CHAPTER 5

The 'Postscript'

Ross Wilson

Appreciations, as is well known, gathers a number of essays that Pater had already published. The 'Postscript' both is and, in some notable respects, is not the reissue of an essay already published elsewhere. It is, because Pater had published 'Romanticism' in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1876 and the 'Postscript' substantially reprises this text. However, there are significant changes – both omissions and additions – as well. (It is striking, incidentally, that in his positive review of *Appreciations* for the *Glasgow Herald*, William Sharp identifies the essay on 'Aesthetic Poetry', replaced in subsequent editions, and the 'Postscript' as 'two suggestive new papers'; both, in fact, had been published in earlier versions before.[1]) In the 'Postscript', for instance, the references to Whitman and Baudelaire that are present in 'Romanticism' are excised and, lest these excisions suggest that Pater was backing away from controversy in the process of revision, a polemical final paragraph is added. At least as significant as these particular emendations is, however, the change of title itself, from 'Romanticism' to 'Postscript'. It is worth noting here that 'Romanticism' was already a significant title, since the essay in fact addresses romanticism *and classicism*, and the dialectical relation between the two. It is tempting to speculate that 'Romanticism' designates what was for Pater the dominant artistic tendency, or the one with which his sympathies reside, or that which stands, in 1876, most in need of defence. The question of Pater's estimation of romanticism is, needless to say, central to this chapter. But the point to emphasise here is that 'Romanticism' is not the title granted this essay (even allowing for the revisions Pater made to it) in *Appreciations*. Indeed, the focus on Pater as a gifted essayist, which has gained considerable impetus from the recent resurgence of interest in the essay as form, runs the risk of deflecting from the fact that much of his work took different forms: there is the novel, of course, and the 'imaginary portrait', but also the lecture and the review, neither of which are straightforwardly subsumable under the omnivorous category of the essay. 'Romanticism'

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does not appear in *Appreciations* as a merely retitled essay, then, but rather as a text cast in a new and distinctive form: postscripts, that is, are a particular kind of paratext, one that marks the threshold through which the reader makes their exit from the reading of a text at the end of which they have arrived. As such, the relation of a postscript to the texts – the script – it comes after is one not simply of addition, but of reflection and commentary. Given the concern of Pater's *Appreciations* 'Postscript' with questions of before, after, and what exceeds the demarcations of before and after in the course of literary history, this placement and designation is especially noteworthy; its placement at the end – or, even, after the end – of the volume provokes a heightened consciousness of the reader's situation as they finish their reading of *Appreciations* and are thus poised to go on to other reading or, indeed, to other kinds of activity altogether on which reading (and the reading of *Appreciations* in particular) may be hoped to have some bearing. It is the consciousness of this situation that issues in Pater's addition of a final paragraph to the 'Postscript' of which there is no trace in 'Romanticism'. I consider this important addition in more detail at the conclusion to this chapter.

The 'Postscript', therefore, occupies a peculiar place in relation to the other essays in *Appreciations* and, indeed, in relation to its own forebear in print, namely, the *Macmillan's* 'Romanticism'. The peculiarities of the 'Postscript', its marginal (by which I do not at all mean insignificant or unrelated) status with respect to the other essays in *Appreciations*, are detectable in its content as well as in the form by which Pater designates it. A chapter addressing Pater's conception of the relation between classicism and romanticism in a collection on Pater and English studies, for instance, needs to confront the fact that Pater's sense of romanticism (and of classicism as well, for that matter) does not seem especially English. This is by no means a problem for contemporary readers of Pater, for whom Pater's cosmopolitan conception of literary tradition is cause for admiration, although it was a problem, as we shall see, for some of Pater's contemporaries; and it is also the case, of course, that other essays in *Appreciations*, most notably the essay on 'Style', take their bearings from literary traditions from beyond English shores. The point to emphasise here, though, is that any Paterian conception of 'English studies' must be provisional, capacious, and internally differentiated. To be sure, after the opening essay on 'Style' – which, like the 'Postscript', both titularly eschews the focus on one authorship and is marked as paratextual with relation to the other texts in *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style* – the first three essays of *Appreciations* deal with Wordsworth, Coleridge, and

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Lamb – all English. In the 'Postscript' itself, Pater adduces Scott as a lover of 'strange adventure' which he 'sought . . . in the Middle Age', as well as Emily Brontë, 'a more really characteristic fruit' borne by 'the spirit of romanticism', the chief characters of whose *Wuthering Heights* are 'figures so passionate, yet woven on a background of delicately beautiful, moorland scenery' (*App*., 242). As noted above, in the *Macmillan's* essay, Pater had also cited Whitman as an example of the extremity of curiosity into which romanticism may sometimes run, although this example was excised from the 'Postscript'.[2] Yet it is not just Scott's Scottishness nor Whitman's Americanness, nor even Pater's reminder that Brontë belonged to a distinctly non-metropolitan 'Yorkshire village', that foster the sense that Pater's romanticism may be more than English. It is in France, we are told, that 'the romantic movement . . . bore its most characteristic fruits', a point he emphasises again slightly later: 'But neither Germany, with its Goethe and Tieck, nor England, with its Byron and Scott, is nearly so representative of the romantic temper as France, with Murger, and Gautier, and Victor Hugo. It is in French literature that its most characteristic expression is to be found' (*App*., 243, 249).

What is it that motivates Pater's turn to, and defence of, French romanticism – or, specifically, romanticism as French? The volume's Frenchness was certainly remarked by its original reviewers. Arthur Symons, for instance, noted that 'Appreciations' is 'a word occurring very often in the essays, and used, evidently, in the sense of the French *appréciation*, a weighing, a valuing, more even than in the general English sense of valuing highly'.[3] Symons's 'more even' subtly complicates the suggestion that the French mode of appreciation simply entails a refusal to value, an abdication of praise, and hints in its ampliative reach that 'a weighing, a valuing' involves, in fact, a more capacious and expansive method than merely making a dash for the heights. Symons goes on to extol Pater's 'sympathy' – a term, this time, with Greek roots and many European cousins – noting in particular 'a remarkable breadth and catholicity' discernible, especially, in the essay on 'Style' and the 'Postscript', which Symons, notably, takes together.[4]

Needless to say, not all contemporary readers of *Appreciations* were quite so appreciative of Pater's debts to France. Like Symons, C.L. Graves noticed the linguistic origins of the book's title, although for Graves, however, 'the effort to acclimatise a Gallicism smacks of affectation' (the Germanic 'smacks' is aptly pugnacious);[5] and Mrs Oliphant complained of the 'Postscript' in particular that '[i]t is rather terrible to meet with this old classical and romantic business in the discussion of English literature.

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We have had, Heaven knows, enough of it in French to bewilder anyone's brain', before she went on to protest more generally 'against a foreign model which is altogether out of the question as affording any rule for us'.[6] The national exceptionalism in the fields of language and literature – and, by implication, in life in general, to which language and literature give expression – expressed in response to Pater was precisely what Pater had himself been responding to, both in the 'Romanticism' essay and in the placement of a version of this text as the 'Postscript' to his *appréciations* of English texts. 'Romanticism', that is, had responded to a series of decided accounts of modern romantic literature by, above all, W.J. Courthope and John Ruskin. In his account of this context for Pater's essay, Kenneth Daley has emphasised in particular the importance of Ruskin's lecture on 'Franchise', one of the lectures in the latter's *Val d'Arno* series that, Daley suggests, Pater is likely to have heard in Oxford in 1873. I will turn to 'Franchise' in a moment, but first it is worth briefly examining the place of France in Courthope's interventions in the romanticism debate in two essays of the mid-1870s. 'Though much behind the French in polish and critical perception,' Courthope concedes, without caring much for what is conceded, 'England has produced a literature more vigorous and original than her neighbour.' The distinction between the merely perceptive French and the productive English is the keynote of Courthope's interventions in this debate, and he goes on to insist that 'all great poetry stimulates to action'. With grim inevitability, English heroes of wars with the French are Courthope's favourite exemplars of the stimulating power of poetry:

> Marlborough avowed that he knew no history but what he learnt from Shakespeare. And what a depth of meaning lies in the pathetic anecdote of Wolfe, who, as he was being rowed towards the Heights of Abraham, repeated Gray's 'Elegy' to his companions, exclaiming at the conclusion that he would rather have been the author of the poem than be the victor in the approaching battle![7]

Instead of being a victorious British general, Wolfe would rather have written a poem: hardly the emphatic proof of poetry's stimulation to action Courthope imagines. Yet needless to say, Wolfe turned out in fact to be the victor on the Heights of Abraham, and this favourite anecdote was again in Courthope's mind when he remarks in a later essay on 'Wordsworth and Gray' that Gray's 'Elegy' 'appeals immediately, and will continue to appeal, to the heart of every Englishman, so long as the care of public liberty and love of the soil maintain their hold in this country'.

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'We feel,' he goes on to say, 'that it is in every way fitting that the author of the "Elegy" should have been the favourite of Wolfe and the countryman of Chatham.'[8] This may appear like so much anti-French patriotic bloviation (because it is), but there is also a serious point at issue here. Courthope's qualification of liberty as '*public* liberty' (emphasis added) is of considerable significance to the arguments that both he and Ruskin advanced against contemporary romanticism. In defending Gray against Wordsworth's depreciation of him, that is, Courthope emphasised that '[t]he real question at issue between the two poets concerns the liberty of the imagination'.[9] Whereas 'Wordsworth and the romanticists' take the liberty of the imagination to be 'absolutely paramount', Gray admits restrictions on imaginative freedom, above all concerning what subjects are (allegedly) appropriate for imaginative treatment, in order to allow to the imagination the greatest degree of '*just* liberty'.[10]

This qualified understanding of liberty is given more historically nuanced expression in Ruskin's 'Franchise'. One gets the sense from Courthope that France as such, and for all time, is the problem, whereas that is far from the case for Ruskin. It is *modern* France – and, indeed, *modern* England – that are at fault:

> France is everlastingly, by birth, name, and nature, the country of the Franks, or free persons; and the first source of European frankness, or franchise. The Latin for franchise is libertas. But the modern or Cockney-English word, liberty,—Mr. John Stuart Mill's,—is not the equivalent of libertas; and the modern or Cockney-French word liberté,—M. Victor Hugo's,—is not the equivalent of franchise.[11]

Anticipating the qualified versions of liberty on which Courthope would insist ('public liberty', '*just* liberty'), Ruskin argues that franchise is governed by law. In this, Frank and Greek are at one, though the laws by which they are governed are nevertheless distinct: that of France is 'the law of love, *restraining* anger', and of Greece, 'the law of justice, and *enforcing* anger' (117). The law of the Franks is one of generosity and boundless munificence; that of the Greeks, judgement and discrimination. Or, alternatively, the law of the Franks is romantic, that of the Greeks, classical (121). It is in invoking these terms that Ruskin shows his hand: 'there is no appeal' from the authority of the classics, whereas 'however brilliant or lovely', the romantic 'remains imperfect, and without authority' (122). Romantic works do have, for Ruskin, the advantage over classical ones, first, that even where they are not fully understood, they give delight, and, second, that they 'fulfil to you, in sight and presence, what the Greek

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could only teach by signs' (122). These are indeed virtues of romanticism, but for Ruskin, modern French romantic writing – exemplified above all by Victor Hugo – suffers both by its difference from Diana Vernon, the character he advances as the embodiment of a dignified romanticism in Scott's *Rob Roy*, and by its similarity with Mill's liberalism. Ruskin ends his lecture on 'Franchise' with a curt disparagement of contemporary French culture: 'And what Diana Vernon is to a French ballerine [*sic*] dancing the Cancan, the "libertas" of Chartres and Westminster is to the "liberty" of M. Victor Hugo and Mr. John Stuart Mill' (126).

It is in response to these characterisations of romanticism – and of France, modernity, and the political valorisation of liberty with which they are inextricably bound up – that Pater wrote 'Romanticism'. His placement of a revised version of that essay after the end of *Appreciations*, moreover, retrospectively casts the entire volume as a riposte to a narrow conception of English culture and insufficiently nuanced conception of the interweaving tendencies of literary history on the ground of English literature itself. First, Pater senses that the compliment Ruskin pays to romanticism in contrast to classicism – that its works give delight even where they are not understood – is back-handed. He seeks to repay it by ascribing a particular affect to classical works:

> beneath all changes of habits and beliefs, our love of that mere abstract proportion—of music—which what is classical in literature possesses, still maintains itself in the best of us, and what pleased our grandparents may at least tranquillise us. The 'classic' comes to us out of the cool and quiet of other times, as the measure of what a long experience has shown will at least never displease us. (*App.*, 245)

The diminuendo here from pleasure, to tranquillisation, to the failure to displease not only makes the point that the mode of reception of classical works goes beyond the manly, no-nonsense faculty of the understanding, but also that their dissociation from feeling may have more to do with the fact that they have simply faded. But it is in defending recent French romantic writing that Pater's response to Ruskin and Courthope is most marked. Having emphasised that romanticism and classicism 'are tendencies really at work at all times in art' and having described how the history of art is thus a perennial balancing act between these tendencies, 'with the balance sometimes a little on one side, sometimes a little on the other', Pater details how romanticism demands 'strangeness' before allowing its 'passionate care for beauty' to be fulfilled (247). It is Hugo who is the chief exemplar of this pattern of strangeness first, then beauty:

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> [Romanticism's] eager, excited spirit will have strength, the grotesque, first of all—the trees shrieking as you tear off the leaves; for Jean Valjean, the long years of convict life; for Redgauntlet, the quicksands of Solway Moss; then, incorporate with this strangeness, and intensified by restraint, as much sweetness, as much beauty, as is compatible with that. *Énergique, frais, et dispos*—these, according to Sainte-Beuve, are the characteristics of a genuine classic—*les ouvrage anciens ne sont pas classiques parce qu'ils sont vieux, mais parce qu'ils sont énergiques, frais, et dispos*. Energy, freshness, intelligent and masterly disposition:—these are characteristics of Victor Hugo when his alchemy is complete, in certain figures, like Marius and Cosette, in certain scenes, like that in the opening of *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, where Déruchette writes the name of *Gilliatt* in the snow, on Christmas morning; but always there is a certain note of strangeness discernible there, as well. (248)

The use of the Ruskinian term 'grotesque', incidentally, warrants attention, since just a few sentences earlier Pater had described 'the grotesque in art' as the result of 'a great overbalance of curiosity'; he then goes on to suggest that 'a trace of distortion, of the grotesque, may perhaps linger, as an additional element of expression' (247), before, in the above passage, taking the 'grotesque' as a synonym for that 'strangeness' that is the very *condition* – not the excess – of romanticism. Grotesquery is thus stripped of its mischievous connotations in order to prepare the way for the defence of Hugo. In contrast both to the activist, indeed, bellicose tradition of English writing advanced by Courthope and to Ruskin's derision of contemporary French writing typified by Hugo, Pater, in Stefano Evangelista's words, is articulating 'a definition and defence of a rich cosmopolitan Romanticism that he sees as a unifying cultural force in nineteenth-century Europe'.[12] Pater, then, defends romantic writing in its modern and French forms against Courthope's ultimately anglophile denunciations and Ruskin's preference for a past world of Gothic franchise. Implicit in this defence, as Daley has noted, is also a sympathy with the liberalism adumbrated by Mill.[13]

Two objections may be raised at this point, and both have to do with the place of romanticism in Pater's conception of the history of art and literature. First, in the above passage, in which he adduces three examples from Victor Hugo, it is in fact with Sainte-Beuve's definition of 'a genuine classic', and not with the romantic work, that Pater is concerned. Second, Evangelista's ascription of a view of romanticism as 'a unifying force in *nineteenth-century* Europe' to Pater may be taken to suggest that Pater views romanticism as belonging to, or, at least, characterising a particular

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historical epoch. In response to the first of these objections, it should be noted that it is a major part of Pater's purpose in the 'Postscript' to undermine the sense that classic and romantic are merely opposed: it is not a matter of assigning work *either* to classicism *or* to romanticism. As Wolfgang Iser and others have emphasised, Pater historicises the relation between classic and romantic – rendering them 'contingent powers', rather than normative concepts – but not (and this is where a response to the second objection raised above is pertinent) in order to affix classic and romantic to particular periods.[14] So even where Pater admits that 'in a limited sense' the romantic spirit 'may be said to be a product of special epochs' (*App*., 250), or that, for instance, '[t]he last century was pre-eminently a classical age, an age in which, for art and literature, the element of a comely order was in the ascendant', the admission is, precisely, limited, and the opposite tendency (classic or romantic) is never simply dormant. 'Yet,' he remarks, in a qualifying gesture typical of his criticism, 'it is in the heart of this century [that is, the eighteenth], of Goldsmith and Stothard, of Watteau and the *Siècle de Louis XIV*.—in one of its central, if not most characteristic figures, in Rousseau—that the modern or French romanticism really originates' (251). It is also typical of Pater's writing that the parenthesis, as well as the repetition of 'in's and 'of's, should have the effect of shifting the ground of his description so that a wider focus is obtained. What is it that Rousseau is meant to be 'most characteristic' of? The eighteenth century? Romanticism? The fact that the answer is 'both' is telling.

In thus acknowledging the characteristics of epochs only within certain bounds, Pater accords individual temperament considerable significance – and indeed, the cultivation of a particular kind of temper, rather than the instilling of identifiable points of view, is a keynote throughout his writing. This accordance of significance to individual temperament was cast as typical of romanticism by T.E. Hulme in his 'Romanticism and Classicism', collected by Herbert Read in the volume he titled *Speculations*, partly in implicit response, no doubt, to Pater's *Appreciations* and Wilde's *Intentions*. Though Hulme nowhere names Pater explicitly, 'Romanticism and Classicism' is thoroughly informed by its reaction against Pater, not least in Hulme's insistence that 'no one, in a matter of judgment of beauty, can take a detached standpoint . . .. Just as physically you are not born that abstract entity, man, but the child of particular parents, so you are in matters of literary judgment'. This reflection on the pre-determined nature of literary judgement is extended to literary creation when Hulme avers (there is a lot of averring in

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'Romanticism and Classicism') that 'many acts which we habitually label free are in reality automatic. It is quite possible for a man to write a book almost automatically'.[15] Hulme's stress on the restricted and conditioned nature of both literary judgement and creation is itself, of course, predicated on a classicalist precept: 'The classical poet never forgets this finiteness, this limit of man.'[16]

In defiance of such a view as Hulme would go on to adumbrate, Pater focuses not only on the fact that figures such as Rousseau and William Blake (someone whose theory and practice of composition was inimical to the automisation of creation) are difficult to situate straightforwardly in their times, but on the fact that their singularity is also, in fact, a profound expression of their times in the fullness of their complexity and in contrast to subsequent simplification of them. It is not that Pater advocates the simple overflowing of limits in the manner Hulme associates with romanticism (as per his famous definition: 'It is like pouring a pot of treacle over the dinner table. Romanticism, then, and this is the best definition I can give of it, is spilt religion'[17]), rather, any given historical epoch is the product or, better, forcefield of countervailing tendencies. 'William Blake, a type of so much which breaks through what are conventionally thought the influences of that century,' writes Pater, 'is still a noticeable phenomenon in it, and the reaction in favour of naturalism in poetry begins in that century, early' (*App*., 257). The ironically belated qualification ('early') in that sentence is a deft touch of Pater's, apt to forestall any attempt to respond to his argument merely by shifting period boundaries: Rousseau and Blake are products of the later eighteenth century, such a response would go, and so we do not have to shift by much our dates for the end of classicism and beginning of romanticism. But Pater eschews the easy option of splitting the difference in this way: the tendencies of romanticism and classicism are not merely opposed, but rather depend upon one another and are thus operative throughout the history of art.

I discussed earlier Pater's defence of French romanticism but it is worth briefly considering at this point a significant German source – one, unlike Goethe, Heine, and others, that is not actually acknowledged in his 'Postscript' – namely, G.W.F. Hegel. In his *Aesthetics*, which Pater knew well, Hegel was himself the author of a consideration of the historical relation between symbolic, classic, and romantic forms of art that cannot simply be mapped on to specifiable historical epochs. Yet it is in fact Hegel's conception of historical process more broadly that is germane to the characterisation of the historical relation between classicism and romanticism in Pater's 'Postscript'. As Anthony Ward shows in his account

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of Pater's thinking, Benjamin Jowett, one of Pater's most influential Oxford contemporaries, developed what would turn out to be an influential summary of Hegel's historical understanding:

> he views all the forms of sense and knowledge as stages of thought which have always existed implicitly and unconsciously, and to which the mind of the world, gradually disengaged from sense, has become awakened. The present has been the past—the succession in time of human ideas is also the eternal 'now'.[18]

While there are holes one could pick in this as an account of Hegel (Jowett's evocation of 'the eternal "now"' is vulnerable to the critique of sense-certainty Hegel develops in *Phenomenology of Spirit*), the Hegelian sense of the continuity of the past in the present and of the perpetual outworking of spirit in history clearly influenced Pater's insistence that 'Romanticism, then, although it has its epochs, is in its essential characteristics rather a spirit which shows itself at all times, in various degrees, in individual workmen and their work, and the amount of which criticism has to estimate in them taken one by one, than the peculiarity of a time or a school' (*App*., 256–7). Moreover, Pater's sense that romanticism departs from classicism, but also 'retain[s] the flavour of what was admirably done in past generations, in the classics' (256), clearly owes something to Hegel's conception of *Aufhebung*, usually translated as 'sublation', according to which one concept or force is both superseded and retained in a subsequent form – although, as a number of commentators have emphasised, Pater does not subscribe to the kind of determinable teleology that *Aufhebung* is sometimes thought to subserve in Hegel's work.[19]

Yet despite his emphasis on the relative historical ubiquity, as it were, of both classical and romantic tendencies, Pater's propensity for reverting to the eighteenth century as an instance of a classical epoch (even in order to complicate such an account) and, likewise, of exemplifying romanticism by recent works may nevertheless create the impression that classicism belongs to the past and romanticism to the present. And insofar as it stands for rebellion against fixed standards, then romanticism would seem to appear secondary. But as soon as we have granted the validity of that appearance, we must acknowledge that, insofar as it stands for the imposition of standards on excess, classicism would also seem to need to follow, rather than lead. In order to focus this question of the priority of classicism or romanticism, and, particularly, of Pater's subtle treatment of it, it is worth paying slightly closer attention to an idiosyncrasy in his handling of a particular, although otherwise unremarkable, term. Early in the

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'Postscript' Pater describes 'the opposition between the classicists and the romanticists—between the adherents, in the culture of beauty, of the principles of liberty, and authority, respectively—of strength, and order or what the Greeks call κοσμιότης' (*App.*, 244). Returning to the same opposition slightly later, he makes the point in a similar way:

> But, however falsely those two tendencies may be opposed by critics, or exaggerated by artists themselves, they are tendencies really at work at all times in art, moulding it, with the balance sometimes a little on one side, sometimes a little on the other, generating, respectively, as the balance inclines on this side or that, two principles, two traditions, in art, and in literature so far as it partakes of the spirit of art. (247)

If we take 'respectively' to mean '[c]onsidered individually or in turn, *and in the order mentioned*' (*OED*, 'respectively', adv., sense 3; emphasis added), then these are both unusual uses of the word, which reveal something important about the way that Pater handles the relation between romanticism and classicism. The mismatch between terms and what they 'respectively' entail is, indeed, crucial to the at once historicising but not periodising understanding of the relation between classic and romantic that Pater is seeking to articulate. His use of 'respectively' is a 'tiny modification of the expected', which are frequent in Pater and arise from his 'constant recourse to the secondary', his 'act of aftering, reappraising'.[20]

While such an 'act of aftering, reappraising' may be generally discernible in Pater's works – and I agree with Angela Leighton's implication that it is one of Pater's strengths, however much it has often been misjudged as a weakness – it is specifically germane to the 'Postscript', which as I emphasised above is at once a revision of an earlier essay, a backward glance on the essays in *Appreciations* after which it comes, and an intimation of what might come now, after the end. Reappraisal, to borrow Leighton's terms, is not the avoidance of appraisal and modification of the expected is not the disappointment of hopes but the transformation of convention, established order, and precedent. These reflections on Pater's affinity with second thoughts are naturally germane to this consideration of the 'Postscript' and perhaps especially to the ending of the 'Postscript', since this is the site of Pater's most significant revision to 'Romanticism' and the moment in the text where he at once conclusively and prospectively points beyond his own discussion to the task of literary and cultural criticism. To be sure, prior to the addition of what is in effect a kind of coda to the 'Postscript' – recourse not so much to the secondary, then, but

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even the tertiary – Pater had considered, in a section of 'Romanticism' reprised in the 'Postscript', the consequences of romanticism for those looking to the future. Attempting, again, to account for the 'appeal' of 'the works of French romanticism' to those who are 'weary of the present, but yearning for the spectacle of beauty and strength', Pater acknowledged that there is 'a certain distortion' in the works of Gautier and Hugo, though such distortion is, paradoxically, 'always combined with perfect literary execution', and mounts, via 'grim humour' and 'ghastly comedy' (*App*., 253), to 'a genuine pathos' (254). He sets out the reason for this as follows:

> for the habit of noting and distinguishing one's own most intimate passages of sentiment makes one sympathetic, begetting, as it must, the power of entering, by all sorts of finer ways, into the intimate recesses of other minds; so that pity is another quality of romanticism, both Victor Hugo and Gautier being great lovers of animals, and charming writers about them, and Murger being unrivalled in the pathos of his *Scènes de la Vie de Jeunesse*. Penetrating so finely into all situations which appeal to pity, above all, into the special or exceptional phases of such feeling, the romantic humour is not afraid of the quaintness or singularity of its circumstances or expression, pity, indeed, being of the essence of humour; so that Victor Hugo does but turn his romanticism into practice, in his hunger and thirst after practical *Justice !*—a justice which shall no longer wrong children, or animals, for instance, by ignoring in a stupid, mere breadth of view, minute facts about them. (254)

The argument is not so much for the temperance of justice by mercy, though that is in the background, but is aimed instead at justifying a dissatisfaction with the merely formal administration of justice understood as the maintenance and application of established standards. Romanticism's regard for 'quaintness or singularity', for what lies beyond the purview of precedent, for what, indeed, is systematically excluded from consideration, is necessary to the functioning of any justice worthy of the name. Though it may be alleged that the 'practice' into which Hugo turns his romanticism is not action itself, but rather 'his hunger and thirst after practical *Justice !*', and hence that his practice is a thirst for practice, Pater can hardly be convicted of avoiding the articulation of a positive ethics that inheres in the just treatment of conventionally ignored beings with whom readers of Murger, Hugo, and, now, Pater share the world.

Where Pater's attempt to derive an ethics of justice from Murger and Hugo depends fundamentally on knowledge – on, that is, ceasing to ignore 'minute facts' about downtrodden and neglected occupants of the world – the newly written coda to the 'Postscript' begins by emphasising

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the need for the organisation of what we already know. This, strikingly, may appear to give expression to a distinctly classical emphasis on order – 'For the literary art, at all events, the problem just now is, to induce order upon the contorted, proportionless accumulation of our knowledge and experience' (*App.*, 260) – though it is perhaps also worth noting its affinity with Percy Shelley's assertion, made as near to the beginning of the nineteenth century as Pater stood to its end, that '[w]e have more moral, political and historical wisdom, than we know how to reduce into practise; we have more scientific and œconomical knowledge than can be accommodated to the just distribution of the produce which it multiplies'.[21] Pater's concern in *Appreciations* may appear literarily inward – not just in its concern with literary writers but in its cultivation of a particular literary style for criticism of them. And the 'Postscript', in its treatment of the relation between presiding subdivisions of literature, may appear particularly so. But its concern is, in fact, with the relation of artistic practice to 'knowledge and experience', which, as the reflections on Murger and Hugo demonstrate, ought to serve as the foundations of justice. 'Romanticism' had ended with a fairly tepid, if unimpeachable summary of the essay's argument: 'But explain the terms as we will, in application to particular epochs, there are these two elements always recognisable; united in perfect art, in Sophocles, in Dante, in the highest work of Goethe, though not always absolutely balanced there; and these two elements may be not inappropriately termed the classical and romantic tendencies.'[22] But it is here, at the end of *Appreciations* as the volume necessarily begins to give way to what is beyond it, that Pater looks determinedly outside literature to that which it may affect, to what it may 'induce order upon'. 'For, in truth,' Pater concludes the 'Postscript' and so *Appreciations* as a whole, 'the legitimate contention is, not of one age or school of literary art against another, but of all successive schools alike, against the stupidity which is dead to the substance, and the vulgarity which is dead to form' (261). Stupidity and vulgarity are not offences against taste, merely, but against justice, and it is the calling of all literary art to contend against them.

Notes

1 William Sharp, unsigned review, *Glasgow Herald* (28 November 1889), 9; repr. in *Critical Heritage*, 195–8 (196).
2 'Romanticism', *Macmillan's Magazine* 35 (November 1876), 64–70 (66).
3 Symons, unsigned review, *Athenaeum* (14 December 1889), 813–14; repr. in *Critical Heritage*, 201–4 (201).

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4 Symons, unsigned review, 203.
5 Graves, unsigned review, *Spectator* (21 December 1889), 887–8; repr. in *Critical Heritage*, 209–14 (211).
6 Mrs Oliphant, unsigned review, *Blackwoods Magazine* 147 (1890), 140–5; repr. in *Critical Heritage*, 214–19 (218).
7 [W.J. Courthope], 'Modern Culture', *Quarterly Review* 137 (October 1874), 389–415 (403–4).
8 [W.J. Courthope], 'Wordsworth and Gray', *Quarterly Review* 141 (January 1876), 104–36 (110–13).
9 Courthope, 'Wordsworth and Gray', 128.
10 Courthope, 'Wordsworth and Gray' 128 (Courthope's emphasis).
11 Ruskin, Lecture VIII: 'Franchise', *Val d'Arno* (delivered 1873, first publ. 1874), in *The Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols (1903–12), xxiii (1906), 116. Further references to this lecture are given in parentheses in the text.
12 Stefano Evangelista, 'Rome and the Romantic Heritage in Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*' in *Romans and Romantics*, ed. Timothy Saunders and others (Oxford 2012), 305–26 (310).
13 Kenneth Daley, *The Rescue of Romanticism: Walter Pater and John Ruskin* (Columbus, OH 2001), 129. On Mill's and Pater's liberalisms, see David Russell, *Tact: Aesthetic Liberalism and the Essay Form in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Princeton, NJ 2018), especially 113 and 117–19.
14 Wolfgang Iser, *Walter Pater: Die Autonomie des Ästhetischen* (Tübingen 1960), 93.
15 T.E. Hulme, 'Romanticism and Classicism', in *Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. Herbert Read (1924; repr. 1971), 111–40 (123).
16 Hulme, 'Romanticism and Classicism', 120.
17 Hulme, 'Romanticism and Classicism', 118.
18 Benjamin Jowett, introduction to *The Sophist*, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, 3rd edn, 5 vols (Oxford 1892), iv. 405; see Anthony Ward, *Walter Pater: The Idea in Nature* (1966), ch. 3 ('Hegel').
19 See, for example, Giles Whiteley, *Aestheticism and the Philosophy of Death: Walter Pater and Post-Hegelianism* (2010), especially 151–2.
20 Angela Leighton, 'Walter Pater's Dream Rhythms', in *Thinking Through Style: Non-Fiction Prose of the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Michael D. Hurley and Marcus Waithe (Oxford 2018), 217–29 (219).
21 Shelley, 'A Defence of Poetry' (written 1821; published 1840), in *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, 2nd edn, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Fraistat (New York 2002), 509–35 (530).
22 Pater, 'Romanticism', 70.

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