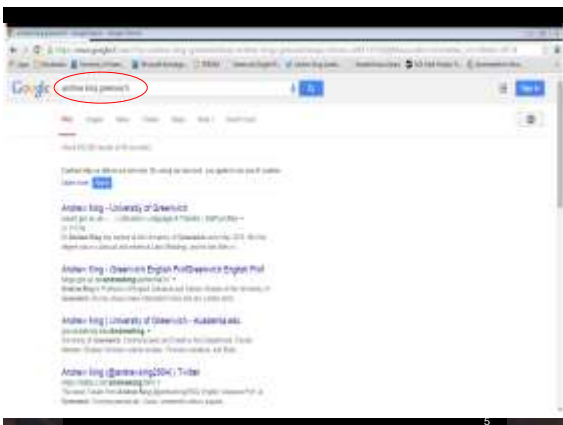


**How do We Read?**

Paratext, Poetry and Ouida's [A Dog of Flanders](#)

**Andrew King**  
 Professor of English Literature and Literary Studies

**What are we doing today**

1. Who was Ouida?
2. Why Ouida today?
3. How do we read?
  1. Reading or using? Reading through use?
  2. The paratext/ epitext
  3. Editions of *A Dog of Flanders*
4. How might we read?
5. Why Ouida then?

## Who was Ouida?

- Louise Ramé
  - (NB NOT “Louise de la Ramee”)
- Born Bury St Edmund’s 1839
  - Father French teacher, mother daughter of small business man
- Moved to London 1857
  - Started writing for journals aged 18 to support mother and grandmother
  - On tour of Europe 1871-2 (via Belgium) decided to remain in Florence
- Died Viareggio, Italy, 1908
- Wrote 40 novels + lots of articles and short stories

## Who was Ouida?

- Transnational success
  - (Representative publishers and countries only)
  - UK – Chatto & Windus
  - English-speaking continent – Tauchnitz
  - US – Lippincott
  - France – Hachette
  - Italy – Treves
- & (unauthorised) trans in German, Polish, Spanish, Russian, Czech...

## Who was Ouida?

- Transclass success
  - *Bentley’s Miscellany, New Monthly, Lippincott’s, Graphic, Illustrated London News, Contemporary Review, Times...*
  - *Weekly Times; The Newcastle Weekly Courant; Western Mail; Glasgow Weekly Herald; Nottinghamshire Guardian ...*
  - 3 volume form
  - 1 volume form (hardback – art printing and “normal”)
  - 2 shilling yellowbacks
  - 6d paperbacks

## Why Ouida?

“Reviled by some critics and adored by her readers, Ouida has much to teach us of the vexed class and gender politics of her period, just as her reception in recent years teaches us about our own contradictory investment in a literary form considered inherently bourgeois and conservative and reveals the ways we simultaneously demand innovation within and resistance to bourgeois ideals.”

Pamela Gilbert, “Ouida and the Canon” in *Ouida and Victorian Popular Culture*, Ashgate, 2013: 38

## Why Ouida?

*Insultata da alcuni critici e adorata dai suoi lettori, Ouida ha molto da insegnarci della politica delle classi e del genere del suo periodo, proprio come la sua lettura in questi ultimi anni ci insegna del nostro investimento contraddittorio in una forma letteraria considerata intrinsecamente borghese e conservatore, e rivela i modi in cui contemporaneamente richiediamo l’innovazione e resistenza agli ideali borghesi*

Pamela Gilbert, “Ouida and the Canon” in *Ouida and Victorian Popular Culture*, Ashgate, 2013: 38

## Ouida’s status

I remember Ruskin and Cardinal Manning routing [= rooting?] on their knees amongst some books to find “The Dog of Flanders” which they loved; getting covered with dust and searching with enthusiasm...

In late 1890s artist Burne-Jones writes letter to Frances Horner (published in her *Time Remembered*, William Heinemann, 1933, pp. 183-4)

## Ouida's status

*Ricordo Ruskin e Cardinale Manning cercando in ginocchio tra alcuni libri alla ricerca di "The Dog of Flanders" che amavano, coperti di polvere ricercandolo con entusiasmo ...*

In late 1890s artist Burne-Jones writes letter to Frances Horner (published in her *Time Remembered*, William Heinemann, 1933, pp. 183-4)



Love among the Ruins, by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, 1894  
Wightwick Manor, West Midlands

Ruskin in 1884



Cardinal Manning



## "A Dog of Flanders"

### Film – and computer game – versions (based on Wikipedia)

1. *A Dog of Flanders* (1914), directed by [Howell Hansel](#).
2. *A Boy of Flanders* (1924), directed by [Victor Schertzinger](#) and starring [Jackie Coogan](#) as Nello.
3. *A Dog of Flanders* (1935), directed by [Edward Sloman](#).
4. *A Dog of Flanders* (1960), directed by [James B. Clark](#).
5. *Dog of Flanders* (Japan, 1975), [Japanese animation](#) TV series produced by [Nippon Animation](#).
6. *My Patrasche* (Japan, 1992), Japanese animation TV series produced by [Tokyo Movie Shinsha](#).
7. *The Dog of Flanders* (Japan, 1997), directed by [Yoshio Kuroda](#). remake of the 1975 TV series.
8. *A Dog of Flanders* (1999), directed by [Kevin Brodie](#).
9. *Barking Dogs Never Bite* (2000), South Korean satirical version directed by [Bong Joon-ho](#).
10. *Patrasche, a Dog of Flanders - Made in Japan* (Belgium, 2007), documentary directed by [Didier Volckaert](#) and [An van Dienderen](#).
11. *Snow Prince* (Japan, 2009), directed by [Joji Matsuoka](#).
12. *A Dog of Flanders*, 2011, Minoto Studios (computer game – link is to video screen capture of a child playing it!)

### More specific links

- <https://www.facebook.com/NelloInPatrasche>
- 1997 Japanese anime (last 11 minutes [here](#))
- 1992 Japanese anime series ([last episode](#))
- 1980 Japanese anime ([last episode](#))

## How to read “A Dog of Flanders”?

- Reading or using?
- Reading through usage?

## The paratextual apparatus

Genette, Gérard: *Seuils*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987. (translated as *Paratexts. Thresholds of interpretation*, Cambridge: CUP, 1997)

The paratext is what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers, and more generally, to the public. More than a boundary or a sealed border the paratext is, rather, a threshold... ‘unidentified zone...’ ‘a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one’s whole reading of the text’

pp. 1-2, quoting Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (Seuil, 1975), p. 45

## The paratextual apparatus

Genette, Gérard: *Seuils*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987. (translated as *Paratexts. Thresholds of interpretation*, Cambridge: CUP, 1997)

Il paratesto è ciò che permette un testo di diventare un libro e di offrirsi come tale ai lettori, e più in generale, al pubblico. Più di un confine o un bordo chiuso il paratesto è, invece, una soglia ... ‘una zona non identificata ...’ ‘una frangia del testo stampato che in realtà controlla tutta la nostra lettura del testo’

pp. 1-2, citando Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (Seuil, 1975), p. 45

## Publisher’s “peritext”

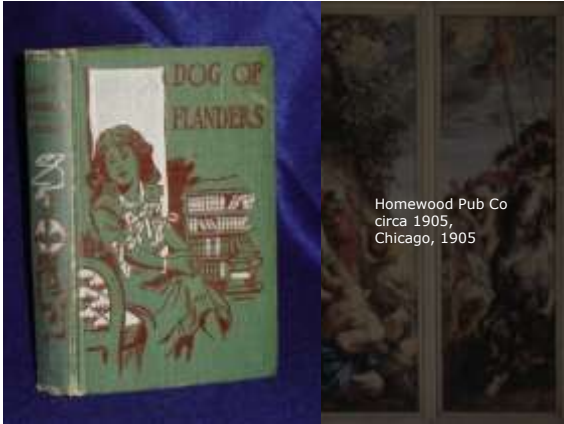
- Cover
- title page
- Frontispiece
- Publisher’s series
- Accompanying texts
- Adverts
- Format (3 volume? Paperback?)
- Paper
- Price marker
- Bar code
- Typesetting
- Typographical devices
- Page turns

## Epitextual apparatus

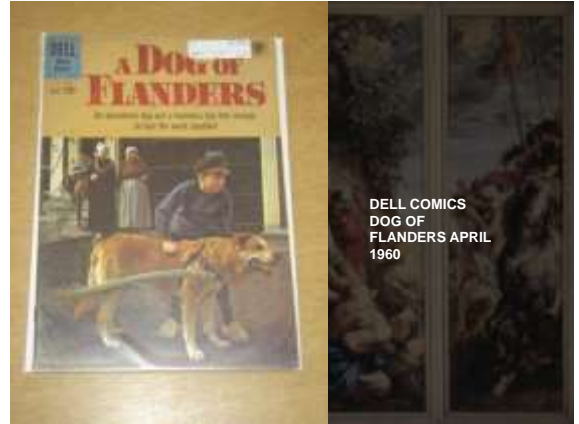
- Adverts
- Reviews
- Critical Studies
- TV & Radio chat shows
- Lectures
- Seminars
- Discussions
- Adaptations (cinematic, TV, online)
- Today...
- Social media
- Twitter
- Facebook...
- Computer games



Donohue, Hennberry and Co, Chicago, (1893)



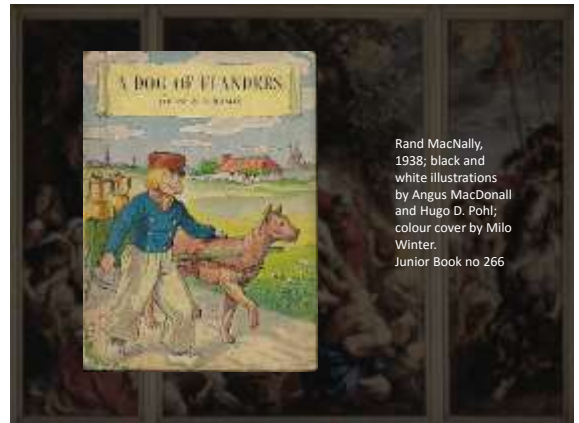
Homewood Pub Co  
circa 1905,  
Chicago, 1905



DELL COMICS  
DOG OF  
FLANDERS APRIL  
1960



The Saalfield  
Publishing Co.,  
New York, 1926

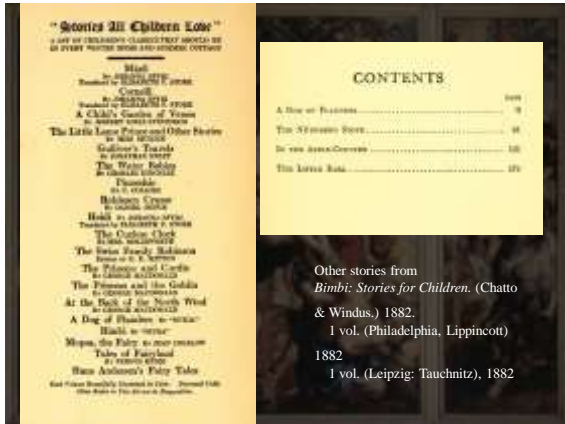


Rand MacNally,  
1938; black and  
white illustrations  
by Angus MacDonall  
and Hugo D. Pohl;  
colour cover by Milo  
Winter.  
Junior Book no 266

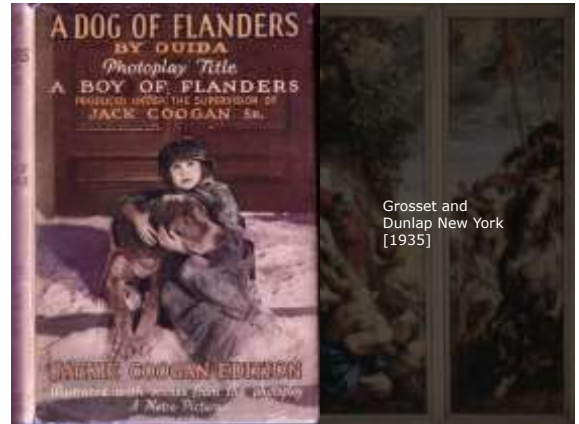


Lippincott, 1909

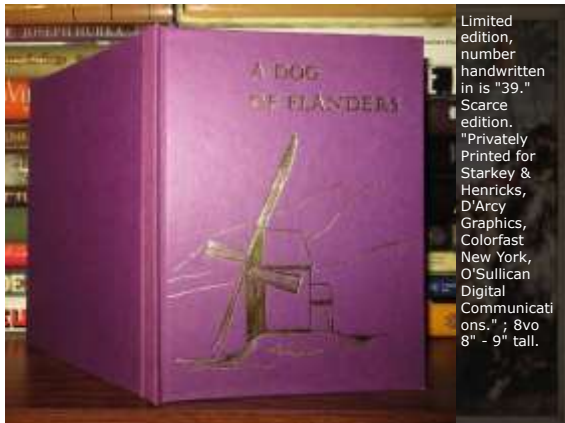




Other stories from *Bimbi: Stories for Children*. (Chatto & Windus.) 1882.  
1 vol. (Philadelphia, Lippincott) 1882  
1 vol. (Leipzig: Tauchnitz), 1882



Grosset and Dunlap New York [1935]



Limited edition, number handwritten in is "39." Scarce edition. "Privately Printed for Starkey & Henricks, D'Arcy Graphics, Colorfast New York, O'Sullivan Digital Communications." ; 8vo 8" - 9" tall.



J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1893  
contains  
A Dog of Flanders,  
A Provence Rose,  
A Leaf in the Storm, and A Branch of Lilac.  
glossy frontispiece  
+ internal glossy plates



Nims and Knight, 1891



Roycrofters, East Aurora, NY, 1906  
Handmade paper  
Binding probably by Louis Herman Kinder.  
Internals printed on Japan Vellum. Limited Edition: 110 copies



## Help Please

- General popular
- Children animals
- Bourgeois – refined mark of status

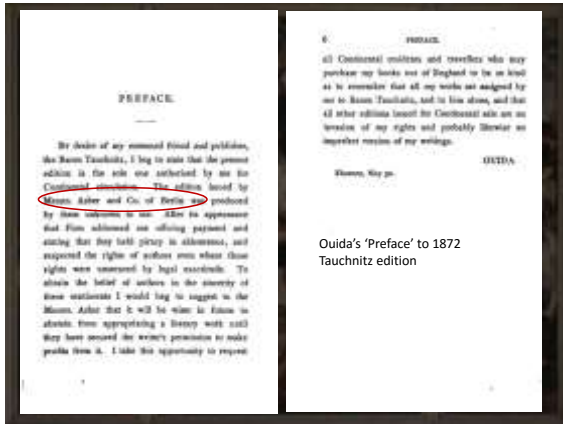
## HOW MIGHT WE READ?

## “A Dog of Flanders” in Context

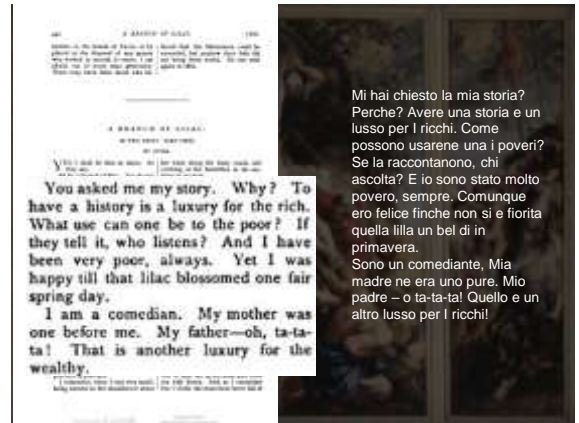
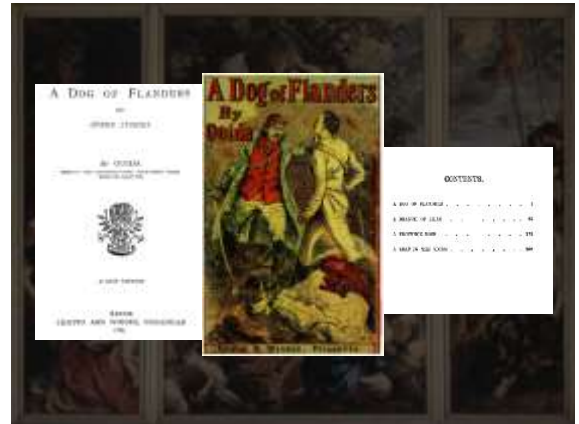
- Originally in *Lippincott's Magazine*, 9, January 1872: 79-98
- Preceded by
  - “A Leaf in a Storm” 7, March 1871: 249-265
  - “A Provence Rose” 7, June 1871: 561-572; 8, July 1871: 27-36
  - “A Branch of Lilac” 8, November 1871: 440-456 ; December 1871: 602-618

## In Volume form – 1<sup>st</sup> editions

- *A Dog of Flanders and Other Stories.* (Chapman & Hall.) with illustrations by Enrico Mazzanti 1872 (new editions 1889/ 1893 – no illustrations)
- *A Leaf in the Storm, and Other Stories* (Philadelphia, Lippincott) 1872
- *A Leaf in the Storm; A Dog of Flanders; and other stories* (Leipzig: Tauchnitz) 1872 (Collection of British Authors, 1236)



Ouida's 'Preface' to 1872 Tauchnitz edition



Mi hai chiesto la mia storia? Perché? Avere una storia e un lusso per i ricchi. Come possono usare una i poveri? Se la raccontano, chi ascolta? E io sono stato molto povero, sempre. Comunque ero felice finché non si è fiorita quella lilla un bel dì in primavera. Sono un comediante. Mia madre ne era uno pure. Mio padre – o ta-ta-ta! Quello è un altro lusso per i ricchi!

**July 1870 - May 71 Franco-Prussian War and Paris Commune**

- Marked birth of German empire
- Paris Commune of 1871 ruthlessly suppressed by French PM (c.17,000 civilians killed)

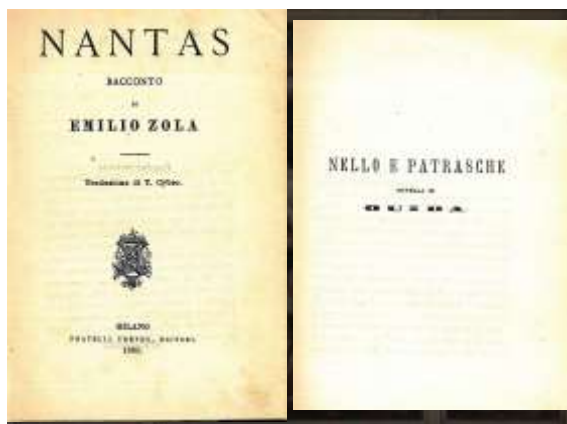
Photographs of communards killed

50 hostages about to be shot by communards

**"A Dog of Flanders" in Context**

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## Nantas (orig. 1878)

Un giovane uomo povero da Marsiglia arriva a Parigi dopo la morte di suoi genitori a fare la sua fortuna. Vive in condizioni terribili e decide di suicidarsi. Improvvisamente la governante della vicina di casa bussa alla sua porta: egli sposerà la sua padrona, che è incinta di un altro uomo? C'è una condizione: la moglie deve essere così solo nome. Disperato, è d'accordo. Successivamente sostenuto dal suo suocero ricco e potente, Nantas ottiene un gran successo e alla fine diventa Ministro delle Finanze. Cade anche in amore con la moglie, ma il suo sentimento non è ricambiato. Ancora una volta disperato, decide di suicidarsi. Improvvisamente la moglie irrompe nella stanza e grida "Ti amo perché sei forte!"

## Help Please!

- Nantas
- Dog of Flanders

## WHY OUIDA THEN?

## Ouida's conflicted position today

- 3 battles for humanities academics
  - 1) justify subject of study (e.g. an author) as an ancestor
  - 2) Justify an author/ topic as important ("aesthetic innovation" "filiation")
  - 3) Find a mode of reading that respects the complexities – the otherness - of the subject

## Victorian "popular modes"

- Melodramatic oppositions
- Episodic set pieces
- Stark contrasts
- Pleasures of contemporary (and fleeting) references
- Emotional responses in the moment

## Sentimental tradition

- Aims to generate sympathy
  - Confession key tactic
  - Political purpose
    - Protect the vulnerable
  - Commercial purpose
    - Organise audiences
      - Fellow feeling with or channelled through a "star"

## Sentimental tradition

- Stress on typical not unique
  - Inc use of commonly used words and phrases and oppositions – ("cliches")
  - Use of diminutives (e.g. little, just a, only a)
- Non-linear
  - Circular, agglutinative
- Use of "poetic" / "lyric" techniques
  - Alliteration
  - Attention to rhythm
  - Oppositions organised in elaborate patterning
  - The "sententia" ("bon mot")
  - Strong single images

## The representative indefinite article

CONTENTS.

1. THE FLOWERS OF FLANDERS . . . . .	1
2. THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM . . . . .	44
3. THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO . . . . .	111
4. THE BATTLE OF BUNENSLADE . . . . .	188

## From 1909 Lippincott edition pp. 22-3

In the spring and summer especially soon they glad, Flanders is not a lovely land, and around the length of Eindhoven it is perhaps least lovely of all. Cows and calves, pasture and plough, succeed each other on the characteristic plain in wearying repetition, and soon by some great gray tower, with its peak of pathetic bells, or some figure coming above the fields, made picturesque by a glimmer's handle or a woodman's light, there is no change, no variety, no beauty anywhere; and he who has dwelt upon the meadows or amidst the forests feels oppressed as by imprisonment with the tedium and the confinement of that vast and dreary level. But it is green and very fertile, and it has white houses that have a certain charm of their own even in that dulness and monotony; and among the rushes by the water-side the flowers grow, and the trees

rise tall and thick where the large glens with their great larches black against the sun, and their little green barrels and nut-colored flags gay against the leaves. Anyhow, there is greenery and breadth of space enough to be as good as beauty to a child and a dog; and those two asked no better, when their work was done, than to lie buried in the lark grasses on the side of the mead, and watch the meadows round drifting by and bringing the crisp air full of the sun among the blossoming stems of the country women.

## pp. 208-9 di Nello e Patrasche

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## The familiar (the banal?)

In the spring and summer especially soon they glad, Flanders is not a lovely land, and around the length of Eindhoven it is perhaps least lovely of all. Cows and calves, pasture and plough, succeed each other on the characteristic plain in wearying repetition, and soon by some great gray tower, with its peak of pathetic bells, or some figure coming above the fields, made picturesque by a glimmer's handle or a woodman's light, there is no change, no variety, no beauty anywhere; and he who has dwelt upon the meadows or amidst the forests feels oppressed as by imprisonment with the tedium and the confinement of that vast and dreary level. But it is green and very fertile, and it has white houses that have a certain charm of their own even in that dulness and monotony; and among the rushes by the water-side the flowers grow, and the trees

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### The agglutinative conjunction

In the spring and summer especially were they glad, Flanders is not a lovely land, and around the length of Etienne it is perhaps least lovely of all. Cows and oxen, pasture and plough, succeed each other on the characteristic plain in wearying repetition, and now by some great grey tower, with its peak of pathetic bells, or some figure coming athwart the fields, made picturesque by a glen's beauty or a woodman's light, there is no change, no variety, no beauty anywhere; and he who has dwelt upon the mountains or amidst the forests feels oppressed as by imprisonment with the tedium and the colorlessness of that vast and dreary level. But it is green and very fertile, and it has wide lawns that have a certain charm of their own even in that dullness and monotony; and among the pasture by the water-side the flowers grow, and the trees

rise tall and look where the larger glens with their great hecks black against the sea, and their little green barrels and vast-colored flags gay against the loams. Anyway, there is greenness and breadth of space enough to be as good as honey to a child and a dog; and those two asked no better, when their work was done, than to lie buried in the lush grasses on the side of the mead, and watch the madonna rambles drifting by and bringing the crisp whiff small of the sea among the blossoming sweets of the country summer.

### the admission of alternatives

In the spring and summer especially were they glad, Flanders is not a lovely land, and around the length of Etienne it is perhaps least lovely of all. Cows and oxen, pasture and plough, succeed each other on the characteristic plain in wearying repetition, and now by some great grey tower, with its peak of pathetic bells, or some figure coming athwart the fields, made picturesque by a glen's beauty or a woodman's light, there is no change, no variety, no beauty anywhere; and he who has dwelt upon the mountains or amidst the forests feels oppressed as by imprisonment with the tedium and the colorlessness of that vast and dreary level. But it is green and very fertile, and it has wide lawns that have a certain charm of their own even in that dullness and monotony; and among the pasture by the water-side the flowers grow, and the trees

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### The "poetic"

In the spring and summer especially were they glad, Flanders is not a lovely land, and around the length of Etienne it is perhaps least lovely of all. Cows and oxen, pasture and plough, succeed each other on the characteristic plain in wearying repetition, and now by some great grey tower, with its peak of pathetic bells, or some figure coming athwart the fields, made picturesque by a glen's beauty or a woodman's light, there is no change, no variety, no beauty anywhere; and he who has dwelt upon the mountains or amidst the forests feels oppressed as by imprisonment with the tedium and the colorlessness of that vast and dreary level. But it is green and very fertile, and it has wide lawns that have a certain charm of their own even in that dullness and monotony; and among the pasture by the water-side the flowers grow, and the trees

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Binary tower-figure complicated by 2nd figure: are there 2 or 3 elements?  
Resolved into tricolon with anaphora

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3 pairings: mountains/forest, tedium/endlessness, vast + dreary  
Answered by 3 elements (the 3rd much longer) and recollection of earlier 2

### The "poetic"

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Influence of Keats, Shelley and the poetry of bodily sensation (Spasmodics)?  
William Rosset's edition of Shelley 1871  
See <http://blogs.pre.ac.uk/andrewking/2012/08/08/The-summer-of-1871-ouida-and-wierzt/>

### The aesthetic

#### What is the role of "art" in the story?

battle between 2 kinds of art – commercial and "pure"  
poverty & wealth

#### Are there other battles?

- individual v. society
- individual v institution
- art v death
- animal v human
- transhuman v human
- honesty v deceit
- country v town



**Why do  
We  
Read?**

**Paratext,  
Poetry  
and  
Ouida's  
[A Dog of  
Flanders](#)**

Luciano Berio, *Sinfonia*, [3<sup>rd</sup> movement](#) (1968)

- demands made on art after Romanticism

*[ l'arte ] non può fermare le guerre, non può ringiovanire il vecchio o abbassare il prezzo del pane, non può cancellare la solitudine o calmare i passi fuori dalla porta ...*

*E domani si legge che [ scegliere un'opera d'arte ] ha fatto crescere i tulipani nel mio giardino e ha alterato il flusso delle correnti oceaniche.*

*Dobbiamo credere che sia vero.*

*Ci deve essere qualcos'altro.*

*Altrimenti sarebbe del tutto senza speranza.*

*Ma è del tutto senza speranza ...*

Berio, *Sinfonia*, [3<sup>rd</sup> movement](#) (1968)  
- demands made on art after Romanticism

[*art*] can't stop the wars, can't make the old  
younger or lower the price of bread, can't erase  
solitude or dull the tread outside the door...

And tomorrow we'll read that [*choose an art work*]  
made tulips grow in my garden and altered the flow  
of the ocean currents.

We **must** believe it's true.

There **must** be something else.

Otherwise it would be quite hopeless.

But it *is* quite hopeless...