

Worldwide Pre-Raphaelitism, edited by Thomas J. Tobin; pp. xi + 326. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004, \$65.00.

There are many dimensions to this collection of essays. As promised by its title, this volume delivers a series of multinational perspectives on Pre-Raphaelitism and the movement's shaping influence on the cultures of the British colonies, continental Europe, and North America. Additionally, as Thomas J. Tobin notes in his introduction, the essays are "informed by feminism, cultural studies, postcolonialism, deconstruction, socialism, Orientalism, medieval textuality, and legal scholarship" (1). The resulting relationships are strikingly multidimensional; meaning is not only layered in these essays, but also emerges from a diverse array of intersecting horizontal and vertical perspectives.

Four of the essays deal with colonialism in its various manifestations: Francesca Altman writes about W. H. Hunt in Palestine, Margaret Stetz about the art critic Gertrude Hudson in India, Juliette Peers about Pre-Raphaelitism in colonial Australia, and David Latham about Pre-Raphaelitism in Canada. Taken together, these essays prove that the sun never did set on the British Empire. Continental Europe is represented by Tatjana Jukic's essay on Pre-Raphaelitism in Croatia, Éva Péteri's on Pre-Raphaelitism in Hungary, and Susan P. Casteras's on "Symbolist Debts to Pre-Raphaelitism" over a wide expanse of Continental Europe. Reversing direction, Beatrice Laurent writes of the formative influence of the medieval and early Renaissance European paintings that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood saw in 1849. The United States figures through Paul Hardwick's discussion of Morris, medievalism, and Christian Socialism in America, and through Sarah Wooton's tracing of Keats's poetry as a thread in both English and American Pre-Raphaelitism.

Among the accomplishments of Casteras's "Symbolist Debts to Pre-Raphaelitism: A Pan-European Phenomenon" is its convincing demonstration of the importance to the Symbolists of Edward Burne-Jones's and D. G. Rossetti's female figures, and of John Everett Millais's *Eve of St. Agnes* (1863) as well. Millais's painting was exhibited at the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1867, and subsequently acquired an "almost cult-like stature" (121); Rimbaud and Verlaine saw it in London in 1872 and 1873, and J. K. Huysmans cited it in *A Rebours* (1884). Thus "the literary appeal to the Symbolist poets was clearly established, along with the suggestive metaphors they created for the hypnotic beauty and power of women" (121). The wide embrace of Casteras's essay further establishes the presence of the Pre-Raphaelites (or their techniques and themes) in not only France and Belgium, but in the rest of Europe as well. This was less a cause-and-effect relationship than a combining: Casteras argues that "overall, it was the image of the fin-de-siècle female that united these diverse individuals and groups, all of whom recast their own visions of dreamy Burne-Jonesian and Rossettian feminine icons" (119).

The title of Florence Boos's "William Morris's Later Writings and the Socialist Modernism of Lewis Grassie Gibbon" refers to the pseudonym of the Scotsman James Leslie Mitchell, and Boos sees affinity between Morris's writing in the 1890s and Gibbon's 1930s trilogy, *A Scots Quair* (1932-35). She cites Gibbon's intellectual commitment to "diffusionism," which held "that humans had originally lived in free and genuinely egalitarian communal societies, a state of secular grace" (148). Morris shared this view. The late prose romances *The House of the Wolfings* (1889) and *The Roots of the Mountains* (1890), for example, depict Germanic tribes as exhibiting these qualities: we see them, strengthened by egalitarianism, fending off both Romans and barbarians. And by affiliating Morris's work in the 1890s with Gibbon's later novels, Boos validates her own incontestable assertion that recently there has been "a partial reassimilation of Victorian and early-twentieth-century writers" (145).

Stetz's "Pre-Raphaelitism's Farewell Tour: 'Israfil' [Gertrude Hudson] Goes to India" deftly intertwines women's emergence in the aesthetic movement with the unequivocal theme of British imperialism in India. As an art critic, Hudson was one of the women who, in words Stetz quotes from Talia Schaffer's *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes* (2000), used masculine pseudonyms "as a release 'from the particular culture and expectations of women writers'" (174). Visiting India, Hudson admired (as did Morris) Indian patterns and architecture.

Invoking Hudson's *Ivory, Apes, and Peacocks* (1899), Stetz enables us to see India through Hudson's eyes. They are the eyes of a critic particularly sensitive to color, and while Hudson is not always complimentary to Indians' use of it, she is never condescending. Her career suggests that "some British women . . . used imperialism as a way to develop a legitimate aesthetic space for themselves, especially in the male-dominated world of Victorian art criticism" (182)—a reminder that history does not always oblige us with simplistic support for our retrospective view of the past.

Latham, in "'Count Us But Clay For Them to Fashion': Pre-Raphaelite Refashioning in Canada," provides a multiperspectival assessment of Canadian culture. Noting Pre-Raphaelite themes and techniques in Canadian painting, he provides a reading of Canadian history from the perspective of Franz Fanon's "On National Culture," in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). In answer to the question of how a colony may respond to an occupying power's cultural nationalism, Latham cites the Pre-Raphaelite-inspired *The Death of Elaine* (1877), by Homer Watson (dubbed "the Canadian John Constable" by Oscar Wilde [255]). This painting exemplifies "Fanon's first phase of colonial literatures, wherein the 'native intellectual gives proof that he has assimilated the culture of the occupying power'" (255). Latham also writes about the poet-printer James Macdonald, whose "A Word to Us All" (1900), urges Canada to stay out of the Boer War. With pen and ink, Macdonald presents his poem as a page startlingly similar to one of the Kelmscott Press, and Latham argues that the poet's treatment of text and lettering "exemplifies a halfway stage that Fanon would identify as . . . within the second phase of the colonized consciousness, when the native intellectual shuns the imperial culture as a swamp that threatens [in Macdonald's words] to 'suck him down'" (257).

But Latham primarily focuses on the writers Francis Sherman (the essay's title is a line from Sherman's 1897 poem "A Word from Canada") and Phillips Thompson. Exemplifying two different dimensions of Pre-Raphaelite cultural exchange in Canada (Sherman, the transatlantic, and Thompson, the transborder), both were heavily influenced by Morris's aesthetic and political radicalism. And as "transborder exchanges with the growing imperial power south of the Canadian border shifted the site of contention from cultural importation to U.S. assimilation" (264-65), both responded to the increasing cultural pressure for Canadian intellectuals to develop what Fanon called a "native intellectual" who could "shake the people" and produce a national literature (265). Latham's examination underscores the fact that nineteenth-century Toronto was a center for bohemian literature and revolt—an idea that may well be unfamiliar to some Americans south of the Canadian border—and he sets Thompson's *The Politics of Labor* (1887) in this context.

Latham wishes "to avoid suggesting a smooth progression from colony to nation," arguing instead "that Canadians have undergone a pendular swing from one empire to another" (273). The path to autonomy was blocked by the Modernists, "who disliked the provincialism of a 'native' or national culture" (273), and instead favored the attempt to create an extra-national "pure poetry" along with their peers in Britain and the United States. Thus, for Latham, Canada misplaced its heritage of "the subversive efforts inspired by the Pre-Raphaelites in the 1880s and 1890s to establish a national cultural community no longer dependent on a foreign center" (274). But Latham knows there is no going backward and so ends with a question: is Canada "now a more politicized post-

colonial community or merely another assimilated segment of the Coca-Colonized global village" (274)?

With this question in view, one might ask, should the debate be shifted to the consequences of globalization for all of us? We might ask, too, whether the aim of this book—to present Pre-Raphaelitism as a worldwide phenomenon—doesn't owe something to globalization. The discoveries of a "worldwide" art phenomenon and of "globalization" share an historical moment, and Tobin's collection reflects the current trend to identify the exported presence of English nineteenth-century figures and movements in as many nations or cultures as is both possible and plausible.

As for Latham's concern, globalization challenges not only the desired heritage in Canada of a Pre-Raphaelitism that might have inspired a politicized postcolonial community, but the notion of art as universally conceived. Does art have an irreducible degree of autonomy as the aesthetic movement, approvingly cited in several of the essays, suggested; or must it wait for the sorting out of the consequences of globalization before it can know itself again? One thing is certain. Either as a product of globalization, its energies possibly coopted, or as a future post-globalization rebirth, art will be very different not only from the Pre-Raphaelite heritage described here, but also from much else that now claims a place under the rubric that art provides.

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