



**Elegy for an Age**  
The Presence of the Past in Victorian Literature  
*John D. Rosenberg*

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**Illustrations:** 8+ colour and halftone illustrations

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**Description**

**A rich and elegantly written exploration of Victorian elegy in all its forms.**

'An inventive and spirited book, with many brilliant pages which any student of Victorian culture would do well to ponder.' —Roger Ebbatson, *The Tennyson Research Bulletin*

This rich and elegant work describes how the unsettled cultural climate provided fertile soil for the flourishing of elegy. John Rosenberg shows how the phenomenon of elegy pervaded the writing of the period, tracing it through the voices of individuals from Carlyle, Tennyson, Darwin and Ruskin, to Swinburne, Pater, Dickens and Hopkins. Finally, he turns from particular elegists to a common experience that touched them all – the displacement of the older idea of the earthly city as a New Jerusalem by the rise of a new image of the Victorian city as an industrial Inferno, a wasteland of sprawling towns and of rivers so polluted they caught on fire.

**Readership:** A must read title for students and lecturers on nineteenth-century literature and society and for anyone interested by the Victorian era.

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**Contents**

List of Illustrations; Acknowledgements; 1. The Age of Elegy; 2. Carlyle: History and the Human Voice; 3. Stopping for Death: Tennyson's In Memoriam; 4. Tennyson and the Passing of Arthur; 5. Ruskin's Benediction: A Reading of Fors Clavigera; 6. Water into Wine: The Miracle of Ruskin's Praeterita; 7. Mr. Darwin Collects Himself; 8. The Oxford Elegists: Newman, Arnold, Hopkins; 9. Swinburne and the Ravages of Time; 10. Walter Pater and the Art of Evanescence; 11. Varieties of Infernal Experience: The Fall of the City in Victorian Literature; Notes; Bibliography; Index

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**About the Author**

John D. Rosenberg is William Peterfield Trent Professor of English at Columbia University of New York. He has received numerous awards and fellowships, including American Council of Learned Societies, Guggenheim and NEH fellowships. Among many works and editions, he has written *The Darkening Glass, on Ruskin* (Columbia University Press, 1961); and *Carlyle and the Burden of History* (Harvard University Press, 1985).

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