

CHAPTER 5

The Discourses of Journalism: "Arnold and Pater" Again and Wilde

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T. S. ELIOT'S ESSAY ON PATER, first published in 1930, stresses the continuities between Arnold and Pater rather than the disruptions.¹Eliot undervalues Arnold's deep attachment to Christianity (and perhaps Pater's) and suppresses Pater's many challenges to Arnold's ideas. I would like to suggest that Pater attacked two of Arnold's key positions in the 1870s and 1880s, that of the inferiority of romanticism and the superiority of poetry. To these notions, rooted in Arnold's construct of a classical tradition, Pater counters positions that derive from identifications with modern literary forms and writing: he defends Romanticism, and assesses it from a position consciously and unapologetically within it; prose, he proclaims, is "the special art of the modern world."²The relationship between Pater and Arnold was largely one of disagreement and rivalry, voiced in public dialogue in print, in the press and in books, as well as in private conversation. In 1876 and 1888, in "Romanticism" and in "Style," the essays that begin and end *Appreciations*, the volume of collected essays published in 1889, Pater is, among other things, continuing the public dialogue.

As for Arnold, the second series of *Essays in Criticism* appeared in November 1888, a month before "Style" and a year before *Appreciations*. In his *Essays*, Arnold foregrounds his introduction to Humphry Ward's 1880 anthology of English poetry as the first essay, now newly entitled "The Study of Poetry": Arnold's 1880 essay does constitute a genuine referent of Pater's claims for prose in his essay on "Style" that appears less than a month later. Insofar as Pater had himself contributed to the Ward anthology which Arnold's then untitled essay served to introduce, Pater was familiar with Arnold's position and was addressing it. Pater's "Style" is placed analogously as the flagship of *his* collection a year later.

Enter Wilde. According to Frank Harris, editor of the *Fortnightly Review* in which "Style" appeared in December 1888, Pater, Arnold, and Wilde *discussed* style in 1886 at a London dinner party where Harris commissioned the essay from Pater.³ Pater's defence of prose and Arnold's of poetry in the 1880s are related counter-statements that, with Oscar Wilde's interventions, inscribe a contest in the late nineteenth century between adherence to models from classical literature (which

privileges poetry, nobility and the grand styles) and a challenging recommendation of contemporary literary forms (prose and its new popular form, the novel).⁴ The apparent meanings of the ideological alliance between Pater and Wilde, and their differences with Arnold on this question, are disrupted, however, by an eloquent if unnoted harmony between Pater and Arnold in their common publisher (Macmillan) and periodical (*Macmillan's Magazine*). These parallel publications can be contrasted with the provenance of Wilde's work published by the small house of McIlvaine and originally in the free space of the *Nineteenth Century* and the *Fortnightly Review*. These aspects of production yield ideological meanings. Moreover, it may be that Eliot's choice as well as construction of Arnold and Pater as subjects is in part due to their implication in the problematic of culture and religion in the nineteenth century. Eliot's predisposition to matters of faith in the 1930s leads him to exclude Wilde and to minimize the ideological contest in the 1880s and early 1890s, just as Frank Harris's bohemianism ensures Wilde's prominence and exposure of the discontinuities.

Both Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* and Pater's *Appreciations* were published by Macmillan, and both included a large number of essays originally in *Macmillan's Magazine* or in books published by Macmillan. If these essays and books seem to have common origins and to be parts of the same discourse, that cannot be said for essays which were included in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1889 and 1890, signed Oscar Wilde, and published in book form by Osgood McIlvaine in 1891 as part of *Intentions*. The first, "The Decay of Lying," published in January 1889, prominently quotes notions of Arnold's and Pater's, either to reject them outright or to extend them beyond recognition. The second, "The True Function and Value of Criticism," in two parts or acts printed in July and September 1890, openly confronts Arnold's earlier pronouncements in 1864-65 in "Function of Criticism at the Present Time" and the first series of *Essays in Criticism*.⁵ The wit, pace, and form of Wilde's essays distinguish them markedly from the contemporary work of Pater and Arnold; they combine argument and aphorisms with an unembarrassed and even exploitative topicality; and the Platonic dialogue, W. S. Landor's *Conversations*,⁶ Frederick Harrison's 1867 "Culture: a Dialogue" (an analogous and influential critique of Arnold),⁷ and Wilde's persistence from 1880 with writing drama contribute to his essay's distinctive and unexpected dialogue form which offers an alternative metaphor for the site of criticism: Wilde displaces Arnold's pulpit and Pater's academy with the Aesthetic drawing-room, and the setting of the public occasion and

audience favoured by Arnold and Pater with the private. These qualities together make Arnold's and Pater's contemporary work appear rarefied and even constrained compared with Wilde's, and suggest Wilde's work is part of a different periodicals discourse.

If the definition of the "text" is extended beyond content and style to include the discourse and its readers, then the differences between Wilde's text and those of Arnold and Pater emerge more clearly. The flamboyance of Wilde's writing is indicative of the degree of freedom afforded by the periodical in which it appeared; indeed, through Wilde's exploitation, or, more neutrally, utilization, of that freedom, its capaciousness is revealed. Although neither Arnold nor Pater tested its limits as strenuously as Wilde did, they also availed themselves of the freedom of James Knowles's *Nineteenth Century*, which prided itself on tolerant, untrammelled eclecticism, and fostered oppositional expression through the format of the symposium. The definition of the "text" includes the periodical of which Wilde's writing forms a part.

While signature, the signature of *individual* authors, that is, figured importantly in James Knowles's programme for his journal, the other signature, clear to the editor and the periodical reader of the day, is the "signature" of the journal itself; its significance, if not its identity, is now obscured to us. Moreover the production process whereby writing is translated from the ephemeral of the periodical essay into the permanence of the book engineers the obscuring of the ephemeral characteristics and, most important, origins, even to the original readers of the book. The corporate institutional authorship of a work is obfuscated, and authorship is shifted to a context which foregrounds the individual; the discourse of the book is now that of art, the collected work, with its emphasis on individual performance, genius, memorability here the tarnished image of the artist-as-critic.

I write "collected" work because that is how the production process is perceived by the consumer. But for the author it is selected work, and what is deselected, left to the limbo of ephemera, is for our purposes as important. In this process of selection and omission the "text" by the *critic* is constructed by the writer. Another process of this construction is characteristic of this system of production: it is the systematic revision of the ephemeral writing to provide it with a "finish" allegedly not required by periodical publication. Disallowed as a characteristic of a form of publication associated with constraints of time and with the undignified labours of Grub Street authors whose livelihood depends upon meeting deadlines, "finish" comes to be exclusively associated with another form of production, leisured and gentlemanly, which may result in art which by implication is defined as "not journalism." Finish often involved the careful suppressions of topical allusions in order to enhance the illusion of timelessness of the new "art" text. This was often Arnold's purpose in the relatively few revisions of his periodical texts for book publication. In the course of restoring the periodical texts of Arnold's work to readers in his edition of the *Collected Prose Works*, R. H. Super stresses:

I hope it has been apparent how much of Arnold's writing which was almost all journalism on its first appearance is embedded in the ephemera of his day . . . Arnold's relation, not with the monuments of Victorian literature, but with the multitude of forgotten and fallen leaves seeing him read his daily newspaper and comment upon it, then seeing that newspaper take up his comment, until as with the *Saturday Review* and the *Daily Telegraph*, a tradition of mutual banter is set up.⁸

Wilde, like Pater and Arnold, selected essays to reprint in book form. *Intentions* (1891) consisted of four pieces, "The Decay of Lying" and "The True Function and Value of Criticism" from the *Nineteenth Century*, one other from the same periodical, equally uncompromising, now entitled "The Truth of Masks,"⁹ and "Pen, Pencil, and Poison," from the *Fortnightly Review*.¹⁰ A liberal and erudite periodical from its inception in 1865 when it was modelled on the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the *Fortnightly* was edited in 1889 by the young Frank Harris, and open to publication of Wilde's libertine, provocative, and light-hearted defence of the aesthetic perfection of a life of a murderer and a forger. *Intentions* is a text to keep in view beside Arnold's *Essays* and Pater's *Appreciations*, with Wilde's selections from his critical essays characterized by inclusion of work from the two journals at the apex of the high culture which offered the widest moral parameters in the British press of the day. Wilde excluded, and never reprinted in his lifetime, for example, numerous reviews and articles from the daily *Pall Mall Gazette*, and his contributions to *Woman's World*, the *Court and Society Review*, *Queen*, and the *Speaker*. He constructs himself in *Intentions* as the irreverent and youthful upstart who takes on and displaces the ageing gurus. Arnold's death in April 1888 may have freed Pater and Wilde from critical constraint (would Wilde mock and attack Arnold at sixty-six so directly had Arnold been alive?), but Arnold *hors de combat* may also have consolidated his influence among critics and readers more generally.

By contrast a great part of the selections by Arnold and Pater from their respective books in 1888 and 1889 stemmed from a relatively staid periodical aimed at a family audience.¹¹ *Macmillan's* habitually carried fiction and this signalled its lighter magazine format and its intention to include women prominently among its readers. Unlike the *Nineteenth Century* or the *Fortnightly Review*, *Macmillan's Magazine* was implicated in its publisher's book publications; originally conceived as a vehicle of trailers for forthcoming books for the firm, the *Magazine* addressed the moral tolerance not only of its own immediate audience but that of the large circulating libraries such as Mudie's and retailers such as W. H. Smith; these possessed considerable economic and moral authority through their power to purchase books in bulk from publishers or not. An anonymous review of *Macmillan's* cumulative catalogue which appeared in the *Bookman* in 1891 makes plain this moral dimension of Macmillan's list in its diction, with value accorded to Macmillan's "honourable career," its "steadfast" adherence to "principles," and its efforts to "raise" the publication of books, while the alternatives of "bad books," "startling

successes," and "big sales" are rejected. The association of the publication of aesthetically fine books with this high moral posture endorses the "worth" of the publications:

This volume has been executed in a manner which is worthy of the honourable career it records. Some publishers may have achieved more startling successes than any even of Messrs. Macmillan, but big sales of bad books the latter have never aimed at. None have done more to raise the whole manner of the publication of books. They have been steadfast to two great principles: first, never to publish a book which they did not think worth reading; next, always to give all books fair opportunity so far as printing and binding were concerned. Looking over this catalogue, it is with growing surprise one notices how very few of the titles are unfamiliar. . . . Everyone knows that it is almost always a pleasure to handle a Macmillan book the binding is invariably tasteful, and some of the new sizes introduced by the firm peculiarly neat.¹²

The ideological link between Macmillan's and Smith's, renowned for its refusal to circulate "immoral" books, is revealed by the case of Wilde's novel *Dorian Gray*, which Macmillan refused to publish, and Smith to distribute.

Arnold's second series of *Essays in Criticism*, comprising ten essays, includes only two from non-Macmillan origins. Both are on controversial topics, and they appeared in the same two journals which harboured Wilde's work. *Essays* reprints one item from the *Nineteenth Century*; predictably, it is the most morally vulnerable in the opinion of Lord Coleridge, who appends a "Prefatory Note" to this selection of essays Arnold made before his death.¹³ "C" (Coleridge) suggests that Arnold's review of Edward Dowden's biography of Shelley (it is the most recent essay in the volume, having appeared in January 1888)¹⁴ is only part of what Arnold would have wished to say while he would not have retracted what he does say, he would have said more about Shelley.

The other non-Macmillan essay, on Tolstoy, is from the *Fortnightly Review*, published only a month before the piece on Shelley, in December 1887.¹⁵ We know that Tolstoy too was a morally delicate subject at the time, probably unfit for inclusion in *Macmillan's Magazine*, as an irate reviewer of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in the *Tory St James Gazette* of 24 June 1890 indicates. Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* serves the reviewer as an example of Puritan prurience, which is one form taken by authors like Wilde who derive pleasure from treating a subject merely because it is disgusting.¹⁶ These essays which originate outside of *Macmillan's* pages inscribe its familial audience and the limits of respectable morality as well as identify their subjects and the sites of their publication as marginalized and suitable for male readers, in a different discourse.

Pater's selection from his published work for *Appreciations* is far more eclectic in a

variety of ways than either Wilde's or Arnold's. The essays are drawn from three decades, two from the 1860s, four from the 1870s, and five from the 1880s; partly in consequence the essays cohere less. Where Arnold's book overwhelmingly addresses poetry and Wilde's criticism and theory, Pater's volume includes essays on each of three genres four on prose, four on poetry, and three on drama; and two on critical terms "style," and "romanticism" and "classicism." These two are carefully positioned at the beginning and end of the volume, and the title of the last essay is even changed by Pater from "Romanticism" to "Postscript" to enhance the illusion of unity and discernible structure. Similarly, the sources of the essays show a greater range: four from the *Fortnightly Review*, three from *Macmillan's Magazine*, two from the *Westminster Review*, one from *Scribner's Magazine*, and one from T. H. Ward's anthology, *The English Poets*. The faceted eclecticism of *Appreciations* in part results from Pater's decision to give fiction his serious attention in the 1880s; he is forced to dig more deeply into the past than Arnold or Wilde to provide criticism suitable for translation from ephemera to art.

Both Pater and Arnold include essays in their books which first appeared in T. H. Ward's anthology of English poets (in 1880 and 1883), but the roles these essays play are contrasting: they reveal the centrality of poetry to Arnold's literary production in the period, and Pater's parallel preoccupation with imaginative and critical prose. Arnold's three contributions to Ward (his niece's husband) were the introduction (later titled "The Study of Poetry"), and pieces on Keats and Gray. These were all written specially for the selections of poems which they preface in Ward. Two other essays on Romantic poets in Arnold's volume treat Wordsworth and Byron; these served as introductions to editions of their poems edited by Arnold and published by Macmillan in 1879 and 1881 respectively. With his review of Dowden's life of Shelley in 1888 Arnold could be said to have completed a personal project, that of reconsidering his earlier views on the Romantic poets stated in 1864 and 1865. Just as "The Study of Poetry" genuinely states the programme of the 1888 volume, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" itself served as the keynote to the first series of *Essays in Criticism* in 1865. The essays Arnold did for Ward were part of a larger, previously conceived, reconsideration of Romantic poetry, a project which Arnold continued to pursue after Ward's anthology appeared.

The coincidence of Arnold's interests with Ward's volume is not accidental. Darrel Mansell¹⁷ strives to distinguish between the conception of Ward's project with its twin emphases on the teaching of English poetry and the dispersal of authority implicit in the plurality of critics and Arnold's well-known predilections for classical and European literature, and for authority. However true these differences, it is also true that Ward's project is itself significantly Arnoldian. As early as 1865 Arnold recommends "that a practice common in England during the last century, and still followed in France, of printing . . . a notice by a competent critic, to serve as an introduction to an eminent author's works, might be revived among us with advantage,"¹⁸ and in 1877 he responds positively to his publisher's suggestion that he undertake a selection of Wordsworth and

provide a preface. This appeared in September 1879, the same month in which Arnold probably began to prepare his introduction for Ward: Arnold's parallel selection of Byron's poems in 1881 immediately followed the publication of Ward's volumes 3 and 4 in December 1880, in which Arnold's Keats and Gray essays appear. All three, Arnold's selection from Wordsworth and Byron, and Ward's anthology, were published by Macmillan. The close interrelatedness of the projects is indicated by the common publisher; the family link between Arnold and Ward; and the Oxford associations of Arnold (graduate and former professor of poetry) and Ward (graduate and recent fellow of Brasenose), and most of the critics whom Ward employed in his anthology. These selections of Arnold's and Ward's anthology are productions of the same formation.

Comparison of Humphry Ward's proposal to Macmillan with Arnold's suggestion in 1865 shows that both took their idea from French models, probably the same model, as Sainte-Beuve had already attracted Arnold's attention in 1864 in "The Literary Influence of the Academies":

The idea, which I wish to carry out is one which I think will mark off such a book from all similar collections in English, namely, that each poet or group of poets should be undertaken by a separate writer, who would select from his work, and write a short *critical* introduction, varying from a single page to ten or twelve. This idea has been mooted in a most admirable collection of French poetry, called "Les poetes français," published in 1861 by Gide & now (I believe) issued under Hachette's name. That collection occupies four volumes. I should propose that the present book should be in three. . . .

I have already enlisted a good many friends to help in the work . . . I should say that Mr. Matthew Arnold has expressed himself strongly in favour of the scheme, & has promised to help if he can possibly find time. If I can induce him to write the general introduction, as Sainte-Beuve did for the French Collection, I think we would not fear for the success of the book.¹⁹

Ward's anthology slots easily into Arnold's endeavours at the time, allowing Arnold to lend his name and authority to Ward by agreeing to write the introduction. The flattery of the parallel with Sainte-Beuve and the authority it implied may also have induced Arnold to agree. Ward's project, a version of which Arnold is simultaneously engaged upon, is a variant of one proposed by Arnold fifteen years earlier, and now nurtured by a publisher common to both. Prompted to publish *because* Arnold endorsed it, Macmillan recognized its compatibility with aspects of its current list, while Arnold endorsed it out of recognition of its origins and those (familial and academic) of its youthful proposer.

Pater is also a Macmillan's author, publishing with the press in the 1880s a combination of fiction and criticism, *Marius the Epicurean* in 1885, *Imaginary Portraits* in 1887, the third

edition of *The Renaissance* in 1888, and numerous articles, including chapters from *Gaston de Latour* in the *Magazine*. Ward's original proposal to Macmillan of February 1879 shows Pater as volunteering to take eight out of the twenty-seven poets in Volume III: Coleridge, Robert Southey, Samuel Rogers, Keats, Milman, John Keble, W. S. Landor, and possibly E. B. Browning. In the event, he only takes on Coleridge, and in 1883, for the second edition, Rossetti, now dead and thus eligible for inclusion. Southey and Rogers are undertaken by Henry Taylor, Keats by Matthew Arnold, Keble by A. P. Stanley, Landor by Lord Houghton, and E. B. Browning by W. T. Arnold. It is interesting that in theory Pater was willing to concentrate on nineteenth-century poetry in early 1879, and that circumstances intervened to prevent him. Poetry does not appear to be prominent in *Appreciations*, insofar as two of the four essays in poetry date from 1868 and 1874; the other two are derived from Ward, and one of those, on Coleridge, which Pater dates in the volume "1865, 1888," is created in 1888 by combining the Ward essay and his 1866 *Westminster Review* article on Coleridge's prose. Three out of the four essays on poetry were written over a decade before *Appreciations* appeared. Moreover, the introductory and concluding essays of the volume which are both theoretical discuss modern European prose texts; in this respect they parallel "Amiel" and "Count Leo Tolstoi," the only two parts of Arnold's 1888 *Essays* which do not treat Romantic poetry. However, where Arnold's first essay, from Ward, foregrounds poetry and anticipates the majority of the essays which follow, Pater's "Style" is recent. It foregrounds prose, and it marginalizes the essays on poetry, including those from Ward, which follow. What the poetry essays in *Appreciations* show is Pater's willingness to discuss recent literature in English, such as that by Rossetti and Morris. The list of poets Pater volunteered for Ward's third volume, which included contemporaries and near-contemporaries such as Keble, Landor, and E. B. Browning, bears this out. In this respect Pater, and Wilde after him, differ from Arnold, who clearly confines his published literary criticism on English literature to work by the previous generation, as he does in 1888.

Besides pieces on poetry and prose, Pater selects three essays on different types of Shakespearean drama for inclusion in *Appreciations*. This choice of subject typifies the apparent moral and intellectual respectability of the essays in this volume. Pater's essays from the *Fortnightly* do not probe its perimeters of tolerance as Wilde's do, and on the whole the distinctions between the *Fortnightly* and *Macmillan's Magazine* do not emerge as clearly as they do in Arnold's selection. The *Appreciations* essay which is to attract controversy was one of Pater's earliest reviews, originally entitled "Poems by William Morris" which appeared anonymously in the *Westminster Review* in 1868, a period when Arnold was to call it "the wicked *Westminster*." The Morris essay attracted adverse criticism then and in 1873, when part of it appeared as the "Conclusion" to Pater's *Renaissance* essays. Although Pater removed it from the 1877 second edition, he republished it twice in 1888-89, in the third edition of *The Renaissance*, and in a different form as "Aesthetic Poetry" in *Appreciations* (1889), as a companion piece, perhaps, to the Ward introduction to Rossetti. But because it again provoked criticism, it was withdrawn a second time by Pater, this time from the 1890 edition of *Appreciations*. If Oscar Wilde at

this time sought to be provocative, exploiting the spectrum of latitude in the press, and Arnold was also, even as an elder critic, willing to reprint the Shelley and Tolstoi reviews, Pater emerges in his criticism of the period as the most sensitive to the prevailing morality of the readers of his books, most anxious to construct a reputation of rectitude to survive him.

The significance of the critic constructed by Pater is not only illustrated positively by what *Appreciations* includes, but also by the critical journalism not reprinted. All the articles published between 1873 and 1888 and excluded reveal facets of Pater's critical practice and reserve. Certain topics are carefully avoided, such as classical Greek culture and French fiction. Thus, the succession of pieces from 1875 on "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone" (1875), "A Study of Dionysus" (1876), "The Bacchanals of Euripides" (1878), "The Beginnings of Greek Sculpture" (1880), "The Marbles of Aegina" (1880) are not only excluded from *Appreciations*, which in the event is confined to English literature; the Greek essays remain uncollected by Pater, who is aware of the common association among his peers of classical Greece with homosexuality, and aware too of his own vulnerability on this score. These Greek studies, with others, were only collected posthumously.²⁰

Pater's suppression of this material takes on an increased significance, even poignancy, when one notes that in 1889 he republished his treatment of the *revival* of Dionysus in a *French* setting, in the apparently protective guise of fiction, as one of the four *Imaginary Portraits*. Indeed, the whole of that volume suggests that prose fiction for Pater was liberating, and incurred less risk of personal liability. However, the suppression of the classical Greek essays registers the strength of presence of the vociferous moral majority among readers and institutions such as the church, the academy, and the critics; particularly vulnerable, it would appear, are collected prose essays, availing themselves of the authority art offers the ephemera of journalism in the form of printed books. In the light of this, Matthew Arnold's definition of Hellenism, characterized by sweetness and light, may be read, even in its earliest forms, as carefully excluding the homosexual aspect of Greek life while leaving the hearty manliness to Hebraism. This is a delicate distinction, and his advocacy of disinterestedness, most commonly read as an allusion to the affray of journalism and political life, may well exclude covertly this form of engagement in and with Greek life.

Pater's decision to risk the inclusion of "Aesthetic Poetry" in 1889 is of interest in the light of what replaces it in the second edition of *Appreciations* in 1890. Pater chooses a review he published anonymously in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1886 of a French novel, Feuillet's *La Morte*.²¹ The Victorian press shows that readers were kept well-informed through reviews about noteworthy writing of all kinds in Europe and nineteenth-century writing in Britain shows marked familiarity with its European counterparts. However, it is equally true that French fiction, associated with sordidness, moral laxity, and realism had for some time been labelled as unsuitable reading for a major group of novel readers, respectable

women. It would be reassuring to such readers that Pater's review had appeared in *Macmillan's* (had they known it), but significantly its author chooses to publish it anonymously in just such a family magazine. When Pater made his selection of work for *Appreciations*, he may have judged that having restored the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance* (1888), it was safe in 1889 to reprint the entire essay from which it was drawn, but having incurred criticism again, he substitutes in 1890 perhaps wryly this moderate and "approved for the family" review of a French novel.

Pater's fear of castigation was not the result of individual neurosis or simply personal experience. In theological circles and the closely related academic world, the indignation and litigation following the publication of *Essays and Reviews* in 1860 was swift, long-lived, and well-known. In the wider national sphere, while *La Traviata* was performed in London in 1857, the libretto was "unavailable" and the novel banned. Censorship, the tyranny of the majority, was a live issue in the mid-1880s, and fiction associated with light literature and women readers was predictably a prime site of conflict.

If the issue of censorship is implicit in Pater's selection and deselection process, novelists whose work was its victim, such as George Moore and Wilde, protested openly and vociferously. In "A New Censorship of Literature," an article in an evening daily newspaper, the *Pall Mall Gazette* in December 1884, and in a pamphlet *Literature at Nurse* (1885),²² George Moore exposed the refusal of the circulating libraries to stock *A Modern Lover* and subsequently *A Mummer's Wife*; he claimed that the consequential failure of fiction in this position was disastrous for contemporary English literature as well as for the author and publisher of the work refused. In noting that the reaction of the press to the pamphlet was cool, Pierre Coustillas quotes a review in the *Academy*, a journal written by and for men in the universities, which disapprovingly links the realism of George Moore's novels with that of Emile Zola's;²³ in 1888 the septuagenarian Henry Vizetelly, the publisher of Moore's pamphlet, was imprisoned for three months for publication of Zola's *La Terre*. In February 1891 Wilde included a riposte to the critics of his novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in an article he published in the *Fortnightly*, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism"; while his claim there is stylistically emphasized by hyperbole and italics, his contention that "[t]here is not a single poet or prose-writer of this century, for instance, on whom the British public have not solemnly conferred diplomas of immorality,"²⁴ refers to a contemporary climate that all of his *Fortnightly* readers would recognize. When one considers poets and novelists of the nineteenth century, many did attract the charge of immorality: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, and Byron, but also Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte and Emily Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, Moore, Meredith, Hardy, Gissing, William Morris, D. G. Rossetti, and Swinburne.

Pater's careful behind-the-scenes regulation of what should be published on diverse occasions in different discourses, and Moore's and Wilde's explicit interventions to alter public opinion and behaviour provide two models of responses to censorship. The

explorer, editor, and translator Richard Burton provides a third. He withdraws the potential object of controversy from the public domain by publishing for private subscribers; and in order to protect himself and his associates from charges under the Obscene Publications Act of 1857, he invents a false Indian company under whose imprint he publishes his edition of *The Book of a Thousand Nights and a Night* in 1885.²⁵ His edition of the *Arabian Nights* is copiously annotated, and its long "Terminal Essay" is largely devoted to the subject of pederasty; undoubtedly learned, the project is bound up with exploration and the anthropology of the period, and detailed sexual erotica is presented in the notes under the guise of the interest of cultural relativism. The two thousand subscribers to the first edition undoubtedly included a majority interested in this material. In the introduction Burton roundly defends this medieval Islamic work from charges of immorality and, contrasting it favourably with modern hypocrisy, identifies a French novel as a genuine purveyor of vice! No doubt he is appealing to his readers' knowledge of another, more familiar literature labelled exotica by the same censorship. But he too is attesting in 1885 to the existence of censorship, and the pressure emanating from its formation, such as the law. He also shows that in 1885 French fiction was still commonly regarded as an object of censorship:

The morale is sound and healthy; and at times we descry, through the voluptuous and libertine picture, vistas of a transcendental morality, the morality of Socrates in Plato. Subtle corruption and covert licentiousness are utterly absent; we find more real "vice" in many a short French roman, say *La Dame aux Camélias*, and in not a few English novels of our own day than in the thousands of pages of the Arab. Here we have nothing of that most immodest modern modesty which sees covert implication where nothing is implied, and "improper" allusion when propriety is not outraged; nor do we meet with the Nineteenth Century refinement: innocence of the word not the thought; morality of the tongue not of the heart, and the sincere homage paid to virtue in guise of perfect hypocrisy.²⁶

We should therefore not be surprised that besides work on Greek culture, Pater does not select any of the four reviews of French fiction for *Appreciations* in 1889. He also leaves out a number of anonymous reviews of the work of friends which appeared in periodicals such as the *Oxford Magazine*, and newspapers such as the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Guardian*, reviews which seem to derive primarily from their function of the anonymous puff, as their authority would undoubtedly diminish were their authorship to be acknowledged. But there is also the factor of where the reviews appeared: these periodicals and newspapers lack the status of periodicals from which the selected articles originate. In particular, the newspapers in the 1880s and 1890s are identified with the vulgar mass medium, the "new journalism" and the non-professional man of letters at leisure to write the amusing or learned paper within the domain of letters.

Unlike Arnold and Wilde, Pater does not resort habitually to the latitude offered by the

Nineteenth Century, making only four contributions to it in his lifetime, two book reviews in the late 1880s and two papers on the great French churches in 1894. Both of the reviews were not only signed but understood to be entirely the reviewer's work, with the initiation of the review and the choice of book his. The first of Pater's reviews of Noticeable Books appeared in April 1889 and treated a French novel; the second, published in December, proved to be Pater's most explicit manifestation of his interest in politics. Pater sees the potential of the space James Knowles offers, but avoids being associated with such a libertine journal. Two other decisions by Pater support this. In the June following the signed Ferdinand Fabre review in April, he reviews another novel by Fabre, but in a different periodical,²⁷ one which is allied to the Anglican church and which permits anonymity; it offers Pater double protection: non-exposure to the reading public, and the respectability of the Church for the many colleagues and critics privy to the authorship of unsigned journalism. That Pater chose an Anglican weekly like the *Guardian* to place a review of French fiction suggests an element of wit as well. Pater's wish in the latter part of his career to identify himself and be identified with religious rather than libertine formations is also indicated by his decision to place essays on Plato and classical Greece in the *Contemporary Review*, the journal whose religious constraints its editor, James Knowles, left to create the unconstrained *Nineteenth Century*. Pater's association with homosexuality and paganism in the 1860s and 1870s, and the popular association by the 1880s of homosexuality with Plato meant that publication of these essays was potentially damaging to Pater. The appearance of such work in the *Contemporary Review* might forestall adverse response. The only other essay Pater placed in the periodicals before the publication of *Plato and Platonism* in February 1893, "A Chapter on Plato," appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*,²⁸ another journal calculated to attest to the respectability of the material.

The last category of significant omissions from *Appreciations* is politically topical material, in particular two essays which deal with the question of English literature and English in the university syllabus, which appeared in the *Guardian* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*.²⁹ These may be thought too slight for inclusion, but fused in the way Pater constructed the essay on Coleridge, a suitable piece might have resulted, but for a different book. These pieces have no place in a collection of appreciations which identifies itself in its title as an aesthetic project pertaining to high culture. The contemporary debate about English is ruled out.

Pater's publishing tactic to avoid unwelcome exposure is well illustrated by his intervention in the debate following the appearance of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* complete in one issue in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* in July 1890. Ward, Lock & Co. published an expanded version the following April, incorporating a preface of epigrams which Wilde published in March in the *Fortnightly*, no doubt as a trailer for the novel. He followed it up with *Intentions* in May. Yet the bulk of the reviews of *Dorian Gray*, and Wilde's public response to them in letters to the press and in his essay "The Soul of Man

under Socialism" which appeared in the *Fortnightly* in February 1891 were reviews of the periodical version, so sensational was the novel. A friend and former teacher of Wilde, Pater had been sent the novel in manuscript by Wilde for comment. We might expect that Pater would have been one of the supportive reviewers. Certainly, Wilde himself might have such an expectation, as he had produced at Pater's delicate request³⁰ a highly appreciative review of *Appreciations* in the *Speaker* just ten weeks before *Dorian Gray* first appeared; its last paragraph concluded:

But in Mr. Pater, as in Cardinal Newman, we find the union of personality with perfection. He has no rival in his own sphere, and he has escaped disciples. And this, not because he has not been imitated, but because in art so fine as his there is something that, in its essence, is inimitable.³¹

More praise for Pater was incorporated by Wilde in the novel itself as published in July 1890 and in *Intentions* which appeared in May 1891. The significance of this sequence is that, although requested by Frank Harris to write a review for the *Fortnightly*,³² Pater did not review the novel when it first appeared, when his favourable view might have been of value to Wilde.³³ Nor did Pater review it promptly when it appeared in volume form in April, or after *Intentions* was published in May. Only in November, seventeen months late, did Pater publish a review.³⁴ However, few reviews of Wilde's novel *were* published, and Pater's reticence was unquestionably shared by other critics.

The debates of Pater, Arnold, and Wilde on the nature of the subject of literary discourse are implicated in the wider contemporary discussion of the institutional role of literature: whether the classical model was to continue to prevail with its constituent validated literary forms, or whether the subject was to be defined so as to have its roots in the vernacular and its indigenous form: "The future of poetry is immense," Arnold proclaims at the opening of "The Study of Poetry."³⁵ Wilde and Pater demur: "Imaginative prose," Pater declares in "Style," "being the special art of the modern world,"³⁶ and the *decay* of lying of more concern to Wilde than Arnold's search for truth. If the ideological alliances are clear, their material forms show that Arnold and Pater share a periodical discourse and a publisher which are repudiated by and repudiate Wilde. The positions of the three critics on the late Victorian spectrum of gender and discourse of gender figure significantly in the equation. Self-censorship as well as external censorship is evident. This examination of a cluster of critical writing in the late nineteenth century reveals the process of authorial management of publication and the construction by authors of themselves as critics. In the interplay of debate and cultural formations, details of the relationship between the history of periodical and book publication, and kinds of discourse emerge. Insofar as the construction of the twentieth-century canon has marginalized Wilde's interventions, it reproduces the effect of Victorian publishers, publications, and critics.

