

SAME-SEX DESIRE, HEDONISM, AND STRUGGLING IDENTITY IN JOHANN
WOLFING VON GOETHE'S FAUST: A TRAGEDY (1806) AND OSCAR
WILDE'S THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY (1891)

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Same-sex Desire, Hedonism, and Identity in Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe's
Faust: A Tragedy (1806) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891)

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Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* remains emblematic of queer literary studies given its unique position of juxtaposing coded same-sex desire with the blatant biographical connections of its author's controversial imprisonment for indecency. Scholars have already exposed these connections and the principles exposed within the broader Aesthetic Movement of the nineteenth century to critique accepted notions morality. Yet the exploration of same-sex desire with aestheticism, hedonism, and identity has origin in Goethe's *Faust; A Tragedy*. Both of these works explore same-sex desire within the same paradigm of aestheticism, hedonism, and dueling identity inspired by art theory. First, Goethe and Wilde are inspired by the homoerotic art theory of Joachim Winkelman, who provides a common origin for the presentation of same-sex desire. Then, Dionysian hedonism provides a vehicle to explore same-sex desire.

Dionysian elements of Greek tragedy and theater inspire Faust and Dorian into cathartic experiences to embrace sexual freedom. The hedonistic journey also reinterprets the Classical model of the Platonic relationship to construct a same-sex relationship based on pleasure that contrasts Christian European cultural institutions. Finally, I prove that the the dueling souls of Faust and Dorian represents conflicting urges that prefigure the emergence of a homosexual identity. The competition of different souls, philosophies, and passive or active masculinity demonstrate division of the public persona and private self found later in history in the homosexual closet. This thesis underlines the Faustian paradigm of aestheticism, hedonism, and identity, to illustrate an overlooked and significant representation of same-sex desire in the nineteenth century. The Faustian paradigm and its interworking form and function provide a new way for understanding the nineteenth century and the representation of same-sex desire.

Introduction

Literary critics often view the Aesthetic movement and particularly Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as an exemplary exploration of coded same-sex desire. Nickolai Endres and Henry Alley both explore same-sex desire in *Dorian Gray*. The author's controversial lifestyle, trial, and imprisonment allow the canonical work to remain a blatant representation of same-sex desire. Long before Wilde's controversial exploration of same-sex desire *Dorian Gray*, Goethe's *Faust* begins this representation.. Although conjecture has tied these works little has been done by the way of research to adequately place Goethe's influence on Wilde or decipher the immense influence of similar themes (Wilde 102, note 33). Goethe's influence on Wilde is an especially missed opportunity of inquiry as Wilde's reiteration of the Faustian bargain is relevant in function as well as form. Furthermore, through comparing these works, we may better understand their similar approaches to hedonistic pursuits of pleasure.

With recent critical approaches to Goethe's work expanding on the cultural influence of same-sex desire, we find that the connection to Wilde's *Dorian Gray* is more prominent than ever in exposing the representation of same-sex desire in the nineteenth century. A. Kuzniar's *Outing Goethe and His Age* compiles the research of literary scholars across the field to unveil the overlooked subject of male same-sex desire in Goethe's writing and time. In the

introduction, Kuzniar states that “As the contributors to this volume show, homosexuality forms a division around which eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century culture organizes itself. The topic informs the larger issues of pedagogy, the cult of friendship, the socialization of the subject, the regulation of sexuality in the bourgeois family, and the subjugation and representation of the body and its pleasures,” (3). Based on a shorter work within *Outing Goethe*, Richard Tobin’s *Warm Brothers: Queer Theory and the Age of Goethe* also historically links the rise of industrialization to the newly emerging homosexual identity. Thus, the Faustian bargain becomes a trope that underscores how homosexual identity was identified as deviance as the male characters are seduced into hedonistic lifestyle which inspire their destruction.

While critics have researched both Wilde’s and Goethe’s works to demonstrate the threads of same-sex desire, the ways these texts similarly present, explore, and even exalt same-sex desire remain unexplored. Though many understand the obvious influence of the Faustian bargain on Dorian’s pact for immortality, critics have yet to explore truly the parallels of both works in exhibiting a hedonistic journey of pleasure for male protagonists struggling with their inner desires. Goethe’s *Faust* reveals a longer tradition of same-sex desire, hedonism, and identity which exists throughout the Nineteenth century prior to the Aesthetic Movement in France or Britain. The countercultural *Dorian Gray*

and the larger culture of the Aesthetic movement has an origin within German Romanticism, which reveals that a hedonism specific to same-sex desire is vastly important for understanding these nineteenth century works.

This paper argues that a nineteenth century paradigm for same-sex desire exists in *Faust* and *Dorian Gray*. Firstly, the popularity and large cultural influence of Art critic Joachim Winkelmann demonstrates the importance of homoerotic aestheticism in combining Greco-Roman antiquity, same-sex desire, and art in the nineteenth century. This has major impacts for representations of same-sex desire which are often reliant on homoerotic aestheticism in describing men as beautiful and akin to works of art. As *Faust* and *Dorian Gray* reiterate a similar preoccupation for homoerotic aestheticism founded by Winkelmann we find these works presenting same-sex desire. Dionysian hedonism then becomes apparent through the structural and symbolic models of antiquity. For instance, Greek tragedy, Platonic relationships, and paganism, provide classical models of alternatives to Christian European values while presenting same-sex desire. Finally, a pre-homosexual identity experience is illustrated in both works through the juxtaposition of dueling souls. The battle between urges illuminates contrasting philosophical perspectives and masculine gender behavior, as this battle of souls presents an early form of differing public and private identity formation. By showing same-sex desire as closely linked to early same-sex

identity and hedonism we may designate the Faustian bargain as an historically relevant symbol of male same-sex desire that holds implications for the century and Western culture more broadly.

Homoerotic Aestheticism

The homoerotic aestheticism of Wilde finds its origin in Goethe's contemporary-influential Art Historian Joachim Winkelmann. The exaltation of Greek culture in the 19th century can be traced to one academic origin in the work of art historian Winkelmann. His popular *Reflections Concerning the Imitation of the Greeks* (*Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Werke*, 1763) isolates and expands homoerotic aestheticism for a new age. For Winkelmann contemporaries, the artistic merits of antiquity provide a buffer for the obvious paradoxical "immorality" of same-sex desire which was so ubiquitous in ancient works. Winkelmann's detractors were still supportive of his work because it allowed them to "imagine bridging the centuries-wide span between the ancients' past and their present," (Kuzniar 11). Because of his cultural project of connecting Europe to Greco-Roman culture, Winkelmann's popularity provides a new way to present, explore, defend, and affirm same-sex desire all at once. Winkelmann's popular work presents Greece as an ideal of artistic excellence, with beatified appreciation of the male form and by extension, a celebration of homoerotic aestheticism. As Alice A. Kuzniar notes in "Introduction," to *Outing Goethe and His Age*, before Winkelmann, Greek artifacts were not well known, cataloged, or even very distinguishable from those of Rome. It goes without saying, that Winkelmann's undertaking to exalt Greek art had major implications

from the eighteenth century onward, as the use of Greek culture in its entirety is so extremely vast it would be impossible to illustrate every example outside of our intended focus of works.

What is noteworthy for this discussion's purposes is how Winkelmann exalts, not only beauty, but he also champions expressions of same-sex desire. Simon Richter studies Winkelmann's influence on same-sex desire more in-depth in "Winkelmann's Progeny: Homosocial Networking in the Eighteenth Century." He notes that queer male identities are closely connected with a Greek aestheticism at this moment as "this powerful vision of Greece, of aesthetic, moral, and sexual freedom, of a time that privileged male friendship and incorporated it into its social and political institutions, that celebrated the beauty of the male body--this vision generated the entire movement of German neoclassicism," (Richter 38). Contrary to the typical focus of such queer identity expression and production within the Aesthetic Movement, Winkelmann and his many imitators planted the seeds of homoerotic aesthetics in the eighteenth century.

This is not to say that Greco-Roman culture evolves to include same-sex desire in the nineteenth century cultural imagination solely because of Winkelmann. Indeed, Greco-Roman culture maintains a lineage of same-sex desire through its culture of myths and societal practices. The aesthetic values of

antiquity remained relevant though they contrasted with Christian European culture. The importance of a Classical education prior to the nineteenth century confirms the exalted status of this culture, which was emulated and imitated widely. In this way, I find it accurate to claim the culturally recognized "merits" of Greco-Roman antiquity provide the backdrop of defense for its less recognized and more criticized representation and normalcy of same-sex desire. Blondell demonstrates the thread running through Greek culture and how this could lead to the appropriation of Greek culture in eighteenth century Europe, as, "Harmodius and Aristogiton, Achilles and Patroclus, were not only heroic historical ancestors but heroic couples in the ancient imagination. From the first, then, such figures were available for appropriation in the service of various sexual ideologies, and they remained so despite profound historical, cultural, and ideological shifts," (115-6). A larger implication of same-sex desire within antiquity is that it provides an alternative vision of sexuality absent of the fears or criticisms of Christian theology and European culture.

Winkelman's influence on Wilde and Goethe exposes the similar function of antiquity and homoerotic aestheticism. Winkelman eroticizes the male form in his descriptions of Greek statues and his descriptions could be considered, "overt and clinically detailed" with "depictions of eroticized body parts, from the full, feminine buttocks of a Bacchus to the contours of the nipples (see Parker 530) on

a male torso," (Kuzniar 11). As a contemporary of Winkelmann, Goethe seems equally aware of homoerotic aestheticism, and even goes so far as to depict an erotic male form in his poem "Ganymede." Goethe was well aware of Winkelmann's attraction to "beautiful youths" and lacks the moralistic judgment against same-sex desire articulated in the later nineteenth century (Kuzniar 10). Homoeroticism and aesthetics originates in Winkelmann a century before Wilde's publication of *Dorian Gray*, and thus exposes the roots of Aesthetic literature or at the very least expands its projected purpose and content.

Winkelmann's erotic depictions of the male form seem most explicit in Wilde's presentation of Dorian Gray as an alluring artistic object. First, Wilde describes, "Dorian stepped up on the dais, with the air of a young Greek martyr, and made a little moue of discontent to Lord Henry, to whom he had rather taken a fancy," (Wilde 92). Although edited from the 1891 book version, the original manuscript makes clear that Dorian was "made to be worshipped" (Wilde 90). This worship extends from mere superficiality to the spiritual as Basil states about his first meeting with Dorian, "I knew that I had come face to face with some one whose mere personality was so fascinating that, if I allowed it to do so, it would absorb my whole nature, my whole soul, my very art itself" (78-9). Dorian is also described as a work of art:

He was bare-headed, and the leaves had tossed his rebellious curls, and tangled all their glided threads. There was a look of fear in his eyes, such as people have when they are suddenly awakened. His finely-chiselled nostrils quivered, and some hidden nerve shook the scarlet of his lips, and left them trembling.

(Wilde 98)

Describing the color of his lips, and the chiseled aspect of his nose, the narrator becomes an intensely scrutinizing art critic of the male form expressing homoeroticism of a feminized male form. Winkelmann's writing and broad influence connects Goethe and Wilde in their reiteration of homoerotic aestheticism. It would appear that Winkelmann and his many imitators planted the seeds of queer aestheticism in the eighteenth century, which would later become popular in the Aesthetic movement of the nineteenth century.

Dionysian Hedonism and Same-sex Desire

Faust and *Dorian Gray* present the tales of seduced men whose lives of hedonistic pleasure lead to their mutual demise and rebirth. This hedonism is not distinct from classicism but heavily reliant on classical myth, culture, and art. I wish to show that beyond a general presentation of homoeroticism or same-sex desire within these works, there is a deeper philosophical hedonistic journey which exposes the tormented emerging identity of a homosexual. The same-sex hedonistic journey of male protagonists becomes a way to present, explore, and even exalt same-sex desire in a way that contradicts the societal norms of nineteenth-century European culture. Through Dionysian hedonism, the male relationships also display a contrasting model destabilizing the Christian European values and assumptions about marriage, reproduction, and the importance of opposite sex attachment.

To begin with, the overall reliance on Classical tragedy in *Faust* and *Dorian Gray* display the attributes of Dionysian hedonism and the cathartic spiritual experience of the male protagonists. However, it is important to first designate the foundational Dionysian hedonism and catharsis in tragedy before discussing the works in more detail. In *The Bacchae*, women from Thebes depart in a frenzy to worship Dionysus in the wilderness. Pentheus, the king of Thebes, is an “emblem of the male order of rationalism and the city-state threatened by

irrational disorder fomented by Dionysus” (Thornton 75). Dionysus and wine come to represent the frenzy of primal urges contrary to societal order as his followers eventually tear the King apart. Dionysian hedonism then is the pursuit of pleasure to the point of rapture. Friedrich Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) demonstrates an important function of tragedy, similar to Aristotle’s vision of catharsis for self-transformation. *The Birth of Tragedy* describes the conflicting nature of the human psyche in terms of the Greek deities Apollo and Dionysus. The clear trajectory found within the cultural zeitgeist is one of a mini-drama within the human mind or soul, in which primal desire and lofty goals compete. For Nietzsche, Dionysus is emblematic of the tragic chorus as he states, “This function of the tragic chorus is the *dramatic* porto-phenomenon: to see one’s self transformed before one’s self, and then act as if one had really entered into another body, into another character,” (Nietzsche 30). Nietzsche’s dualism of human nature, as with the work of Wilde and Goethe, is intensely indebted to German Neoclassicism. The Dionysus myth and Tragedy both influence the hedonistic journey of Faust and Dorian Gray and reveal how intersections of same-sex desire, hedonism, and the catharsis of spiritual decay and rebirth function.

Goethe’s tragedy *Faust* begins with a classical invocation of the muse, subsequently supported by a metaphorical tragic chorus. Nietzsche’s claims

about the Dionysian tragedy explain a similar theme in Goethe's precursor *Faust* in which tragedy's form underpins the hedonism and cathartic experiences of the protagonist. In "Night" Goethe presents a symbolic chorus of bells and a choral song which stops Faust's attempted suicide prior to his adventure and seduction by Mephistopheles (Goethe 732-736). Nietzsche provides an explanation the role of the chorus in *Faust*: it ends Faust's suicide attempt when it "arrests the goblet in mid-way," (783) and Faust states, "The tear wells up, to Earth I am restored!" (784). The Greek God of wine Dionysus inspires madness and transformation supporting the function of tragedy, as we see with Faust's revitalization after the tragic chorus. The failed suicide is one moment of destruction inspiring rebirth while demonstrating the cathartic nature of tragedy.

Dorian Gray similarly relies upon tragedy to show a Dionysian catharsis. The novel begins with Basil's studio, "filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the tress of the garden there came through the open door the heavy scent of lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn," (Wilde 67). The opening paragraph mentions the wind as if this is the classical Muse, preparing the story to begin. At the sentence level, the short descriptive clauses also aid the narrative flow as the reader experiences the incoming images of twilight and the scent of roses. As Paul Sheehan states, "Wilde's prose style is essentially 'decorative,' and this entails a

kind of theatricalization of the novel form...(Wilde's point-of-view), in fact, is always scenic; he sees things in stage-perspective; he is all the time arranging his characters, his landscapes, his events, and making them pose.'" (334). Wilde's reliance on tragedy is more apparent in his intense focus on the theater itself as a place of artistic discovery and destruction. Dorian somewhat randomly happens on a sketchy theater to find the gem Sybil Vane. Her artistic talents provoke his love, much in the way Dorian as an artwork finds the attention of men and women constantly upon him. In other words, the art focuses desire whether personified in Dorian, the artwork of Basil, or the art of Sybil's acting. Sheehan demonstrates the importance of theater in the novel when he states, "One of the more noteworthy aspects of Wilde's novel is that it is a highly theatricalized fiction. The world of the theater provides the central axis for the novel, and it serves as the ideal imaginary space for the focusing of Dorian's desire" (Sheehan 334). However, the theater is not simply an "ideal imaginary space," it is also the epitome of art in which personality and creation take form but compete for demonstration. For Sybil, the greatest sin is letting her personality take over her art, and she is thus punished with rejection. As Sheehan notes, "The relationship breaks down when Sibyl trades her artificial self for a sincere, real-life one," (334). Sybil however, takes agency through her suicide, redeeming her art, as Lord Henry asserts, that "There is something quite beautiful about her death,"

(Wilde 160). Although Wilde's novel is not explicitly a tragic play like *Faust*, it gestures toward the tropes and form of tragedy clearly showing that both works are setting the stage for the hedonistic journey of protagonists and their cathartic destruction based on the classical model of tragedy.

Another element of the hedonistic journey is the reinterpretation of the Platonic or pederastic relationship to explore same-sex desire. Platonic love is inspired by the ideal expressed by Plato of a same-sex relationship of males that transcends lust. This is not to say that the Platonic relationship is lacking sexuality as beauty remains the imperative for the youthful partner. A pederastic relationship is a culturally normative relationship in Ancient Greece between an older male citizen and a younger boy, somewhat in terms of a rite of passage lacking the social stigma of contemporary Western culture. Faust begins as an aged scholar with an arguably active role for his own young student Wagner. Faust takes the place of a passive role when Mephistopheles appears as a nobleman to make the pact and to bring back Faust's youth. The model of platonic relationships is not exact for Mephistopheles or Faust; however, it helps us to designate the power dynamic between the pair, as Mephistopheles is both seductive teacher and eroticized friend, combining the elements of classicism to construct a same-sex relationship adverse to Christian European marriage and confirming the homosocial pursuit of pleasure.

Dorian's relationship is equally based on the Greek classical model of the platonic relationship, which shows the homoeroticism between men and the emerging homosexual identity. In "Locating Love and Closet Eros in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*," Endres claims that Dorian's relationships with Basil and Lord Henry is modeled on the Greek ideal of Platonic relationships. Dorian, the "young shy orphan" is "an ideal candidate for "Platonic paiderastia: the older man acting as a surrogate father for the boy" (Endres 305). Dorian infantilism is also showcasing cultural views of sexual inversion in the 1880s and 1890s. At this time "the sexual invert was increasingly seen as congenitally predisposed (whether neurotic or not), yet developmentally damaged; trapped in arrested development and therefore occupying the zone of childhood experimentation" (Blackford 1-2). When Lord Henry meets Dorian Gray in the second chapter, Dorian becomes intensely objectified by his place as a passive youth, and as a living work of art. Initially, Dorian is led to his sitting for the portrait with the bribe of borrowing one of Basil's books (Wilde 89). This bribery constructs a paternal relationship between Dorian and Basil, as Dorian is led as a child with the potential of punishment or reward. Basil additionally directs Dorian, stating, "Just turn your head a little more to the right, Dorian, like a good boy'" (94). This relationship clearly figures Dorian as somehow feminized

through his passivity to the older men. Dorian is further feminized by his place as an aesthetic object of appreciation and worship.

In both works, the inclusion of a Classical platonic relationship model exalts same-sex desire and homosocial production through the seduction of the male protagonists by demonic male figures. The seductions also propel an artistic journey of pleasure which shuns morality and Christian European culture. The Platonic relationships not only show same-sex desire, but also the hedonism inspired by seductive male figures and the eventual pacts that starkly contrast with Christian marriage. In *Faust*, Mephistopheles courts Faust initially, until the pair debates the rules of their relationship. As the discourse shifts to the desire for Faust to experience pleasure, Faust's wager famously incorporates that, "Should ever I take ease upon a bed of leisure, / May that same moment mark my end!" (1692-3). The discourse between seduction and exchange presents a union very similar to marriage. Yet this "marriage" or deep bond is not a legal document; the Faustian pact is a pagan ritual involving the exchange of bodily fluids. Mephistopheles states that, "You draw a drop of blood and sign your name" (1737) and that "Blood is a very special juice" (1740). This contract, absent of legal or religious marks, exists as a pagan document sealing an unnatural pact between the pair of men, though of course Mephistopheles is only playing a man, further showing the unnatural exchange of blood. This exchange of blood

symbolizes a deep bond outside of socially sanctioned practices, and presents a figure of sodomy, as the expelling of blood instead of semen marks the unholy marriage. In this way the seduction of Faust becomes emblematic of same-sex desire at the onset of hedonistic experiences. The pact is delivered and sealed with blood or the personal exchange of bodily fluids similar to sexual copulation. In this way, the unholy marriage union is at once hedonistic and representative of same-sex desire and its place as pleasurable yet unnatural.

In "Auerbach's Tavern in Leipzig," Mephistopheles presents how Dionysian hedonism, embedded in his seduction, overpowers men other than Faust. Mephistopheles shows his powers to Faust for the first time when providing alcohol to several patrons. Within the wooden table, Mephistopheles magically creates taps to serve the men alcohol. The magical spell recalls Ancient cultural imagery and nature on the surface, but also a sexualized hedonistic experience between the men:

Grapes on the vine stock,
 Horns on the goat-buck;
 Juice is the wine, wood is the vine,
 A Wooden table can flow with wine.
 A singular gaze up Nature's sleeve
 Here is a miracle believe!
 Now draw the plug, hold out your cup!

(Goethe 2284-2290)

The Dionysian God of wine and Ganymede, the cupbearer for Zeus, undoubtedly influences this sharing of wine between the men. The homoeroticism is marked as wine becomes a juice and the vine of growth is the wood or wooden table. Goethe's predilection for puns additionally allows us to view the wooden table skeptically as a possible pun, but at very least symbolic of a sexual phallic symbol for Mephistopheles. As a phallic extension of Mephistopheles the wooden produces the wine symbolic of his semifinal influence on the man he seduces. The patrons become blind in frenzy when they hallucinate and begin to physically harm each other, further showing how the homoerotic experience unfolds as a hedonistic destruction of the men through this Dionysian practice of consummation. Mephistopheles describes his magically created liquor and Faust's blood as juice, an interesting parallel demonstrating that the fluid is part of the men's essence, to be exchanged between them in a pseudo-legal pagan ritual rather than Christian marriage. Like a juice is squeezed from a fruit, the blood/wine is produced from the men themselves. The blood designates an essential part of the body shared between men, suggesting same-sex copulation. Within even this short scene of the play, we find the overall project of same-sex hedonism. Like the larger tragic narrative of Faust, this tavern scene illustrates that Mephistopheles' seductive power incites same-sex desires and sensual experiences, which cause the paradoxical

pleasure and destruction of the men. The paradigm is one of direct contrast to Christian morality, and German nineteenth century culture and institutions. Together, these elements prove the paradigm is a hedonistic journey reverting civilization to a pre-Christian past that influences males to express and follow repressed desire. It is this expression, repression, and regression that we can trace in *Dorian Gray*.

In *Dorian Gray*, the Faustian pact is refigured as Dorian's pact for immortality, inspired by the demonic Lord Henry. Before Basil reveals Dorian's portrait, Lord Henry disturbs the young man with his thoughts on aging. Lord Henry states, "Now, wherever you go, you charm the world. Will it always be so? ..." (Wilde 99). Lord Henry's influence becomes apparent at Dorian's fading rapture after viewing the portrait and realizing, "how said it is! I shall grow old... But this picture will remain always young" (102). After this realization Dorian makes his vague pact for immortality:

If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For this—for this—I would give everything! Yes: there is nothing in the whole world I would not give!

(Wilde 102)

Dorian's pact for immortality is strikingly similar to Faust's as the seductive demonic figure inspires the pact. Human desires for Dorian and Faust create such dissatisfaction that the men are willing to give up everything they have to

achieve their goals. Dorian even threatens suicide if he is old, harkening to Faust's initial suicide attempt which is saved by the tragic chorus. This artwork—Dorian as living statue and his portrait—helps to solidify the pact of Dorian with his seducer Lord Henry. Dorian's relationship with Lord Henry seems to clearly reiterate the Mephistopheles' seduction of a male protagonist. Beginning with Dorian's meeting with Lord Henry, this older male inspires fear in Dorian of growing old and the eventual pact he makes to stay young and beautiful. With Lord Henry's comical expressions it is fairly easy to see an almost satanic and seductive presence in this character. Moreover, his inspiration of Dorian's wish for immortality mirrors the unholy pagan union of same-sex male pacts. Although the novel is quite vague about the pact, we cannot easily detach Lord Henry's influence from Dorian's mind as it inspires the anecdotal wish to be young forever as well as psychological changes in his behavior. In this way, Lord Henry must be considered a Mephistopheles figure beyond the hedonistic journey into which he leads Dorian.

The object fetishes of the homosocial environments also establish a hedonistic domestic space for same-sex relationships complete with the unnatural reproduction of art. In *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), Edelman argues that "reproductive futurity," or the hope and love of children, places importance on reproduction and thus explains why same-sex

desire is antithetical and radical in Western civilization. Gay relationships in literature or other media forms become a foundational affront to an intrinsic part of Western culture and its view on sexuality. Edelman's theory is valuable for understanding the role of objects and materials as unnatural alternatives to reproduction. Richter notes the symbolic value of love letters in homosocial relationships:

The love letter—shared, transmitted from hand to hand, representing the erotic love of two male lovers (one need only think of the effusive expressions of physical contact), and observed by multiple third parties, either jointly or privately—is obviously the vital condition for the entire homosocial community. Indeed, the love letter substitutes for biological reproduction.

(Richter 39)

Like the love letter, exotic objects and art come to replace biological reproduction with materialism and do so especially in homosocial spaces. Materialism becomes an artificial and unnatural reproduction, as Mephistopheles initially seduces Faust with the materialism of his clothing as a nobleman. The materialism is clearly part of this initial seduction connecting the aesthetic and hedonistic with this homosocial relationship, which culminates in the exchange of bodily fluid as discussed above. It's also apparent that much of the seduction takes place within Faust's personal study, which essentially redefines the bachelors living quarters into a homosocial domestic space.

In *Dorian Gray*, the homosocial space similarly inspires the seduction of Dorian. Basil's studio shows the exoticism and aesthetics of the artist's workspace where he entertains. Exemplary of the novel, the space exhibits "a divan of Persian saddle-bags" and "long tussore-silk curtains" (Wilde 68). Dorian's own home begins to mirror such luxury later in the novel. Just as the portrait of Dorian becomes an unnatural production by men, these similar artistic and luxury objects suggest an excessive hedonism that shuns the functionality of Christian European culture. For both Faust and Dorian, these objects and aesthetics are part of a seductive space that inspires their hedonistic journeys and counters the typical Christian European domestic space. More important, these objects symbolize the reproductions of men as aesthetic objects rather than children. Like the homosocial love letters, the men share books, artworks, and objects as opposite-sex couples might produce children. The luxury and exoticism illuminate the unnatural or sinful aspect of materialism for this reason, and provides us for a way to further view the Faustian pact in *Faust* and reiterated in *Dorian Gray* as an unholy union of males.

Faust and Dorian both have relationships with women, which paradoxically reify the same-sex hedonism of the works. Homoeroticism may be expressed through the use of women as acceptable objects of desire, as noted by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial*

Desire. The relationship is triangulated with Mephistopheles' inclusion, as Faust's introduction to Margarethe suggests, when he states to Mephistopheles, "Here, get me that young wench—for certain!" (Goethe 2618). In other words, Faust invites Mephistopheles into the relationship with an active role. The demand is infantile and brings the relationship between Faust and Mephistopheles into a sexual realm whereby they are sharing more than blood. Margarethe's innocence also leads to her attractiveness as an obstacle for the men to overcome. While she is aesthetically pleasing, her most marked trait seems to be an innocence pronounced in her "glance's timid downward dart" (2615) and her confession, "absolved of any sin" (2623). Her absence of sexuality makes her desirable, as she mutes the direct sexual relationship between the men and leads to a prolonged discourse between them. Whatever sexual desire is present is sublimated by its dissemination between Mephistopheles and Faust. The sexual awakening and demise of Margarethe follow the Dionysian trope of destruction, and yet her illegitimate child is a product of Mephistopheles and Faust, much like the homoerotic love letters of eighteenth century Germany. This child illustrates the monstrous child produced by the actions of Mephistopheles and Faust, as well as its murder. In this way, the triangulation of the relationship further suggests a homoerotic relationship using Margarethe as a socially acceptable code of interaction. The hedonistic influence of Mephistopheles also shows his mental

penetration of both Faust and Margarethe in this triangulation. The paradoxical redemption of Margarethe and Faust also suggests a personal growth and spiritual transcendence linked to Mephistopheles, independent of one another. Both Margarethe and Faust escape eternal punishment, as a voice calls to Margarethe "Redeemed!" (4612), leading to redemption instead of eternal punishment. The inevitable loss of family, reputation, and freedom leads to the redemption of Margarethe, just as heaven remains available for Faust after his adventures. The best way to understand this paradoxical relationship between social demise and spiritual transcendence is to trace the relation of these lovers to the third party of Mephistopheles, who makes a religion and spirituality from the pleasure he inspires. In conclusion, Margarethe propels the homoerotic relationship between Faust and Mephistopheles forward erotically, while allowing them to express coded homoerotic discourse with one another.

While Margarethe is usually considered an example of the eternal feminine, her role within the same-sex relationship of Faust equally supports a criticism of Christian morals and European cultural norms. Feminist readings of Margarethe exist in tandem with queer readings of Faust, helping to expose the dangers of patriarchy. While some critics have often debated homosocial patriarchy against feminist concerns, I find a clear example in this text of how patriarchy is equally destabilized by both gender and sexuality through a

critique of this courtship. Some may question whether the play is a moralizing work showing the damage of Mephistopheles and the absence of marriage. Yet, both characters lack any clear or permanent damage, showing the mercy of God on both victims, by a society that represses and punishes erotic desire. In this way, the patriarchy becomes a mutually damaging force to both women and men with same-sex desire as it forces artificial bonds antithetical to their own natures.

Sybil Vane could be considered an example of the eternal feminine; however, like Faust's Margarethe, she seems more to underline the inability for an opposite sex relationship to achieve a Classical ideal. During Wilde's trial for indecency, the artistic and philosophical model of a pederastic relationship was explicitly mentioned. As Endres has already exposed this influence of the Hellenic model of a same-sex relationship between an older male and a youth, and Wilde has explicitly mentioned such a model for an idealized artistic communion between men, let us instead consider how this relationship impacts Dorian's initial love for Sybil Vane. As mentioned, Dorian seems to juxtapose Sybil's influence with Lord Henry. They may even have an equal footing in his mind until Sybil loses her artistic autonomy and becomes a victim to love. Although Sybil is not an exchange between men in the way of Margarethe, she remains a symbol of the immutable failure of a Christian European marriage to accommodate same-sex desire, especially as a philosophy steeped in the platonic

ideal of younger and older male relationships. Furthermore, as both Sybil and Dorian commit suicide, I believe we might view these characters as equal victims to a patriarchal society that does not allow freedom of expression.

The Dueling Self

Queer literary scholars such as Kuzniar have proven the unavoidable concern with male same-sex desire in Germany and the various factors influencing the emergence of a queer male identity in Germany along with its subordination. Wilde's Victorian England was closer to solidifying the identity of the homosexual, as the term homosexual was invented in 1892 by Charles Gilbert Chaddock (Halperin 27). The emergence of the homosexual shifts the focus on same-sex desire as a vice to be punished to an ingrained pathology that could be studied and diagnosed. Goethe's Germany is further removed from the solidification of the homosexual, yet the existence of same-sex desire was acknowledged and, as Faust shows, the presentation of the pleasure and torment experienced by primal urges that are not socially sanctioned remained problematic. Faust and Dorian Gray both present dualist tensions that express the pleasures and torments of same-sex desire. As the formation of a homosexual identity is occurring, these male characters exhibit the same hedonistic journeys and the conflicts between morality and desire, the past and the present, and even the role of masculinity. I wish to present the interior struggle of Faust and Dorian as a prototype of a fragmented homosexual identity. Through divided souls, philosophies, and masculinities we find the hedonistic journey and same-sex desire show an overlooked interior conflict of a pre-homosexual identity.

To begin with, Faust and Dorian are presented as dualistic persons with divided souls that showcase their inner struggles for same-sex desire. Prior to Mephistopheles's seduction of Faust, we come to know Faust as deeply entrenched in a battle of selfhood. Faust's journey begins in "Night" with an attempted suicide that clearly shows a fragmented internal struggle between knowledge and pleasure (Goethe 732-736). After the exit of his student Wagner, Faust questions which instincts to follow:

Who teaches me? What should I shun?
 That urge I feel—should I obey?
 Both what we do and what we suffer to be done,
 Alas, impedes us on life's way.

(Goethe 630-3)

In this passage, Faust begins to illustrate what will later be expressed in the exposition of his infamous dueling souls. Faust battles with the competing interests of the socially sanctioned and respectable pursuit of knowledge, or the base, primal, and the unaccepted pursuit of pleasurable experiences. He further states, "And what you never lose, you must forever mourn," (655), essentially an early nineteenth century *carpe diem*. As his urges for pleasure overwhelm him, he expresses the human concern of indulging dangerous impulses or living to "mourn" what has never been lost. Faust later explicitly demonstrates his dueling desires to his student Wagner in "Outside the City Gate." Faust explains to his naive student, that the life ahead of a bachelor scholar is one of torment:

You are by just a single urge possessed;
 Oh may you never know the other!
 Two souls, alas, are dwelling in my breast,
 And either would be severed from its brother;
 The one holds fast with joyous earthy lust
 Onto the world of man with organs clinging;
 The other soars impassioned from the dust,
 To realms of lofty forebears winging.

(Goethe 1110-17)

This passage has been previously connected to the dueling philosophical tensions in the early nineteenth century, and Goethe's creation of Romanticism. I agree such readings are fruitful, yet I believe these arguments further prove that the tensions of Faust's souls are indeed intrinsically tied to his morality and sexuality. The Faustian dueling souls are drastically important for representing inner turmoil between secret sexual desires and a public identity. Faust frames these competing interests as his scholarly search for knowledge and the earthly experiences that life has to offer. The symbolism is a precursor for the homosexual closet and provides a queer perspective of public versus private personas. The ties to paganism and hedonism provide a classicist preoccupation with denying the Christian theological ethos of punishing sin, mortification of the body, and even humbleness. The paganism and hedonism provide contradictory modes of pleasure, experience, expression, all bound in what Faust refers to as "earthly lust." Although the "homosexual closet" is not yet relevant for this juxtaposition, it still reflects a contemporary understanding that impulses

and desires for both what is socially expected, accepted, and sanctioned, and what is not, namely, sexual pleasure. To understand the fragmented subjectivity, we must understand how the philosophical tensions are related to tensions of repressed same-sex desire. Even if unintended, it is easy to see how this tenuous battle becomes reiterated in a queer hedonistic context and by those with same-sex desire throughout the century.

For Dorian Gray, the tensions of the inner-self are presented through the juxtaposition of Dorian and his portrait. After Dorian's rejection of Sybil he finds his portrait changed with "a touch of cruelty in the mouth" (Wilde 150).

Although the moment does not spark repentance it does create a moment of Dorian's self-reflection, as Wilde states, "Had he been cruel?" (150). The self-reflection grows as Dorian views the portrait as a manifestation of his secret sins:

A feeling of pain came over him as he thought of the desecration that was in store for the fair face on the canvas. Once, in boyish mockery of Narcissus, he had kissed, or feigned to kiss, those painted lips that now smiled so cruelly at him. Morning after morning he had sat before the portrait wondering at its beauty, almost enamoured of it, as it seemed to him at times. Was it to alter now with every mood to which he yielded? Was it to become a hideous and loathsome thing, to be hidden away in a locked room, to be shut out from the sunlight that had so often touched to brighter gold the waving wonder of the hair? The pity of it! The pity of it!
(Wilde 164)

In this passage, we find Dorian lamenting his innocent beautiful youth prior to his hedonistic experiences. The closeness is apparent as Dorian even kisses the

portrait further illuminating the theme of Narcissus. Like the river as a mirror for Narcissus, the portrait is a mirror of Dorian's soul. As the soul becomes "a hideous and loathsome thing" Dorian realizes it will need to be locked away out of view, as a perfect metaphor for the secret inclinations of same-sex desire. In this scene, we find explicitly that Dorian has a dueling souls existing in his person and in his portrait severing a public persona from a private secret identity. Together the dueling souls prefigure later "closeting" of homosexuals in America and Europe, but more importantly simply demonstrates the torments of hedonism and same-sex desire, and that they are not socially sanctioned, acceptable, and for that reason deeply destructive. Dorian's internal struggle plays out with the physical representation of the portrait, vacillating between admiration and torment until finally stabbing the portrait in a failed attempt to extricate himself from his sins (252). This suicide, a reversal or so it would seem of the Faustian suicide attempt, reveals the same conclusion; death, destruction, and punishment do not change the fabric of the soul. The hedonistic journey allows the experience of same-sex desire and pleasure as the denial of these urges provides equal torment so that the tragedy of Dorian, and even Faust, is an inevitable fate.

Philosophical tensions also support the interior struggle of the male characters as these works question the past and the present seeking to find a way

to reclaim sexual freedom. Faust's dueling souls are underlined by the tensions between Enlightenment and Romanticism. The binary dualism of Faust's "two souls" represents a common Romantic trope of rectifying lost subjectivity with Enlightenment philosophy. Goethe remains emblematic of Romantic literature, as a response to Enlightenment Philosophy inspired by Emmanuel Kant (Habib, 408-14). Enlightenment becomes symbolic of the dominant and institutional powers in Goethe's society. Romanticism provides a reinterpretation of this world with subjectivity at the core. Nature is valued over mechanized industries of cities, emotion over reason, and beauty and form over substance. Goethe's Romanticism explores immorality and sensual pleasures more thoroughly in a manner similar to his Werther character or the later creations of English Romantic writers, such as Lord Byron. Faust's dualistic souls, functioning as "earthly lust" and the "realms of ancestral forebears" become vastly important for disclosing this philosophical tension (Goethe 1114-7). The realm of ancestors as a supernatural plane becomes the symbol of Christian morals and the systematic and rational Enlightenment, otherwise known as the valued and superior "lofty goals." Notwithstanding the overpowering tensions of philosophical approaches to the world, a simple critique of Enlightenment does not answer the immense anxiety, tragedy, and torment illustrated within this passage. Indeed, this tension which inspires attempted suicide, the practice of

magic, and the eventual pact with Mephistopheles is not explained by a Romantic philosophy alone. This dualistic complexity is not one of mere choice or perspective, but a deeply entrenched moralistic battle of the will over the desire for pleasure, and at that, the losing battle of morals over sensory pleasures and pagan rituals, as Faust becomes inundated in magical knowledge, denying scholarly or religious pursuits. In this way, these dueling tensions are a foundation from which other modes of expression are clearly visible, namely the queer hedonism of the text.

The connection of God with Enlightenment and Mephistopheles with Romanticism also provides a way for understanding how Christianity, morals, and rationality itself are critiqued within *Faust*. In "Prologue in Heaven," Goethe clearly illustrates the tension between Heaven and Mephistopheles. In contrast to the lone Mephistopheles as an outsider, God is omnipresent as the figurehead of heaven and angels. We find a rational God who has "cast off laughter long ago," (Goethe 278). God is figured as intensely systematic, institutional, and rational. God's position as the feudal Lord, I believe, functions more for the purpose of idealization than critique. John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, (1667) seems somewhat parallel with its depiction of God as a feudal lord. This culturally granted construction still functions to systemize the realm of heaven, giving it the symbolic treatment of an Enlightenment realm with the rational mind

dominating nature and emotion. On the other hand, Mephistopheles becomes a Romantic opposition in this space as a quick-tongued court jester. God is dour and humorless, whereas Mephistopheles is an enchanting rogue. These relative levels of attractiveness cannot be separated from a philosophical understanding. It is clear that pleasure and experience are not found in the rigid construction of heaven or Christianity. Yet, as we see the exalted status of this location, we see the “realm of lofty forebears” that Faust intrinsically seeks against his sensual desires. As Faust later deconstructs a biblical passage, the tension between the “word” and the “thought,” or objective and subjective reality, rationality and nature, becomes a common thread uniting these oppositions, and placing Mephistopheles’ immorality as part of nature and sensual experiences.

On the other hand, Wilde’s “New Hedonism” seems to be an even starker moral contrast between Victorian society and the Decadence movement. The Decadence movement began in England in the late 1890s and was unavoidably tied to Greek influences of society, historical figures, and non-normative sexual behaviors (Abrams 69). Literature, as well as the philosophy of the decadence movement, included “drugged perception, sexual experimentation, and the deliberate inversion of conventional moral, social, and artistic norms” (Abrams 69). Lord Henry’s pact with Dorian begins with a philosophical doctrine that exhibits what the Decadence would come to symbolize:

A New Hedonism! That is what our century wants. You might be its visible symbol. With your personality there is nothing you could not do. The world belongs to you for a season.

(Wilde 100)

The New Hedonism inspired by Lord Henry underlines the tensions of Dorian's interior self as his struggle between morality and pleasure becomes reified by a philosophical view of life. For Wilde, New Hedonism represents what Romanticism does for Goethe: to question standard assumptions and society and harken back to parts of the pagan past which have been lost. Again, these philosophical tensions are present as a backdrop for the individual struggles of identity in Faust and Dorian, as these characters struggle with competing forces and urges.

The tragic artist Basil and the immoral seducer Lord Henry additionally personify the philosophical tensions of *Dorian Gray*. Lord Henry's New Hedonism has been demonstrated above in seduction of Dorian; however, Basil presents a contrast to the blatant hedonism of Lord Henry. While Lord Henry asks Dorian to embrace immorality and pleasure, Basil is unable to cope with Dorian's loss of reputation. Before his murder, Basil visits Dorian and begs him to deny charges of infamy:

"If you tell me that they are absolutely untrue from beginning to end, I will believe you. Deny them, Dorian, deny them! Can't you see what I am going through? My God! don't tell me that you are infamous!"

(Wilde 218)

What is interesting is that despite Basil's devotion and obsession with Dorian, he still seems unable to act upon his desires as he prefers transferring his emotions into his art to exalt them. This passage clearly shows Basil's innocence and the fear of public scrutiny that motivates him. This fear of ruining public reputation is a major element of the morality that Basil wishes Dorian to possess. Basil comes to symbolize the exaltation of same-sex desire in a Platonic ideal while Lord Henry's influence is one of unfettered experiences of pleasure. Dorian's murder of Basil confirms the impossibility of same-sex relationships to achieve and maintain normalcy since the times of the Greeks. Instead, the 19th century destroys Basil's philosophy of artistic achievement and intellectual betterment, while Lord Henry's base pursuits go relatively unpunished. The innocence of same-sex desire symbolized in Basil is impossible in Victorian England leading to the need of hedonistic shunning of society.

Masculinity also provides another interesting tension for Faust and Dorian as the tension between activity and passivity seek a balance. In Goethe's poems named after the title characters Prometheus and Ganymede, distinct features mark similar same-sex longings and attributes. In *Warm Brothers*, Tobin argues that the poems are the foundation for Faust's competing souls (139), figured as the battle between the dominant Prometheus and passive Ganymede. It is not surprising that Prometheus would be a close influence on Goethe's works, as

Timothy Richard Wutrich's *Prometheus and Faust: The Promethean Revolt in Drama from Classical Antiquity to Goethe* traces the ancient myth to its eventual inclusion in Goethe's *Faust*. Wutrich is correct to find the reiteration of this myth, yet his work does not fully show the inclusion of the entirety of Greek sources. As the poem "Ganymede" suggests purposeful homoeroticism, Goethe's *The West-Eastern Divan* (*West-östlicher Divan*) reiterates the homoerotic myth of Ganymede. Tobin explains how "The Book of the Inn" uses a commonly understood German pun which is also understood as "The Book of the Cupbearer" (102-3). This reference to Ganymede is important for interpreting Goethe's exploration of same-sex desire closely connected to Greek myths. In "Prometheus," the title figure represents his disdain and opposition of the God Zeus. Much like Mephistopheles, this Prometheus seems to question theology stating:

Shall I honour you? What for?
Have you softened the pains,
Ever, of a burdened one?

(Prometheus 212-4)

As Mephistopheles states to The Lord about humans, "He claims the most resplendent stars from heaven, / Yet near or far, he finds no haven," (Goethe 304-6), we find that Prometheus is parallel to the similar critique of divinity and theology. The construction of Prometheus suggests a dominating male presence. This same dominance eventually influences Faust, as suggested in his sexually aggressive desire for Margarethe, initially stating "Get me that young wench—

for certain!" (2618). On the other hand, it would seem that Ganymede's sensual frenzy is more closely linked to a Faustian desire. The poem begins with a description typical of a human relationship with the divine, with Ganymede expressing "sacred emotions" (Ganymede 209) and the physicality of the relationship only reaching a desire to hold God within his arms. Yet even if we were to ignore this physical desire to touch Zeus, Ganymede becomes frenzied in his desire. The poem is quite euphemistic with Ganymede stating, "Upon thy bosom / Lay I, pining," which begins a sexually progressive frenzy (208-9). The physical motion depicted, contrasting between "Up, up, lies my course," and God finally "Bending" grows into an orgasmic finish, mirroring the acts of copulation (219-22). This desire for sexual pleasure and spiritual transcendence seems parallel to Faust's desire to experience the worldly pleasures.

Prometheus and Ganymede also illuminate a conflicting struggle of differing masculinity rather than religious concerns. Although Tobin is correct to see the influence of the subversive same-sex desire in Greek sources, I do not believe that Faust's souls are adequately represented by the opposition between Prometheus and Ganymede. For one, Prometheus represents an oppositional relationship with the divine, which effectively queers his dominant subjectivity. When Faust describes his moral soul soaring to the "realms of lofty forebears winging" he clearly distinguishes this divine goal as morally normative.

Prometheus also avoids any mirroring of the erotic lust of the contrary soul. However, Ganymede's erotic frenzy seems closely linked to the desire for "earthly lust." The moralistic binary of Faust's souls prevents a mirroring of oppositional subjectivities and figures which are both queer, as one must be connected to a normative social and religious imperative. The marking of Faust's hidden desire for lust seems explicitly emphasized in "Ganymede," as an erotic frenzy allows Ganymede to transcend earth itself through erotic longing. It may be noted that sexual desire leading to spiritual transcendence is distinct from an Enlightenment Christian perspective, as constructed in "lofty ancestral realms." The God of Enlightenment cannot meet Faust in the way of Zeus towards Ganymede, thus allowing the need for the Faustian pact. Yet this critique of Christian norms and morals through Prometheus and Ganymede is not oppositional but in unison. While some find Ganymede to be expressing divine love, it is impossible to rectify such a position given the immensely physical and sexual relationship. Ganymede is a figure of free sexual expression and as such mirrors Faust's hedonistic journey. Both Prometheus and Ganymede do not fit into a binary but are a synecdoche for the Ancient Past to critique Enlightenment philosophy and Christian morals through sexuality and questioning, both discourses which mark Faust and Mephistopheles. As Tobin notes the way both Greek mythological figures influence Mephistopheles and Faust mutually, I

believe these both represent parts of the immoral, subordinated, and sensually desiring soul of Faust's breast. In this way, the desire for opposing God or religion, and the desire for shameless transcendent sensual pleasures, both mark the mutually homoerotic and hedonistic journey of Faust and his lustful soul. Ganymede and Prometheus offer differing types of masculinity as active and passive, presenting role models for the changing power dynamics of the Platonic relationship and/or the Faustian bargain. In this way, we find an early example of a gendered attempt to question the role of gender along with sexuality, and provide a way of understanding sexuality and identity within active or passive roles.

The relationship of Dorian with Lord Henry reiterates the Ganymede and Promethean binary of Goethe's writing. Dorian is immediately connected to Greek mythology, as his beauty is perhaps the most important thing about him, and oddly becomes a defense against guilt. Dorian even achieves worship, as Basil becomes obsessed with his muse. Lord Henry seems to abjure both a Promethean view of humanity and the Mephistopheles seduction of men into sin. Unlike Basil, the tragic artist who appreciates and loves beauty, Lord Henry seems to obscure such an act. He is not happy merely admiring the youth but must violate him more insidiously through the mind. His views on youth lead to Dorian's wish for immortality and this influence climaxes into murder and then

suicide, easily confirming the Mephistopheles paradigm. However, some might miss the disappointment of this character. Constantly complaining about his marriage and influence over young men, Lord Henry suffers and fails to become art like Dorian or create art like Basil. Like Prometheus and Mephistopheles, Lord Henry turns away from God and spirituality entirely, preferring purely sensual experiences. Dorian seems an obvious passive Ganymede figure with Lord Henry's dominant subjectivity taking hold of him more closely than even sex—inserting himself into his mind. It is quite interesting that with the immense homosocial bond and desires between all three of the main male characters, the punishments fall on the most passive. Both Dorian and Basil cannot exist, as they are both stabbed and penetrated. Meanwhile, the Mephistopheles-like Lord Henry evades any destruction as far as we know, continuing in perpetual torment of his own like Prometheus. Lord Henry cannot grow in the cathartic experiences of the other characters for this reason. These varying masculinities affirm the interior struggles of same-sex desire as even in representation they are confused with Dorian eventually taking an active role himself to murder Basil and himself. In this way, the presentation of masculinity in *Dorian Gray* supports the internal struggles of same-sex desire and helps us to understand how same-sex desire is being explored prior to a solid definition of a homosexual.

As I have shown, *Dorian Gray* reiterates the homoerotic aestheticism, same-sex desire, Dionysian hedonism, and struggling identity originated in *Faust*. The homoerotic art theory of Joachim Winkelmann provides a foundational inclusion of same-sex desire within all of the nineteenth century, but especially Goethe and Wilde. Antiquity further influences the Dionysian hedonism of these works. Greek tragedy and the theater illustrate the cathartic experiences of hedonism and the Dionysian rapture of characters. The reinterpretation of Platonic relationships also shows a model of Greek antiquity and culture to underscore hedonism and same-sex desire, while the female characters fail to provide adequate alternatives for Faust and Dorian. Finally, the competition of souls, philosophical tensions, and the rivalry of contrasting modes of masculinity expose the fragmented subjectivities of Faust and Dorian. In this way, Faust and Dorian are both early examples of a precursor to homosexual identity and experiences that juxtaposes morality with desire and a public persona with the private self. Together, the hedonistic pursuit of pleasure becomes a way of defining the Faustian bargain as a paradigm for representing, exploring, and exalting same-sex desire. Meanwhile, the tragedy and torment of such lifestyles provide an early example of internal turmoil, inspired by same-sex desire which may reveal significant ways individuals struggled in the past.

The Faustian paradigm and its interworking form and function provide a new way for understanding the nineteenth century and its literature. While *Dorian Gray* is a retelling of the Faust story, many other works of the century may be influenced by Winkelmann and Goethe. This means that an expansive realm of literature has yet to be viewed in the proper context or with the advantageous lens of how it represents and explores same-sex desire. The Aesthetic movement's project of counter-cultural critique may be drawn out to other times and regions to help us understand the emergence of a solidified sexual identity, or perhaps other identity formation in the century. My argument is important for beginning the work of adequately reading a larger cultural trend of representation that until now has remained unexamined, ignored, or hidden. Furthermore, while critical approaches grow to include marginalized figures and representations within Western culture, the Faustian bargain may be reclaimed as immensely important for our contemporary world and understanding of same-sex desire and identity. The importance of this work is then twofold as both relevant to queer history and to literary and historical or cultural studies, which offer new ways of understanding the past.

Coda

The paradigm for same-sex desire, hedonism, and dualistic identity struggles is founded in Goethe's *Faust; A Tragedy*. I have shown in this paper how this paradigm resurfaces in the work of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. However, this paradigm is much more influential throughout the 19th century and beyond the limits of European culture. The seduction of male protagonists, hedonistic pleasure, and identity struggles are also part of the American works of Nathaniel Hawthorne in *The Marble Faun* (1877) and Louisa May Alcott in *A Modern Mephistopheles* (1877). These works provide an important bridge for Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which remains the most popular example of same-sex desire intermingled with Greek culture and Aestheticism, although these themes are provided and originated in the Faustian paradigm. An entire transatlantic movement of counter-cultural representation of same-sex desire has yet to be explored or distinguished in this broader scope.

For example, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* demonstrates vastly homoerotic depictions of art, especially in the construction of the titular Faun representing the character Donatello. Even queer literary scholars fail to draw forth this homoeroticism as a transgressive force of critique, despite the vast connections to typical themes of Aesthetic literature. Hawthorne's Romance, much like Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* similarly illustrates homoeroticism,

Greek culture, and a hedonistic catharsis of demise / transcendence, all of which inspire the intersection of cultivated artistic appreciation and transgressions of normative culture, which are meant to expel traditional morals or self-growth (Abrams 297-8). While previous critics have noted the influence of the polarizing European Art Historian Joachim Winkelmann on Hawthorne, the transgressive use of homoeroticism and its function to destabilize traditional religious bourgeoisie culture have yet to be discussed. Through an examination of Hawthorne's faun Donatello the use and function of homoeroticism could become apparent, as well as its fashioning based on the work of Winkelmann. Drawing forth the blatant similarities is doubly important for providing a new way of reading Hawthorne's work, distanced from a contemporary view of his biographical and historical role as a privileged white male. It also illustrates a larger scope for the style, themes, and functions of Aesthetic literature, which is typically constricted to middle 19th century France or end of the century Britain.

Likewise Louisa May Alcott's *A Modern Mephistopheles* is perhaps the best example of the Faustian paradigm reinterpreted. As the title suggests, this work is deeply based on the original Goethe version. In this tale, a creative writer Felix Canaris becomes tied to the demonic stranger Jasper Helwyze. Under the patronage of the seductive and evil Helwyze, Felix is brought acclaim and wealth, but is forced into a love triangle by Helwyze. The Faustian paradigm is

expressed explicitly in the journey of Felix into sinful pleasures at the expense of morality. While research has explored both Alcott's connections to Goethe and her novel as a feminist project, the ways in which the novel illuminates homoerotic desire and hedonism would expose the representation of same-sex desire as the Faustian relationship between the elder Helwyze and the young beautiful Greek Canaris encapsulates same-sex and hedonism. Although Alcott represents another competing homosocial environment in Gladys and Olivia, both relationships are deeply tied to the necessity of homosocial bonds to achieve artistic production and work. However, unlike Faust, the female homosocial relationship stabilizes reproduction of children, contrary to the production of art by the male relationships, and thus demonstrates an exalted same-sex bond which strengthens family and society rather than undermines it. Alcott's transatlantic ties to Goethe's *Faust* would allow us to view how this American text reiterates and explores same-sex desire through the hedonist journey long before *Dorian Gray*.

Both novels reinterpret the dueling souls of Faust, which later inspire *Dorian Gray*. Alcott reinterprets dueling subjectivities or "souls" within Helwyze and Canaris, a clear representation of Promethean and Ganymede. Canaris initially describes Helwyze within relation to the Prometheus myth:

A fall from heaven to hell could hardly have seemed worse than be precipitated from the heights of such a double woe ; for she, the beautiful, beloved woman proved disloyal, and left him lying there like Prometheus, with the vulture of remembered bliss to rend his heart.

(Alcott 30-1)

Canaris, on the other hand, receives many more comparisons to antiquity. When Helwyze reveals his plan for Canaris to marry Gladys, he states, “My Ganymede has lost his skill; it is time I filled his plan with a neat-hand Hebe” (58). Hebe, as female cup-bearer to the Gods, becomes a partner to the traditional same-sex desire of the Ganymede figure. Yet this clear distinction between Helwyze and Canaris represents the same difference between youthful beauty and suffering experience. More than simply explaining character or physical attractiveness, these roles display a rivalry of masculinity and thus power in the vague nature of this ever-evolving relationship between the men. Even initially, Canaris has trouble diagnosing his relationship with Helwyze, as he states, “For more than a year I have been with him.—first as secretary, then protégé, now friend, almost son” (28). In the same fashion, Helwyze vacillates between describing the relationship as “playing Mentor” (36) and enslaving captor: “I call Canaris my Greek slave, sometimes, and he never knows whether to feel flattered or insulted” (37-8). This relationship alters in description even within the same conversation, as either friendly, paternal, labored, or even enslaved. I would suggest this failure is not so much showing a changing relationship, but rather

one that fails an open or understood description. This same-sex relationship is not one easily discovered or shared, and seems impossible of denying the closeness of the men, or Helwyze's interest in Canaris' beauty, while Canaris is interested in what can be gained in wealth and fame. The same-sex male relationship is figured as pederastic in this way, with Canaris suited for one purpose, which is to be beautiful.

Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* similarly reiterates the dueling souls of Faust. In the introductory scene of the novel, the groups of main characters, who are artistic friends, notice an intense similarity between the *Faun of Praxiteles* and their new Italian friend Donatello. While the characters seem to remark on the qualities of moral character and ancestry, the narrator begins his lengthy and categorical descriptions of the male form, stating, "The form, thus displayed, is marvelously graceful, but has a fuller and more rounded outline, more flesh, and less of heroic muscle, than the old sculptors were wont to assign to their types of masculine beauty," (9). Hawthorne clearly demarcates the faun from a traditional view of "heroic muscle" with his "rounded and somewhat voluptuously developed" face (10). The innocent Donatello personified in art becomes the passive Ganymede emblematic of the ancient past, while the demonic model, who is also personified in art presents a sorrowful and suffering Christian and active role. The model becomes represented as the statue of a monk, contrasting

Donatello as a figure of religious piety, grotesque in its Gothic form. Donatello's close association with an innocent ancient past suggests that this natural state of humanity unfolds the moralistic and judgmental views of pleasure absent of a Christian context for evaluation. This dualism of the past and present, activity and passivity highlights the same inner turmoil of same-sex desire shown in *Faust* and *Dorian Gray*, which should be further researched in the future.

In the future we may further solidify the scope of same-sex hedonism and identity through viewing the Faustian paradigm throughout nineteenth century literature. The exploration of same-sex desire considered so fundamental to the Aesthetic movement contrasting Christian European or even American society was well under way at the beginning of the century in the work of Goethe. Winkelmann and Goethe influence a broad sweeping cultural practice of exploring same-sex desire and identity. The Faustian bargain is immensely important for understanding hedonism and same-sex desire at an important historical moment of identity formation. By tracing this paradigm from Goethe's *Faust*, to Alcott's *A Modern Mephistopheles*, Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*, and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, we find same-sex desire represented and explored with aestheticism, hedonism, and identity. The Faustian paradigm of same-sex desire proves a long standing legacy of hedonism and same-sex, which until now is mostly relegated to Wilde and the late nineteenth century.

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