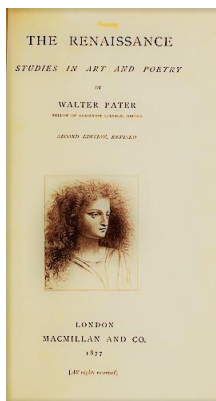


Adrian Temple, an eighteenth-century libertine who had once lived in Maltravers' Oxford rooms, comes to haunt Maltravers (at least in Sophia's version of events – Gaskell is more circumspect), eventually causing his early death following a period of



dissolution in Italy. Temple's spirit is set free by the playing of a seventeenth-century Italian dance tune, a *Gagliarda*, but it is when Maltravers finds Temple's old violin, a genuine Stradivarius, hidden in a secret cupboard, that the evil spirit's power really develops. Maltravers' marriage seems to offer an escape from his obsession with Temple, but the woman he marries is in fact a descendant of Adrian Temple, and a portrait of him hangs in her family home. His efforts to follow in Temple's footsteps take Maltravers to Italy, first on his honeymoon, and then alone. There he becomes increasingly attached to a young Italian, Raffaele Carotenuto, and more and more estranged from his sister, and his young wife and child. He restores Temple's old house, the Villa de Angelis, at Posilippo, outside Naples, and his efforts to perform Temple's neo-Platonic rituals apparently leave him with a permanently whitened visage (like Temple before him) and destroy his already attenuated health. Raffaele Carotenuto, who sings to him, becomes his constant companion. He returns to something of his old self for a time, and is

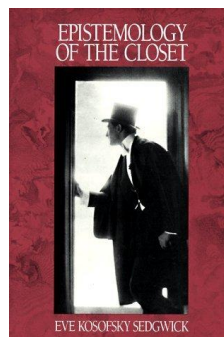
taken back to England by his sister, where he is nursed by her and by his long-estranged friend, Mr Gaskell. Despite signs of improvement, he dies that Christmas, shortly after the old violin breaks under the strain of its modern stringing, while he plays it in his sleep, watched by Mr Gaskell.



A number of details suggest why the novel should be read as a companion text to *Dorian Gray* rather than as simply another late-Victorian ghost story. Most circumstantially, the date of Sophia's

narrative, 1867, was also the year in which Pater published the first part of *The Renaissance*, his essay on the eighteenth-century devotee of classical art, Winckelmann. Other details are, perhaps, more telling. As in Wilde's novel, a key component in John Maltravers' ruin is the gift of a book from another man. If Dorian's sensuous adventures begin in earnest with the gift of 'a book bound in yellow paper, the cover slightly torn and the edges soiled,'¹¹ (generally identified with Joris-Huysmans' *A Rebours*) Maltravers' spiritual decline begins when he finds along with the lost Stradivarius 'two manuscript books containing an elaborate diary of some years of [Adrian Temple's] life'.¹² Linda Dowling notes that the gift of a book is a 'central literary trope for imaginative initiation among late-Victorian Decadent writers'.¹³ The proximal source may be Pater's own novel, *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), where in Chapter 5, 'The Golden Book', Marius and Flavian together read a book (Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*) that 'awaken[s] the poetic or romantic capacity [. . .] but was peculiar in giving it a direction emphatically sensuous'.¹⁴ The perusal of Temple's diaries leads Maltravers into dabbling with 'Neo-Platonism', and the unspeakable 'pagan mysteries' that Temple attempted to revive at his villa in Naples. If we are slow to take the hint that Temple's unspeakable practices somehow represent the ultimate fruit of Pater's Hellenism, Gaskell's narrative makes the connection clearer by mentioning a 'tolerance for aesthetic impressions' as a key component of neo-Platonism.¹⁵ Edward Wilson has noted this and other echoes of the discourse of aestheticism in the novel, pointing out that the whitened faces of Temple and Maltravers also link them to the 'Aesthetic Men of the 1880s and '90s' for whom the lily came to be an emblem.¹⁶

But how exactly does Falkner's novel thematicize male love, and how do aestheticism and homoeroticism intersect in the novel? Wilde's *Dorian Gray* again provides a yardstick. At the centre of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is the picture of Dorian Gray, and Dorian's relation to his own portrait, but this cannot be read purely as an allegory of the relations



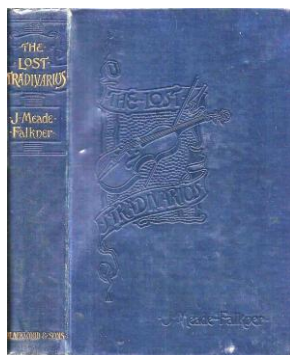
between life and art. Eve Sedgwick puts it clearly: 'The novel takes a plot that is distinctively one of male-male desire, the competition between Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton for Dorian Gray's love, and condenses it into the plot of the mysterious bond of figural likeness and figural expiation between Dorian Gray and his own portrait.'¹⁷ Love between men is reworked, in other words, as a relationship between different facets of the one man, and thus the novel's aesthetic thematics mesh with a thematics of the divided self, which in turn comes to provide both an expression of, and alibi for, male-male love. Dorian Gray also has recourse, though, to an older homoerotic persecution plot, in which the desire to kill another man takes the place of more 'unspeakable' desires, and this too eventually connects to the aesthetic plot. In such plots, by what Sedgwick terms an 'eroto-grammatical transformation', the sentence 'I (a man) love him (a man) becomes 'I do not *love* him – I *hate* him' and this substitution provides the persecutive dynamics of such novels as *Caleb Williams*, *Frankenstein* and *Our Mutual Friend*.¹⁸ Thus there is a whole series of violent male-male tableaux in *Dorian Gray*: Dorian is grabbed from behind and threatened with death by James Vane, the brother of the actress, Sybil Vane, whom Dorian drives to suicide; Dorian stabs to death (from behind) the painter, Basil Hallward; and indeed, the 'consummation' of the narration takes place when Dorian stabs his own portrait, and thus 'himself', with that same knife.

The Lost Stradivarius certainly uses the murderous male-male 'persecution plot' that I have just described. Standing as a sort of 'primal scene' in the narrative is the eighteenth-century Neapolitan episode in which Adrian Temple is stabbed to death by his Italian friend, Palamede, after the latter discovers that Temple has seduced his wife, Olimpia. While Temple and Olimpia dance the Gagliarda, 'Palamede from behind [drives] a stiletto into his friend's heart.'¹⁹ Temple's body is then thrown into the cellar, where Maltravers, now apparently 'possessed' by Temple, finds the unburied remains some hundred years later. This tableau, combining as it does a phobic image of male love turned to murderous violence, and a love triangle in which Temple and Palamede's affection is routed through Olimpia. Gaskell imagines a version of this scene (the dancing couples 'using free and licentious gestures')²⁰ when the two friends

play the Gagliarda in John Maltravers' Oxford rooms, and Temple's violent death appears to be one reason why his spirit lingers on the earth to trouble Maltravers a century later.

The model of displaced love that this 'primal scene' offers helps us to read a series of other triangular relations in the novel. Thus, the close 'musical' (a coded term by this period within late Victorian homosexual or 'Uranian' culture)²¹ friendship of John Maltravers and Mr Gaskell shades into the (frustrated) heterosexual romance between Gaskell and Maltravers' sister, Sophia. A less ghostly version of the relationship between Maltravers and Adrian Temple is evoked when we are told that the woman with whom Maltravers falls in love, and marries, Constance Temple, resembles her dead ancestor.²² Similarly, Sophia is able to give expression to feeling that her brother cannot about Gaskell, she can also express an attraction to Temple that her brother cannot, and her attraction to Temple is explicitly seen as romantic: 'More than once I had been discovered by Mrs. Temple or Constance sitting looking at the picture [i.e. of Adrian Temple] and they had gently laughed at me, saying that I had fallen in love'.²³ As we shall see, there is a further set of substitutions in which Italy comes to stand in for England and Raffaelle Carotenuto for Gaskell (a singer taking the place of a player).

But this, one might say, is only half the story. There is also the specifically aesthetic component of Falkner's novel. If Basil Hallward's picture of Dorian Gray somehow stands as the narrative and thematic cynosure of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the Stradivarius, hidden by Temple, found by Maltravers, ultimately burnt by Gaskell, occupies an analogous position in *The Lost*



Stradivarius. The love of men, in Falkner's novel as in Wilde's, appears as the love of an *object of connoisseurship*. In both novels a certain transfer of qualities between subjects and objects is manifest.²⁴ Dorian becomes increasingly a 'thing', an unchanging

automaton whose defining trait is an appetite for sensation, as his portrait becomes increasingly lifelike. Dorian attempts to destroy the painting, but only succeeds in killing himself. In Falkner's novel it is the violin that appears to become more of a living thing as John Maltravers himself grows to be more of an instrument. When the violin breaks ('its last sound [is] not a musical note, but rather a horrible scream [. . .] a sound such as a wounded beast might utter')²⁵, we know that Maltravers cannot long outlive it.

How do we read these instances of what we might term an unusual variety of commodity fetishism in light of these novels' homoerotic thematics? What is at issue, I think, is less the ascendancy of objects as a certain waning of the subject. As Eve Sedgwick points out, it is possible to read the sequestered portrait of Dorian Gray in terms of an emerging concept of the closeted gay man. Maltravers' discovery at his Oxford rooms of the Stradivarius in its hidden cupboard certainly lends itself to a similar reading. The opening of this cupboard is one of the most highly charged scenes in the novel. Maltravers finds the cupboard when he goes to straighten 'a picture hung askew'.²⁶ Behind this picture he finds the lost cupboard. 'Curiosity' is quickly replaced by the 'feverish anxiety to re-open this cupboard door [which] took possession of him'.²⁷ The lock of the cupboard is painted over, but he is able to 'loosen the paint in the cracks with a penknife'.²⁸ 'His excitement had now reached an overmastering pitch; for he anticipated, though he knew not why, some strange discovery to be made in this sealed cupboard.'²⁹ He searches the room for a suitable weapon with which to force the door' and eventually he cuts away enough wood to 'enable him to insert the end of the poker in the hole'.³⁰ Read aloud with a certain emphasis, this scene almost suggests parody: not to put too fine a point on it, the 'musical' Maltravers recovery of his closeted self seems to involve a sort of rape of the closet.

Most interesting, though, is the way in which the involuntariness that comes increasingly to define John Maltravers already echoes in its language. If he is violating the cupboard/closet, there is a sense in which he himself is operating under some compulsion. Something has taken 'possession' of him; he is 'overmast[ed]'. With occasional interruptions this same involuntariness will shape his life through to

its premature end. His behaviour will come to seem more and more like a rehearsal of the life of the dead Adrian Temple; his musicality will end in the violin's playing *him*: like Dorian Gray, John Maltravers may appear to be engaged in a search for the limits of experience, but he also appears to have minimal choice in the matter.

A more figurative loss of self-control, then, yields to the actual loss of Maltravers's self to Temple and to the violin; the resources of Gothic (haunting, possession, instrumentality) provide a flexible vocabulary to represent such a loss. While *Dorian Gray* also has its Gothic moments, this same waning of the will appears there in a different register, that of addiction. As Eve Sedgwick describes, 'new developments in homo/heterosexual definition' were enmeshed in the developing medical discourse of addiction 'and the corresponding new social entity of drug subcultures'.³¹ Thus we are shown Dorian under the spell of 'a mad craving' staring at 'a large Florentine cabinet' in his library. He unlocks it, opens a hidden drawer in it, and takes out 'a small Chinese box' containing 'a green paste, waxy in lustre, the odour curiously heavy and persistent'.³² In the next chapter he leaves the house and travels across the city to a dockside opium den. As he travels, the craving intensifies: 'The hideous hunger for opium began to gnaw at him. His throat burned and his delicate hands twitched nervously together'.³³ At the den itself, the narrator embarks upon a disquisition on free will: 'There are moments, psychologists tell us, when the passion for sin, or for what the world calls sin, so dominates a nature that every fibre of the body, as every cell of the brain, seems to

be instinct with fearful impulses. Men and women at such moments lose the freedom of their will. They move to their terrible end as automats move.'³⁴ While Wilde uses



Oscar Wilde



Meade Falkner

aestheticism and its rhetoric of conscious self-fashioning to outflank an older conception of sexual identity as a 'given', he also has resort, then, to a language of compulsion to describe the workings of desire.

There is an interesting shift in emphasis between the registers that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *The Lost Stradivarius* use to figure the loss of individual will, between the language of addiction and that of instrumentality, both of which I am reading as at some level figurative of male love. This shift suggests a reading of *The Lost Stradivarius* that does not simply see it as an anti-Paterian, and by extension, homophobic narrative. This reading depends on the role that music and national identity play in the novel. As indicated, the main device through which automatism manifests itself in the case of John Maltravers is music. Thus, one of the first signs of Maltravers' self-estrangement is that he gives up his duets with Gaskell to play by himself, and that he obsessively plays the *Gagliarda* on the violin once owned by, and still in some sense possessed by, Temple. His musicianship improves dramatically, so much so that listeners sometimes think that he sounds like two violinists. Gaskell in his Note muses on the influence that music can have for good or evil, given its ability to lift one above ordinary levels of consciousness.³⁵ From Gaskell and Sophia's accounts, though, we get the very clear impression that there is something demonic in the character of Maltravers' playing – the violin, and or Temple, appear to have taken him over: he has himself become something of an instrument. 'He never for a moment ceased playing. It was always one dreadful melody, the *Gagliarda* of the 'Areopagitica', and he repeated it time after time with the perseverance and apparent aimlessness of an automaton.'³⁶

Maltravers' automatism also touches on issues of nationality. It is by no means adventitious that the violin, and the music that Maltravers plays on it, are of foreign origin. They are both Italian, and so too is Raffaele Carotenuto, the young Italian who sings to Maltravers at the Villa d'Angelis, and who appears to be rather more than a servant to him. We sense that Maltravers is losing not only his self-control but also his *national* identity. Gaskell talks of neo-Platonism as 'being dangerous to the English character'.³⁷ If *Dorian Gray's*

slide into unspeakable, or at least in 1890, unprintable vice is somehow over-determined by his exposure to continental literature, not to say oriental drugs, Sir John Maltravers' forsaking of marriage for the companionship of Raffaele Carotenuto seems to be due in no small part to the influence of Italy.



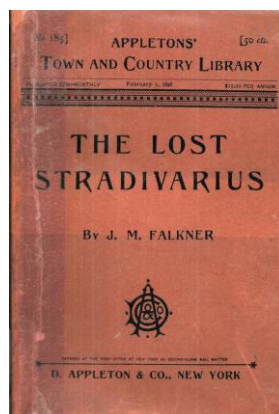
Walter Pater

To understand the issue of national identity in the novel, we have to return to Pater, since Falkner's use of Italy can be traced to the novel's coded engagement with Pater's *The Renaissance*. In this, Italy looms large, and in the chapter on the eighteenth-century art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann, a visit to Italy involves more than a 'merely intellectual' journey.³⁸ Winckelmann escapes the 'crabbed Protestantism' and 'repression' of his youth in Germany and eventually, in the middle of the eighteenth century, he travels to Rome, where he has full scope to develop his love of classical art, but also of the modern Italians.³⁹ As Pater is careful to tell us '[t]hat his affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were interwoven in it, is proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men.'⁴⁰ Like Adrian Temple, Winckelmann is murdered in Italy by one Arcangeli, a 'fellow-traveller'.⁴¹ Despite this grim ending to his trip to the south, there is no intimation in Pater, as there is in Falkner, that Italy is a *dangerous place*; rather it is the locus of self-culture. In the sunny south, and following 'in morals, as in criticism' 'the clue of instinct', Winckelmann is able to penetrate 'into the antique world by his passion', 'perfecting himself and developing his genius' in directions barred to him in his native Germany.⁴²

Pater's association of Winckelmann and 'instinct' relates at some level, surely, both to Dorian's addiction and, more directly, Maltravers' possession. If Winckelmann's self-development depends on his relationship with Hellenism, his openness to the Hellenic spirit in turn depends on something innate: 'This key to an

understanding of the Greek spirit, Winckelmann possessed in his own nature, itself like a relic of classical antiquity, laid open by accident to our alien modern atmosphere.’⁴³ Winckelmann’s own nature, that is, resembles a lost relic found by accident. It does not seem too fanciful to see in this a foreshadowing of Maltravers’ discovery of the violin, another relic of antiquity exposed to an alien atmosphere. We might further speculate that Maltravers finds the violin because something in his nature responds to it. Even before the discovery of the violin and Temple’s notebooks, Gaskell describes him as ‘highly strung’.⁴⁴

It is possible to assume, then, that Maltravers’ nature, like Winkelman’s is able to expand in the air of the sunny south, that things become possible for him in Italy that were not in England. As in the case of Pater’s *Renaissance*, there is a complicated relation in Falkner’s novel between the past as another country, and Italy as a country. Winckelmann’s trip to Italy is also very much a journey into antiquity; both journeys appear to involve an escape from the limits of ‘one’s Fatherland’.⁴⁵



In both Pater and Falkner, Italy is as much a symbolic landscape as a place one finds on the map: it is the land of sensuousness. For Sophia it is a disturbing journey. Contemplating the ‘perfection’ of the Villa de Angelis, she ‘experience[s] a curious **USA first edition** mental sensation, which I can only compare to the physical oppression on some persons by the heavy and cloying perfume or a bouquet of gardenias or other too highly-scented exotics.’⁴⁶ Here one is reminded of the effects of Italy upon two other very different heroines. Dorothea Casaubon and Lucy Honeychurch, who are both challenged by it. Italy is in effect a heterotopia,⁴⁷ where Victorian fantasies are given a local habitation, if not always a name.

We do not have to assume, though, that Sophia’s claustrophobic vision of Italy is that of Sir John, or for that matter, of Falkner. Like other heteropias, Italy in *The Lost Stradivarius* is not completely

different from the land that it displaces. Falkner's Italy in effect provides a sort of extension of the novel's Oxford. Relationships and tendencies that are hinted at in the latter are rather more obvious in the former;⁴⁸ in a species of double displacement, some events are placed in Italy and in the past as well. The most obvious example of this is of course the way in which the eighteenth-century episode involving Temple's murder provides a sort of template for subsequent events in England. But there are more straightforward continuities between home and away. Maltravers' musical friendship with Gaskell dies in England, but is reborn in Italy as the more obvious *affaire de Coeur* between him and the Italian singer, Raffaele Carotenuto. In the accounts of events presented by Sophia Maltravers and Mr Gaskell, Italy may appear as a danger to the English character; indeed, as a veritable infernal region. But it is not merely playful to suggest that England and Italy are connected not as Heaven and Hell, but rather as sepia-coloured Kansas and technicolour Oz. For John Maltravers, as for Winckelmann, leaving behind one's own country may mean an escape into possibilities of self-expansion. The loss of his 'English character' may be a prerequisite of self-discovery.

Such a reading of the novel is more plausible when we bear in mind that we don't actually have Sir John Maltravers' version of events, nor do we have a 'neutral' third-person narrator; we hear Maltravers' story only as mediated by his devout sister and his old college friend. Where *Dorian Gray*'s third-person narration makes us read somewhat against the grain to see Dorian's journey into experience as anything but a rather gloomy moral tale, we may decide to treat Sophia Maltravers and William Gaskell as unreliable narrators (indeed the differences between their accounts mean we *have* to assume this to some extent). Nor is theirs an account written just for the record: it is aimed at another generation of the Maltravers family, Sir Edward 'who has been brought up to think more of a cricket-bat than of a violin-bow'.⁴⁹ While we are given little or no basis to speculate on how he might receive this highly mediated message from the past, we might choose to think that as an Oxford student in 1867 he might very well read it against the grain, and discern in it voices other than those of his conservative aunt and guardian.

To conclude, while it is possible to read *The Lost Stradivarius* as a deeply phobic text that turns Paterian aestheticism into a sort of Hammer Horror Satanism, it is also possible, indeed more tempting, to see Falkner's novel as a veiled but affirmative account of male love. The man at the centre of this account is dead, and all we have are the interpretations of his life that other characters supply. If they choose to read that life as a horror story, that does not mean we are obliged to do so.

Notes:

- 1 Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Cornell University Press, 1994) pp. 67-103
- 2 Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Macmillan, 1873) This edition: OUP, 1986) p. 152
- 3 Lawrence Birken in *Consuming Desire: Sexual Science and the Emergence of a Culture of Abundance, 1871-1914* (Cornell University Press, 1988)
- 4 The best-known of the anti-aesthetic novels is probably Robert Hitchens's *The Green Carnation* (1894)
- 5 For a more nuanced account of the term see R.K.R. Thornton's *The Decadent Dilemma* (Arnold, 1983)
- 6 Pater, *The Renaissance*, p.152
- 7 For the biographical details see Kenneth Warren, *John Meade Falkner, 1858-1932: A Paradoxical Life* (Edward Mellen Press, 1995)
- 8 His late, childless (and, by some accounts, loveless) marriage, together with some other factors, have fuelled speculation that Falkner may have been primarily attracted to men. See Warren, *op.cit.* pp. 135-46.
- 9 'Student' here may mean either undergraduate or fellow. See *The Lost Stradivarius* (Blackwood, 1895. This edition: OUP, 1991, ed. Edward Wilson), p. 167.
- 10 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 2.
- 11 Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Ward Lock and Bowden, 1890. This edition: Airmont, 1964) p. 126.
- 12 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 139.
- 13 Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality*, p. 86.
- 14 *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas* (Macmillan, 1885. This edition: OUP, 1986, ed. Ian Small) p. 32.
- 15 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 147.
- 16 Edward Wilson, 'Introduction' to the OUP edition of *The Lost Stradivarius* p. xxii.
- 17 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (University of California Press, 1990), p. 160.

- 18 Ibid, p. 161.
- 19 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 150
- 20 Ibid. p. 14.
- 21 See Dowling, p.125, n.25.
- 22 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 66.
- 23 Ibid, p. 69.
- 24 Not unlike that reversal of the positions of people and things that Marx identifies in commodity fetishism.
- 25 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 132
- 26 Ibid p. 38.
- 27 Ibid p.39.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid. 31 Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, p. 171.
- 32 Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 150.
- 33 Ibid, p. 152.
- 34 Ibid, p. 152.
- 35 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, pp. 26-7, n. 146.
- 36 Ibid, p. 98.
- 37 Ibid, p.147.
- 38 Pater, *Renaissance*, p. 122.
- 39 Ibid. pp. 120, 122.
- 40 Ibid. p. 123.
- 41 Ibid. p. 126.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 138
- 45 Pater, *Renaissance*, p. 115
- 46 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 112
- 47 On heterotopias see Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', translated by Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986), pp. 22-7.
- 48 The exotic heterotopia seems to have become an important topos in film representations of same-sex desire. One thinks of such recent films as *Heavenly Creatures* and *Ma Vie en Rose*.
- 49 Falkner, *The Lost Stradivarius*, p. 165.