



***The Eighth Lamp: Ruskin Studies Today***

***No 3 2009***

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Edited by

Anuradha Chatterjee and Carmen Casaliggi

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## EDITORIAL

The Volume 2 Issue 1 of *The Eighth Lamp: Ruskin Studies Today* is finally online. The journal is shaping up as we hoped, as it is simultaneously a platform for sharing information and generating content. The journal is advertised in Taylor & Francis's *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/journal.asp?issn=0890-5495&linktype=9>). Ruskin scholars continue to support emerging yet serious scholarship by contributing their valuable time towards refereeing of papers, and in this issue, we would like to thank Dr Anita Grants (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada) and Dr Jed Mayer (Assistant Professor, State University of New York – New Platz) for their time and effort.

Six international conferences in 2008 address the nineteenth century and Ruskin, of which two are devoted solely to Ruskin. 2009 opens with a two day conference John Ruskin's posterity: Ruskinian legacy through literature and art writings in June which is organized by Maison de la Recherche, Salle des colloques, Université de Lille 3. However, while 2008 was the year of major conferences on Ruskin, 2009 is the year of key publications. I am referring to Anselm Heinrich, Kate Newey and Jeffrey Richards's *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture* (Palgrave); Rachel Dickinson's *John Ruskin's correspondence with Joan Severn: sense and nonsense letters* (MHRA); and Robert Hewison's *Ruskin on Venice: 'The Paradise of Cities'* (Yale University Press, expected October). We hope to feature reviews of these publications in the forthcoming issues.

In this issue, we have had the opportunity to review Cynthia Gamble's *John Ruskin, Henry James and the Shropshire Lads* (2008), and we thank Professor Francis O'Gorman for providing a personal, knowledgeable, and generous evaluation of the book. Dr Mark Frost (Centre for European and International Studies Research, University of Portsmouth) has written an insightful and well researched paper titled "The Organic Impulse: Ruskin, trees, architecture, and society (1843-60)". This paper explores the centrality of the allegory of trees in Ruskin's writings, and it concludes that trees "acted as a multivalent analogy for creative process, so that the organic impulse Ruskin described in his work on trees extended to all of his discourses". The section on creative scholarship features an excerpt from a novel in progress by Octavia Randolph. The working title is *Ruskin: A Novel*. Octavia specializes in historical fiction and she is a member of the William Morris Society, the Pre-Raphaelite Society, The Society of Architectural Historians, the Bibliographic Society, and the Authors Guild. The novel begins in the final decade of Ruskin's life, when insanity, which had plagued him periodically for decades, has confined him to his Cumbrian home, Brantwood. Subsequent chapters will deal with some of the major episodes of Ruskin's long and eventful life. The novel is organized in a reverse chronological order, bringing the reader at the end of the book to the dawn of Ruskin's brilliant and vigorous career.

In the forthcoming issue, we hope to feature reviews of Yvonne Markowitz and Elyse Zorn Karlin, *Imperishable Beauty: Art Nouveau Jewelry* (Lund Humphries, 2008) and Jason Camlot (*Style and the Nineteenth-Century British Critic: Sincere Mannerisms* (Ashgate, 2008). We will also feature a refereed paper by our deputy editor Dr Carmen Casaliggi titled "A Study of 'Water Beauty'." We would like to feature a review of the

Ruskin, Venice, and 19th Century Cultural Travel conference and we are currently inviting expressions of interest. In terms of creative scholarship, we have made two discoveries. One is Grace Andreacchi, a US born author known for her blend of poetic language and modernism with a post-modernist sensibility (Wikipedia). Andreacchi is active as a novelist, poet and playwright and she has written *Sesame and Roses* (<http://sites.google.com/site/graceandreacchi/short-fiction-index/sesame-and-roses>), a short story that explores Ruskin's preoccupation with Rose La Touche and Venice. We have invited her to contribute to the creative section of our journal. Another intriguing discovery has been Alain Bruner. Alain is an architect working in Paris. His final year thesis at Victoria University of Wellington (2007, School of Architecture) involved a contextual interpretation of Ruskin's Seven Lamps, in order to resurrect the New Zealand Institute of Architects (which unknowingly sports the Lamps inside a banner of its logo). His project was awarded the national student prize. In the forthcoming issues, we will be able to bring you a glimpse into architectural manifestations of Ruskin's teachings.

We hope you enjoy this issue and we look forward to bringing you the next one.

Dr Anuradha Chatterjee (Editor)

Sessional Academic, University of New South Wales, Australia

and

Dr Carmen Casaliggi (Deputy Editor) Lecturer in English, School of Education, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Content: The Oscholars has expanded its coverage to 1) report research, publications, and events related to John Ruskin 2) publish papers, book reviews, creative essays, and art works by scholars interested in the teachings of Ruskin. Please email [architecturalhistorytheory@gmail.com](mailto:architecturalhistorytheory@gmail.com) to send in your entries.

Scope: The Eighth Lamp has two key aspects. Firstly, its coverage is intended to be multidisciplinary. This is crucial especially since Ruskin was a polymath, well versed in a number of subjects. Hence, we welcome submissions related to art, religion, historiography, social criticism, tourism, economics, philosophy, science, architecture, photography, preservation, cinema, and theatre. Secondly, this section does not aim to have an exclusive focus on Ruskin. It hopes to generate a greater understanding of Ruskin's relation to his fellow Victorians as well as his influence on fin-de-siècle arts and literature.

Approach: The Eighth Lamp is particularly interested in new perspectives on Ruskin. In other words, it places emphasis on showcasing new historical evidence as well as critical interpretations that challenge the narrow label of the 'Victorian'. Therefore, it seeks to foster postmodern readings of Ruskin's thought in terms of subjectivity, identity, subversion, and feminism. Furthermore, this section seeks to investigate the specific nature of modernity in the nineteenth century by studying Ruskin. Hence, the focus is on newness and innovation in visuality; critical frameworks for interpreting art; dress reform; architectural documentation; literary genres as evidenced in Ruskin's work.

## ABSTRACTS

Stuart Eagles. *Political Ruskin: the influence of Ruskin's political ideas and social experiments in Britain circa 1870 – 1920*. PhD Diss., Oxford University, 2008.

This thesis argues that the influence of Ruskin's political ideas and social experiments in Britain circa 1870 to 1920 inspired a wide range of individuals, gathered in a number of key institutions, to engage in social action designed to ameliorate the worst excesses of industrial capitalism. These progressive political thinkers and social activists shared a conscious indebtedness to Ruskin, not merely a coincidental affinity of ideas. Ruskin paradoxically considered himself 'a violent Tory of the old school' and yet also a 'communist'. He often disparaged attempts to alleviate conditions in the cities, yet he financed the pioneering early housing experiments of Octavia Hill in London, and established a museum for working men in Sheffield.

Difficult to categorise politically, Ruskin nevertheless challenged his contemporaries to see the ugliness and corruption of Victorian society, and to reject the hypocrisy of the utilitarian philosophy of political economy which underpinned it. Many of the ideas which had proved controversial to Ruskin's exact contemporaries became, for a younger generation, not merely accepted, but inspirational. Whilst Ruskin's utopianist Guild of St. George failed to achieve any lasting changes, its significance lies in embodying his social challenge. It was an extension of his personality. On a very small scale, it served both to help educate the workman, to recultivate land and to revive traditional crafts.

Ruskin's teaching of Oxford undergraduates, and in particular the Hinksey road-diggings he encouraged some of them to engage with, helped to inspire many of the key participants in the foundation and running of the university settlements movement. Others, including clergymen, nonconformist ministers, lawyers, academics, and middle-class spinsters and housewives, collected together in reading guilds and societies to study and to promote Ruskin's work. Many helped to effect local civic reforms and the organisations themselves were part of a social network engaged in national political debate.

Many of the pioneers of the nascent Labour movement cite the pivotal role of Ruskin's writings in the development of their own political consciousnesses, attracted by his originality and his exposure of social and economic injustices. Separately, these different aspects of Ruskin's influence contributed to the broad progressive consensus of the period. Most of these aspects combine and cohere in the life and early career of Ruskin's foremost disciple of the period, John Howard Whitehouse, Guild companion, Ruskin society and university settlements secretary, parliamentarian and innovative educationist. Ruskin sought disciples who would find their own solutions to the challenges he presented. For many of the most significant contributors to social engagement and progressive politics at the turn of the century, Ruskin was a common and conscious influence and inspiration.

## ASSOCIATIONS

### The Ruskin Foundation

**The Ruskin Foundation:** The Ruskin Foundation is a charitable trust, founded in 1995, for the care, conservation, and promotion of the legacy of John Ruskin. The Ruskin Foundation oversees the world's largest collection of the works of the writer, artist and social visionary John Ruskin. These assets are housed at the Ruskin Library at Lancaster University, and Ruskin's former home and estate, Brantwood, where the Foundation is based. The Foundation explores the relevance of Ruskin's ideas today, undertaking intellectual enquiry and educational activity through a wide range of projects. It is based at Bowland College, Lancaster University, Lancaster, England LA1 4YT. The Foundation has recently created a new website (Source: <http://www.ruskin.org.uk/>).



**The Ruskin Society** has an annual programme of lectures and events. The Secretary is Dr Cynthia Gamble. The Ruskin Society is affiliated to the Ruskin Foundation. The President is Sir Richard Body. Committee members include Dr Malcolm Hardman (Chairman); The Hon. Mrs Catherine Edwards (Treasurer and Membership Secretary); Dr Cynthia Gamble (Secretary); Mr Anthony Page (Deputy Chairman); and Dr The Hon. Elizabeth Robins (Deputy Chairman); and Mr Timothy Rawson. Enquiries can be sent to Dr Cynthia Gamble, 49 Hallam Street, London W1W 6JP.

**Ruskin Museum, Coniston, Cumbria:** There has been a Ruskin Museum in Coniston since 1901, when W.G. Collingwood, a local artist and antiquarian who had been Ruskin's secretary, set it up both as a memorial to Ruskin and a celebration of the area's heritage. Therefore, although the museum has a Ruskin collection, there are also exhibits relating to the coppermines, slate, geology, lace, farming and Donald Campbell. The museum was extended in 1999 with the help of a Heritage Lottery grant; additional building with modern design-work, computer displays, and hands-on exhibits has transformed the look of the two galleries (Source: <http://www.ruskinmuseum.com/>).



John Ruskin's home 1872 - 1900

**Friends of Ruskin's Brantwood:** This is owned and managed by an independent charity, the Brantwood Trust. It receives no public subsidy and relies upon visitor income and the generosity of individual donors and volunteers. The Chairman of the Management Committee is Tony Cann CBE; the Director is Mr Howard Hull; and the General Manager Ms Rachel Litten (Source: <http://www.brantwood.org.uk/>).



## CONFERENCES

### PAST CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

18-20 July 2008, 'Artistry and Industry: Representations of Creative Labour in Literature and the Visual Arts c. 1830-1900', An International Conference hosted by the Centre for Victorian Studies, School of Arts, Languages and Literatures, University of Exeter in collaboration with the Department of History of Art, University of Bristol, and supported by British Association for Victorian Studies

Location: University of Exeter

18th - 19th July 2008, 'Persistent Ruskin – Aesthetics, Education, Social Theory, 1870-1914', University of Lancaster. The conference is being organized by The Ruskin Centre at Lancaster University, in association with Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Salford as part of the John Ruskin, Cultural Travel and Popular Access project.

Location: Ruskin Centre, Lancaster University

25th - 27th September 2008, 'Ruskin, Venice, and 19th Century Cultural Travel', Venice. The conference is being organized by The Ruskin Centre at Lancaster University; INCS: Interdisciplinary Nineteenth Century Studies; and The Department of European and Postcolonial Studies of University of Ca' Foscari Venice.

Location: Venice International University (Island of San Servolo)

See CURRENT RESEARCH for the list of papers.

31 October 2008, Lecturing the Victorians Symposium

Location: Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge

Conference Organizers: Cambridge Victorian Studies Group, Michael Ledger-Lomas, mcl27@cam.ac.uk

See PAST EVENTS for details.

14th-16th November 2008, North American Victorian Studies Association (NAVSA) Annual Meeting

Location: Yale University, New Haven, CT

April 17-19, 2009, 'Tipping Points: Pivotal Moments in Victorian Culture'

Location: Indiana University East, Richmond, IN

Focus: 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. In commemoration of that epochal event, the MVSA 2009 conference will showcase papers that explore events or works that signal profound shifts—"tipping points": Darwinian tipping points, as well as those in the literary, musical, economic, and intellectual life of Britain and its empire during the long nineteenth century (Source: Conference website, <http://www.midwestvictorian.org/conference/conference2009.html>).

Call for papers: Closed

See CURRENT RESEARCH for the list of papers.

Conference Convenors: For information on the conference please visit the Web site at <http://www.midwestvictorian.org> or email questions to Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, MVSA Executive Secretary at [aclappit@indiana.edu](mailto:aclappit@indiana.edu).

#### FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

June 4-5th, 2009, 'John Ruskin's posterity: Ruskinian legacy through literature and art writings'

Location: University of Lille III- Salle des colloques

Focus: This conference explores the nature of the Ruskinian heritage within literary texts, art criticism, and aesthetics. Topics include the development of particular sensibilities in artistic reception; the creative process as informed by religious or social impulses; the possible education of the aesthetic gaze; politics of conservation vs. opposition to practices of restoration; and conceptions of the heritage of medieval architecture; as well as how laterwriters and critics continue to re-evaluate and redeploy Ruskin's ideas and for what reasons (Source: Conference website, <http://www.inha.fr/spip.php?article1985>).

Call for papers: Closed

Conference Organizers: Joëlle Prunghaud, Professor of Comparative Literature, ALITHILA, EA 1061, [Joelle.prunghaud@univ-lille3.fr](mailto:Joelle.prunghaud@univ-lille3.fr) and Isabelle Enaud-Lechien, Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art History, IRHIS, UMR 8259, [isabelle.enaud@univ-lille3.fr](mailto:isabelle.enaud@univ-lille3.fr)

See CURRENT RESEARCH for the list of papers

2-3 October 2009, 'British Aestheticisms: Sources, Genres, Definitions, Evolutions',

Location: Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier

Focus: The conference aims at re-examining the notion of Aestheticism from a transdisciplinary perspective and hopes to attract contributions (in French or in English) from researchers across the fields of British studies, comparative studies, art history, publishing history, aesthetics, philosophy, reception theory, women's studies, queer theory, and gay and lesbian studies (Source: Conference website, <http://www.esthetismes.org/>).

Call for papers: Closed

Conference Organizers: CERVEC Research Center (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Victoriennes, Edouardiennes et Contemporaines, EA 741) of the Université Paul Valéry Montpellier, France

Guest Speakers: Prof. Pamela Gerrish Nunn (University of Canterbury, New Zealand), Prof. Lorraine Janzen Kooistra (Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada), and Prof. Talia Schaffer (City University of New York, USA).

17 October 2009, 'Tennyson and Their Readers: A Bicentenary Celebration, 1809 – 2009'

Location: Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK

Focus: Short Papers are therefore invited, exploring the links, not only between Tennyson and Darwin, but more generally between the writings of nineteenth century scientists and of nineteenth century poets or novelists - evidence that they were reading each other. Some more obvious subjects might be: George Eliot or John Ruskin's reading of Darwin (Source: Conference website, <http://www.essenglish.org/cfp/conf0904.html>).

Deadline for proposals: 1 October 2008.

Conference Organizers: Dr Valerie Purton, Department of English (Anglia Ruskin University), Valerie.Purton@anglia.ac.uk.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers: Professor Dame Gillian Beer (Clare Hall College, Cambridge) and Professor George Levine, Emeritus Professor (Rutgers University, U.S.A).

17-18 June 2010, Ruskin Library and Research Centre conference event, with the University of Liverpool.

Location: 17 June 2010: Day one will take place at the University of Liverpool; 18 June 2010: Day two will take place at Lancaster University.

Organizer: Ruskin Research Centre, Contact: Lauren Proctor at [l.s.proctor@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:l.s.proctor@lancaster.ac.uk)

The Ruskin Centre holds weekly research seminars during term time.

See CURRENT RESEARCH for the list of papers.

## CURRENT RESEARCH

### LIST OF PAPERS FROM THE VENICE CONFERENCE PAPERS

- Acciavatti, Anthony (Harvard University) Apostles of Procedure and Impersonation: The delusory revival of the arts and crafts of India through the Indo-Saracenic movement
- Adams, Edward (Washington and Lee University) Ruskin's Decline and Fall of Venice
- Afinoguénova, Eugenia (Marquette University, Wisconsin) "Ten O'Clock! Velásquez is Awaiting Us!": Class, Gender, Bildung, and Emotions in the 19th-century Prado Museum
- Aiello, Lucia (University of Strathclyde) "Euthanasia's Narrative": The Battle for Florence as the Struggle for History in Mary Shelley's Valperga
- Akiyama, Yasuo (Tokyo Ruskin Library) & Yasuo Kawabata (Japan Women's University) A Quest for Another Pearl of Great Price: Ryūzō Mikimoto and the Tokyo Ruskin Kyōkai (Tokyo Ruskin Society)
- Amblard, Marion (Université Stendhal) Sir David Wilkie and David Roberts on the Continent: The impact of their travels on their career and their art
- Bertonèche, Caroline (Université Stendhal - Grenoble III) John Keats, John Ruskin and the Severn circle: the Italian exile of a British coterie of artists
- Bordeleau, Anne (University of Waterloo, Ontario) Cockerell and Ruskin: Between nature and history
- Brewster, Glen (Westfield State College, Massachusetts) "New Words" and "New Ideas": Henry Crabb Robinson as Cultural Tourist
- Broome Saunders, Clare (University of Oxford) 'Venice has not been wanting in female learning among its other distinctions, to render it illustrious': Louisa Stuart Costello, Venice, and the scholarly travel writer
- Burns, Karen (Monash University, Australia) Atmospheric Vision: Weather, Photography and The Stones of Venice
- Casaliggi, Carmen (University of Limerick) Lessons of Multiple Perspective: Ruskin, Turner and the Inspiration of Venice
- Challis, Debbie (University College London) Artist in the House: Mary Severn Newton
- Chatterjee, Anuradha (University of South Australia) Travelling the surface: John Ruskin and the production of the new theory of the adorned "wall veil"
- Cinquegrani, Maurizio (King's College London) Travel, Cinematography and the City: Architecture, Topographies and Exhibitions of the British Empire at the Turn of the Twentieth Century
- Cogeanu, Oana (Al. I. Cuza- University of Iasi, Romania) Travelling for America: J. Ruskin and W.M.D. Howells
- Coleman Wolsk, Nancy (Transylvania University) Purposeful Traveler: May Alcott Nieriker and the Picturesque
- Damien, Elsa (University of Manchester) Ruskin and Murray's Handbooks: Battles for Tourist Guidance in Mid-19th Century Italy
- Ekmekçioğlu, Neslihan (Hacettepe University, Turkey) The Magical Play of Sunlight in Venice : An Enchanting Source for Ruskin and Turner

- Elsner, Anna Magdalena (University of Cambridge) Death in Venice – Exploring Ruskinian themes in Proust's depiction of Venice
- Farahbakhsh, Alireza (University of Guilan, Iran) Social Protest through Architecture: A Study of Ruskin's 'The Nature of Gothic' as the Embodiment of His Artistic and Political Views
- Filipovska, Tatjana ("Ss Cyril and Methodius" University in Skopje) Ruskin on Canaletto's painting
- Finnerty, Páraic (University of Portsmouth) Rival Italys: Emily Dickinson, John Ruskin and Henry James
- Fontana-Giusti, Gordana (University of Kent) The Stones, the Fold and the Spirit of Sacrifice
- Frost, Mark (University of Portsmouth) Ruskin, Venice, and the Guild Idea: Peter Kropotkin and the anarchist inheritance
- Fusco, Carla (Università degli studi G.D'Annunzio) Beppo, or Lord Byron's Transgressive Venice
- Gaull, Marilyn (The Editorial Institute at Boston University) Ruskin and the Culture of Weather: The dark ecology
- Giese-Vögeli, Francine (University of Bern) John Ruskin and the Alhambra in Granada
- Gilli, Laura (Iulm University, Italy) John Ruskin: Decadence and Untruth of Architecture
- Hélar, André (Classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles, à Rennes) Ruskin between Venice and Chamonix
- Hilton, J. A. (Independent Scholar) 'Sailing to Byzantium': Ruskin's Imaginary Travel to Greece
- Huffman Rockness, Miriam (Independent Scholar) "A Destination - and a Destiny": The Ruskin/Trotter Friendship
- Huseynov, Olena (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy) Phenomenon of "Tour to Venice" in post-soviet interpretation
- James, Kevin. J. (University of Guelph, Ontario) Hunch-backs, a 'Flannel God' and Island Kings: Cultural Geographies of the Inishkea Islands in the Irish Tourist Imagination
- Jenner, Ross (University of Auckland) Lordship and Servitude, Ornament and the Particular in The Stones of Venice
- Jones Nakanishi, Wendy (Shikoku Gakuin University) The Anxiety of Influence: Ambivalent relations between Japan's "Mingei" and Britain's "Arts and Crafts" Movements
- Kershner, Sybille (University of Applied Sciences, Zwickau) Displaced: Ricarda Huch in Trieste
- Kite, Stephen (Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff) 'Careful watchfulness': Drawing towards Venice – 1845
- Kovtun, Liliya (State Academy of Slavic Culture, Moscow) Dreams about Venice in Russian literature of XIX century
- Kucich, Greg (University of Notre Dame) Lady Morgan and Women's Cosmopolitan History and Virtual Travel
- L. Keck, Stephen (American University of Sharjah, UAE) Ruskin and the Remaking of Venice
- L. Krueger, Christine (Marquette University, Wisconsin) British History as European History and the Scholar Gypsy
- Lane, Cindy (University of Western Australia) Italian imaginings of Western Australia in 1906
- Levernier, James A. (University of Arkansas at Little Rock) Mark Twain's Italy during the Age of Ruskin
- Lund, Joshua (University of Pittsburgh) New World in the Tropics: Burton's Brazil and the regeneration of Empire
- Mallozzi, Illaria (University of Pisa) Hardy and Ruskin, two ideas of Venice

- Mamoli Zorzi, Rosella (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) *Against Palladio: Reading Ruskin in the train between Vicenza and Venice*
- Marks, Thomas (University of Oxford) *'Sweet Cemetery Shore': Ruskin's Italy and the Architecture of Mourning*
- Masui, Hiroko (Japan Women's University) *Ruskin's The King of the Golden River and its appreciation in Japan*
- McCarthy, Bernadette (University College Cork) *From 19th-Century Venice to a Stone Cottage in Sussex: Gregory, Yeats and Pound and Visual Venetian Connection to Anglo-American Modernism.*
- McKeown, William (University of Memphis) *The Presentation of the Virgin: Ruskin and Images of Girlhood in Venetian Renaissance Painting*
- Millim, Anne-Marie (University of Glasgow) *The Photographic Gesture in the Diaries of John Ruskin*
- Mrsová, Nella and Mrš Karel (University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic) *Wandering to Italy – notes and pictures by many-sided folk-artist Alois Beer*
- Moen, Kristian (University of Bristol) *"This Image Traced in the Camera Obscura of the Mind": Transforming Visions in Théophile Gautier's Venices*
- Murphy, Margueritte (Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY) *Becoming Cosmopolitan: Viewing and Reviewing the 1855 Exposition Universelle in Paris*
- Ozturk, Anthony (Glion Institute) *Venice and the Architecture of the Alps*
- Parker, Joshua (Fatih University, Istanbul) *A Venice all of Evil*
- Plaszczewska, Olga (Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Krakow) *John Ruskin's Venice seen by a Pole: Maria Konopnicka's impressions on Venetian art – Impressions from Travels (1884) and Italia (1901)*
- Price, Megan (University of Oxford) *Ruskin and the Stones of Oxford*
- Protz, Uta (European University Institute, Florence) *Ruskin and Turner's Drawings of Venice: The Conservation of Lost Skies*
- Pulham, Patricia (University of Portsmouth) *'Something which is not death nor sleep': Death, Desire and the Effigy in Victorian Writings on Italy*
- Purdy, Strother *Carpaccio, Ruskin, and Henry James*
- Riede, David G. (Ohio State University) *Ruskin and the 'Melancholy Deeps of Things.'*
- Roussillon-Constanty, Laurence (Université de Toulouse) *Importing Italy: Ruskin, Italian Art and Dante Gabriel Rossetti*
- Russell, Shannon (John Cabot University, Rome) *"I cannot but fear you as I love you": Italy and the Unconventional Woman in Madame de Stael's Corinne: or Italy and After*
- Sato, Shoji (Brain Functions Laboratory Inc. Yokohama, Japan) *Was Ruskin Demented?: An observation on Ruskin's dementia, tracing back his mental disorders during the last dozen years of Ruskin's life*
- Schwartz, John Pedro (American University of Beirut) *Constructing Modernity on (the Ruins of) the Museum*
- Seddon, R. Martin (Lancaster University) *Ruskin and Visual Media*
- Shin, Kyung-Sook (Yonsei University, Seoul) *Two Victorians in Venice?: Topographies of Memory in Mary Shelley and John Ruskin*
- Simmons, Clare A. (Ohio State University) *Macaulay's Rome and the Defence of Classicism*

- Sliti, Adel (High Institute of Applied Studies in Humanities, Gafsa, Tunisia) "Great Works colonize us": Derek Walcott's Caribbean Optics of Survival in Tiepolo's Hound
- Sorenson, David R. (Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia) 'A Flowing Light-Fountain': Carlyle, Ruskin and the Architecture of Heroism in The Stones of Venice
- Spates, Jim (Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY) John Ruskin's "Death in Venice": An Early 21st-Century Revisitation of a Late 19th-Century Tragedy
- Syndikus, Candida (Universität Münster) From the "Town of the Dead" to "Death in Venice": The German painter Anselm Feuerbach and Venice
- Terry, Allie (Bowling Green State University, Ohio) Stendhal and the Violence of the Italian Renaissance
- Varela Braga, Ariane (University of Neuchâtel) Owen Jones – travel as inspiration
- Waithe, Marcus (University of Sheffield) Memorial Studies and "fast-gaining waves": Ruskin, Venice and the processes of preservation
- Watts Sommer, Laura (Daemen College, Amherst, NY) "Oh Venice... My beautiful, my own...": Francesco Hayez and the Regionalist Condition of Nineteenth- Century Italian Painting
- Wildman, Stephen (Lancaster University) "A gold and purple arch": Ruskin's watercolour, North West Porch of St. Mark's, Venice (1877)
- Wilmer, Clive (Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge) Ruskin, Venice and Verona
- Wynne, Catherine (University of Hull) Ireland, Italy and the Holy Land: Elizabeth Butler's Artistic and Literary Landscapes
- Yilmaz, Ahenk (Izmir Institute of Technology, Turkey) Remembering with (out) Architecture: Ruskin's Lamp of Memory and Ars Memoriae

LIST OF PAPERS, RUSKIN SEMINAR SERIES, LENT TERM (15 January-19 March 2009)

- 15 January: Stephen Wildman (University of Lancaster) 'Ruskin and the Old Masters' exhibition
- 22 January: Alan Davis (University of Lancaster) 'Etching and Editing Turner: what really upset Ruskin in the National Gallery basement, and some consequences for the conclusion of Modern Painters'
- 29 January: Andrew Tate (University of Lancaster) 'The First Theatrical Pre-Raphaelite? Ruskin's Molière'
- 05 February: Stephen Wildman (University of Lancaster) 'A "blunt and untrained faculty"?: Ruskin and David Cox'
- 12 February: Andrew Tate (University of Lancaster) Readings: Ruskin and literature with a focus on Classical Studies and Shakespeare
- 26 February: Charles Nugent (Independent scholar) 'New light on Edward Lear's 1836 Lake District drawings'
- 05 March: Elsa Damien (University of Manchester) 'Ruskin and Murray's Handbooks: Battles for Tourist Guidance in mid-19th Century Italy'
- 12 March: Dinah Birch (University of Liverpool) 'Ruskin and Tennyson'
- 19 March: Brian Hodgson (University of Lancaster) 'The London of Ruskin's Youth'

## LIST OF PAPERS, RUSKIN SEMINAR SERIES, AUTUMN TERM (09 October-11 December 2008)

- 09 October: Stephen Wildman & Andrew Tate (Lancaster University), Introduction to the year, with a reading of a new article by Van Akin Burd, 'Ruskin and his "Good Master," William Buckland
- 16 October: Andrew Tate (Lancaster University): Readings (including 'Fiction, Fair and Foul')
- 23 October: David Barnes (Queen Mary, University of London): 'Ruskin, Venice and Italian Nationalism'
- 30 October: James Deboo (Lancaster University): 'Ruskin and Wordsworth'
- 19 November: Robin Holt (Management School, Liverpool University): 'The Gothic Frame'
- 27 November: Robert Hewison (City University London): 'Ruskin and Zorzi: Observations on an Anglo-Venetian Alliance'.
- 04 December: Brian Ingram (Lancaster University) 'Ruskin and Scott'.
- 11 December: Daniel Karlin (Sheffield University): 'The Monkey and the Coconut: Ruskin reads Browning'

## LIST OF PAPERS FROM TIPPING POINTS CONFERENCE

Laura E. Tabbut (Middlebury College) "Biography of the Poppy: John Ruskin and the Dark Kora of *Proserpina*"

## LIST OF PAPERS FROM JOHN RUSKIN'S POSTERITY: RUSKINIAN LEGACY THROUGH LITERATURE AND ART WRITINGS

- Aubert, Nathalie (Brookes University, Oxford) La lampe de la mémoire : Proust, Ruskin et *Le Temps retrouvé*
- Boucher-Rivalain, Odile (Cergy-Pontoise) La nature du gothique selon Ruskin et quelques définitions ultérieures
- Brognez, Laurence et Freché, Bibiane (ULB, Bruxelles) Ruskin en Belgique : passages en revues (1880-1914)
- Bury, Laurent (Lyon 2) Ruskin vu par quelques femmes du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle : le regard de la marge ?
- Cherly, Maria (Université d'Angers) Proust et Ruskin : la Bible en héritage
- Enaud-Lechien, Isabelle (IRHIS, Lille 3) Les " théories impressionnistes" à l'aune des Elements of Drawing de John Ruskin
- Ergal, Yves-Michel (Strasbourg 2) Marcel Proust du côté de chez Ruskin
- Hélaré, André (Rennes) De l'innocence de l'oeil au parti pris des choses : échos ruskiniens dans la littérature française
- Hullo-Pouyat, Céline (Paris IV-Abu-Dhabi) Achille Carlier : une vision ruskinienne de la restauration
- Larangé, Daniel S. (Université McGill, Montréal) L'apport esthétique de John Ruskin à l'oeuvre picturale et littéraire de Khalil Gibran (1883-1931)
- Larangé, Daniel S. (Université McGill, Montréal) L'apport esthétique de John Ruskin à l'oeuvre picturale et littéraire de Khalil Gibran (1883-1931)



- Leonard, Diane R. (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) *That Golden Stain of Time* : Ruskin avant-textes for Proust's *Église de Combray*
- Martin, François-René (Ensba, Ecole du Louvre) and et Pascale Cugy (Paris IV, Ecole du Louvre), Focillon lecteur de Ruskin : de la critique de la société moderne à l'*Eloge de la main*
- Mastrorilli, Antonella (ENSAPL, Lille) "Le temps est un grand peintre": les déclinaisons de la restauration philologique et le débat en Italie entre XIXe et XXe siècles
- Mezzalama, Giulia (Politecnico di Torino) Venise 1901: patine et polychromie contre les règles de la nouvelle modernité
- Prunghaud, Joëlle (Lille 3) Médiateurs ou disciples ? Les écrivains d'art des Nineties et l'héritage ruskinien
- Roussillon-Constanty, Laurence (Toulouse 3) Anéantissement de l'image / épiphanie de la peinture : de John Ruskin à Daniel Arasse
- Rovera, Silvia (Université Paris XII-Université de Turin), John Ruskin et Henri de Régnier : promeneurs dans Venise
- Sdegno, Emma (Università Ca'Foscari, Venise) On Modern Landscape : Ruskin et le discours contemporain sur le paysage

## EVENTS

### PAST EVENTS

#### THE SOCIETY FOR THEATRE RESEARCH

John Ruskin & the British Pantomime

A talk by Jeffrey Richards

Thursday 19 February 2009

John Ruskin, the great Victorian art critic and social critic, is perhaps the last person you would associate with the theatre. However, he was both an inveterate theatregoer and a devotee of the Christmas pantomime. Professor Richards, a leading historian of popular culture will assess pantomime's appeal to Ruskin and his stout defence of the traditional pantomime as it underwent major changes (Source: <http://www.str.org.uk/events/lectures/archive/lecture0902.shtml>).

At the Art Workers Guild, London

#### AT RUSKIN PROGRAMME, LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

'John Ruskin and a Venetian episode in the life of the National Gallery'

Ruskin Seminar Series

Cynthia Gamble (Honorary Visiting Fellow)

23 April 2009, 4.00pm-6.00pm

Cynthia Gamble is one of the leading authorities on Ruskin and Proust. She is a Visiting Fellow of the Ruskin Library and Research Centre at Lancaster University and Vice-Chairman of the Ruskin Society.

'John Ruskin, Henry James and the Shropshire Lads': A journey through Shropshire's "beautiful little places

Cynthia Gamble

25 April 2009, 6.00 pm

This lecture coincided with an exhibition at Lancaster University on Victorian Artists in Photographs: Selection from The Rob Dickins Collection, from the Watts Gallery)

'My three-cornerdest of Chaplains'. John Ruskin and the Revd John Pincher Faunthorpe, Principal of Whiteland College'

Ruskin Seminar Series

David Peacock - Ruskin Seminar Series

30 April 2009, 4.00pm-6.00pm

'John Ruskin, the Olympian Painters and the amateur stage'

Ruskin Seminar Series

Jeffrey Richards (*University of Lancaster*)

07 May 2009, 4.00pm-6.00pm

Inaugural Lecture- "It cannot be better done:" John Ruskin and Albrecht Dürer

Stephen Wildman, Professor of the History of Art

14 May 2009

Director, Ruskin Library and Research Centre

## **AT BRANTWOOD**

Informal evening

In association with Royal Geographical Society

Friday 08 May 2009

NW region Committee members present a varied and inspirational range of cartography - from geology and politics to Arthur Ransome and Ruskin. From serious maps to childhood treasures. The evening also provides a unique opportunity to preview an art exhibition of John Dugger's Himalayan Notebooks, which opens the following day at Brantwood.

"Ruskin at Brantwood" – A Talk

Freddie Harris

09 June, 28 July, 11 August, 08 September 2009

2.15pm until 3.15pm

Gain an insight into Ruskin's life at Brantwood.

## **THE RUSKIN SOCIETY**

John Ruskin v. Owen Jones

An illustrated talk by Dr Kathryn Ferry

Thursday 13th November 2008

The mid-nineteenth century was a period of intense debate about the future of architecture and design. Whereas Ruskin's views are well known, those of his contemporary, Owen Jones, (1809-74) are less so. Despite this, as author of *The Grammar of Ornament* and a leading member of the South Kensington circle, Jones was influential in putting forward a very different view of nature and industrialization to Ruskin's.

Dr Kathryn Ferry, as an independent architectural historian, will look at two men who seemed to argue from opposite ends of the spectrum, examining the differences and indeed the similarities in their points of view.

At the Art Workers Guild, London

'The interpretation of history in Ruskin's social thought'

A talk by Dr Gill Cockram

Sunday 08 February 2009

Dr Cockram is involved in research in the History of Political Ideas at the University of London and is the author of *Ruskin and Social Reform* (Tauris 2007) and has been commissioned to provide the entry on Ruskin in the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Modern Political Thought*.

At the Priory Church of St Bartholomew the Great

### **AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON**

John Ruskin and a Venetian episode in the life of the National Gallery – A talk

Dr Cynthia Gamble

Tuesday 10 February 2009

In 1852 John Ruskin attempted to persuade the National Gallery to acquire two Tintoretto's which he considered at risk of neglect in the Venetian churches of San Cassiano and Santa Maria della Salute. His efforts proved fruitless. The episode marked the start of a cooling in Ruskin's friendship with Charles Lock Eastlake, an ex-officio Trustee in 1852 and later Director of the National Gallery from 1855. Cynthia Gamble will examine the background to Ruskin's attempts to 'rescue' the Tintoretto's as well as charting the subsequent developments in his friendship with Eastlake.

Wilkins Board Room

### **AT GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE**

A performance of Ruskin's lecture on the political economy of art: "A Joy Forever"

Paul O'Keeffe

31 October 2008

Dr Paul O'Keeffe is actor and art historian, who regularly lectures at Museums in Liverpool

### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

#### **AT BRANTWOOD**

"Ruskin at Brantwood" – A Talk

Freddie Harris

09 June, 28 July, 11 August, 08 September 2009

2.15pm until 3.15pm

Gain an insight into Ruskin's life at Brantwood.

## EXHIBITIONS

### PAST EXHIBITIONS

#### AT BRANTWOOD

Palaces and Castles

Nanette Madan

05 July-31 August 2008

Nanette's lively and colourful oil pastel pictures often depict a solitary, whitewashed stone cottage, surrounded by nature in an idyllic Lakeland setting. Ruskin greatly approved of people that both lived in and worked from their houses – "they were their palaces and castles," to quote from his seminal book on architecture "The Seven Lamps of Architecture," first published in 1849. Nanette's portrayal of stonewalls in her pictures are a visual translation of Ruskin's eloquent prose. Nanette's pictures also reflect the Ruskin ideal, featuring abodes and shop houses in a natural setting, that have been relatively untouched by human interference since they were first built, thereby imparting a sense of their history. (Source: [http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp\\_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Nanette%20Madan.doc](http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Nanette%20Madan.doc)).

Nanette Madan is an emerging artist based in West Cumbria

Proserpina and the Language of Flowers: John Ruskin's Botanical Studies

05 March – 16 November 2008

On show will be numerous studies of plants done by Ruskin both at Brantwood and on his travels throughout Europe, including his 'Flora of Chamonix' a unique collection of specimens collected in the Alps. Other displays will feature extracts from his writings and items associated with Ruskin's revival at Whitelands College of the ancient May Queen ceremonies. (Source: [http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp\\_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Proserpina%20and%20the%20language%20of%20flowers.doc](http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Proserpina%20and%20the%20language%20of%20flowers.doc)).

Wall of Silence

Martin Greenland

22 November- 28 February 2009

Martin's work speaks directly to the great tradition of English landscape painting, and so it is particularly appropriate to exhibit his work in Ruskin's home. In 2006 Martin won First Prize at the John Moores 24 with his painting Before Vermeer's Clouds. Brantwood's director, Howard Hull, says "Cumbria is extremely fortunate to have a painter of Martin's quality living and working in its midst and drawing so richly upon its landscape. His work displays that quality of the imagination that Ruskin vividly described as 'brooding and dream-gifted.'" Willy Russell says of Martin's work: "I think his painting is superb.....a striking fusion of arresting myth and exquisite landscape." (Source: [http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp\\_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Martin%20Greenland.doc](http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Martin%20Greenland.doc)).

Martin is an award winning contemporary artist.

## Coniston's Viewing Stations

Colin Taylor

07 February-22 March 2009

Paintings based on a series of viewing stations detailed in the first Lakes tourist guidebook – *A Guide to the lakes of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire* written in 1778 written by Thomas West. Colin Taylor has faithfully retraced West's footsteps around Coniston Water and painted the views from each of Coniston's three viewing stations. The mountain views enjoyed at Brantwood also had a profound effect on John Ruskin, who lived here from 1872 until 1900, resulting in many of his own artworks and writings.

(Source:

[http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp\\_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Colin%20Taylor.doc](http://www.brantwood.org.uk/temp_files/Press%20Releases/Press%20release%20Colin%20Taylor.doc)).

## AT TOUCHSTONES GALLERY, ROCHDALE

31st May – 13th July 2008

How to See Exhibition

Featured the work of pupils from Deepish School, Alice Ingham School, and Broadfield School

## THE RUSKIN LIBRARY

19th April- 28th September 2008

Journeys of a Lifetime: Ruskin's Continental Tours

Curated by Keith Hanley and Rachel Dickinson.

### Ruskin and the Old Masters

10 January - 29 March

As an art critic, Ruskin is chiefly remembered for his lifelong championship of J.M.W. Turner and his defence of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and patronage of artists such as Rossetti and Burne-Jones. From an early age, however, he had attempted a systematic study of the history of art, concentrating on Italian Renaissance painting, which was to remain an almost equal passion with his love of architecture. Writings following his seminal visit to Italy in 1845 soon made him a recognised authority (Source:

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib/Pages/masters2.html>).

### Nature's Best': Flora and Fauna from the Hesketh Collection

18 October - 14 December 2008

This exhibition will showcase some of the natural history books from the Hesketh Collection which is currently on loan to Lancaster University Library from the Trustees of the Second Baron Hesketh's Will Trust. The collection was largely formed during the first part of the 20th Century by the first and second Lords Hesketh and formed part of the celebrated library at Easton Neston in Northamptonshire. Included in the exhibition will be books on birds by John Gould, R Bowdler Sharpe and Thomas Pennant. The botanical side will be represented with works by Sydenham Edwards, Mary Lawrance and Robert Thornton. Also on show

will be plates from the University Library's own copy of the Flora Londinensis by William Curtis which was printed between 1777 and 1798 (Source: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib/Pages/hesketh2.html>).

### **AT FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM**

Until 17 March

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Mellon Gallery (Gallery 13)

This exhibition celebrates one of the most enriching periods in the history of the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Directorship of Sir Sydney Cockerell (1908-1937). It will examine his close relationship with leading artists, writers and collectors of the period, including John Ruskin, William Morris, the Pre-Raphaelites, Thomas Hardy, George Bernard Shaw, Charles Fairfax Murray, and Henry Yates Thompson (Source: <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk>).

## CURRENT AND UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

### **RUSKIN GALLERY, SHEFFIELD**

Exhibition of the Collection and the Work of John Ruskin

Permanent

The Ruskin Collection is also known as the Guild of St George Collection. It contains over 900 paintings, watercolours and drawings by artists such as Thomas Matthew Rooke, John Wharltton Bunney and Charles Fairfax Murray; about twenty six works by Ruskin himself, ranging from sketches and studies after other artists, such as Turner and Carpaccio, to finished original works; over 6,300 ornithological prints by artists such as Edward Lear, John Gould and JJ Audubon and twelve Medieval manuscripts dating from the 13th to the 16th century thirty and plastercasts from the Ducal Palace, St Marks in Venice and the North West door of Rouen Cathedral, France (Source: Museum Website <http://www.museums-sheffield.org.uk/coresite/html/ruskinc.asp>).

### **AT BRANTWOOD**

Sculptures in Stone: Ruskin and the Gothic Architecture of Northern France

Part I (4 March – 5 July)

Part II (30 September – 13 November).

Drawn from the Whitehouse Collection held at the Ruskin Library

The Interpretative Eye

Alexander Hamilton

09 July – 27 September

Alexander Hamilton is a Scottish-based artist who is an expert in the use of the 19th Century cyanotype process, which is essentially one of the oldest photographic processes without the use of the camera. Each cyanotype plant image is a unique contemplative study with rich tones of many shades of blue, capturing the plant's individual character. (Source: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ruskin/documents/The%20Glenfinlas%20Cyanotypes%20tour2009.pdf>). These cyanotypes were made by Hamilton during his residency at Brantwood.

## **THE RUSKIN LIBRARY**

Victorian Artists in Photographs: selections from the Rob Dickins Collection, the Watts Gallery  
April 4 - June 28 2009

This remarkable exhibition comprises more than 150 Victorian photographs, some extremely rare and many being shown for the first time. It has been selected from the collection of about 4,500 images amassed by the late Jeremy Maas and recently acquired by Rob Dickins CBE for presentation to the Watts Gallery, Compton, Surrey, of which he is a Trustee. This selection brings us face to face not only with such famous Victorian artists as William Powell Frith, George Frederic Watts, Edward Burne-Jones, William Holman Hunt, Frederic Lord Leighton, John Everett Millais, William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, but also with artists' homes and studios, models, wives and families. John Ruskin is also well represented, through some celebrated images (Source: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib/Pages/currex.html>).

Summer Miscellany

4 July - 27 September

A selection of works from the Collection, chosen by Ruskin Library staff

The Interpretative Eye and Glenfinlas Cyanotypes

Alexander Hamilton

3 October – 13 December

The Brantwood cyanotypes will be shown along with the Glenfinlas work



## PUBLISHED AND FORTHCOMING WORKS

### JOURNALS

Call for Contributors, Routledge Annotated Bibliography of English Studies: Nineteenth Century Section

Routledge are proud to announce the launch of the Routledge Annotated Bibliography of English Studies (ABES), a unique reference tool for those working in the field of English Literary Studies. Routledge are currently inviting applications to contribute to the Nineteenth Century section. As a contributor to Routledge ABES you would be called upon to create annotations to some of the best new research in literary studies, helping to provide an indispensable guide for the rest of the literary studies community. Your work would be fully acknowledged, with contributors able to provide a short biography and a link back to their own website or profile.

If you are interested in becoming a contributor to Routledge ABES, then please contact the Nineteenth Century section editor: Dr Johanna M. Smith, Department of English, P.O. Box 19035, University of Texas, Arlington, TX 76019-0035, USA, Email: [johannasmith@uta.edu](mailto:johannasmith@uta.edu). For further details, please visit [www.routledgeabes.com](http://www.routledgeabes.com)

Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal

The journal is committed to interdisciplinary recuperations of “new” nineteenth centuries and their relation to contemporary geopolitical developments. The journal challenges traditional modes of categorizing the nineteenth century by forging innovative contextualizations across a wide spectrum of nineteenth century experience and the critical disciplines that examine it. Articles not only integrate theories and methods of various fields of inquiry — art, history, musicology, anthropology, literary criticism, religious studies, social history, economics, popular culture studies, and the history of science, among others — but also test and open up the very limits of disciplinary boundaries. The link to the past and current issues can be accessed via [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/ncc](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/ncc).

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- James S Dearden, A late Ruskin letter?

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### The Ruskin Review and Bulletin Vol. 4, No. 3

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- Sarah Bunney: J. W. Bunney's 'big picture': an update
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## A CLOSER LOOK AT SOME PUBLICATIONS

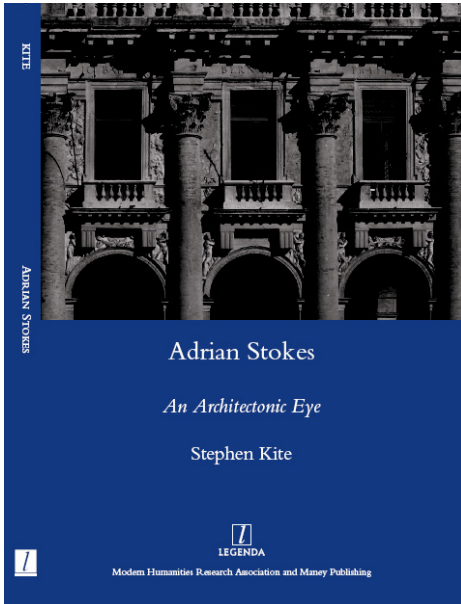


Image credit: Author

Stephen Kite. *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye*. Legenda: Oxford, 2009. £45.00 (\$89.50 US) Hardback, ISBN-13: 9781905981892

Adrian Stokes (1902–72) — aesthete, critic, painter and poet — is among the most original and creative writers on art of the twentieth century. He was the author of over twenty critical books and numerous papers, and in particular the remarkable series of 1930s titles — *The Quattro Cento* (1932), *Stones of Rimini* (1934), and *Colour and Form* (1937) — that embraced Mediterranean culture and modernity. His criticism extends the evocative English aesthetic tradition of Walter Pater and John Ruskin into the present, endowed by a stern sensibility to the consolations offered by art and architecture, and the insights that psychoanalysis affords. For Stokes architecture provides the entrée into art, and this is the first study which comprehensively examines Stokes's theory of art from a specifically architectonic perspective. Kite explores the crucial experiences through which this awareness evolved, traces the influence upon Stokes of places, texts and personalities, and examines how his theory of art developed and matured. The argument is supported by appropriate illustrations showing that Stokes's claim for architecture as mother of the arts carries the deepest experiential and psychological import.

(Source: <http://www.mhra.org.uk/cgi-bin/legenda/legenda.pl?catalogue=b9781905981892>)

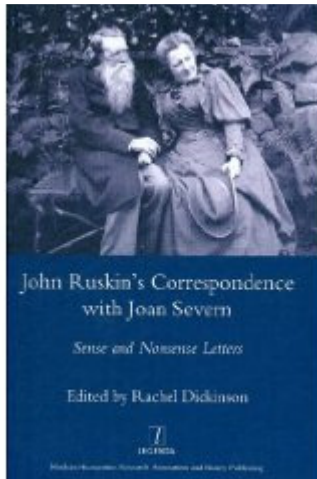


Image credit: Modern Humanities Research Association

Rachel Dickinson, ed. *John Ruskin's Correspondence with Joan Severn: Sense and Nonsense Letters*. London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2009. ISBN 978 1 905981 90 8. 312 pages with 6 illustrations hardback £45.00



Image credit: Palgrave

Anselm Heinrich, Kate Newey and Jeffrey Richards, eds. *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture*. Palgrave Macmillan, 08 Apr 2009. £50.00, Hardback, ISBN: 9780230200593

This book brings together original research in theatre and the visual arts, around the common object of a revaluation of the intersections of the theatre and visual culture. Contributors are drawn from a stimulating

mix of highly-esteemed and established scholars (such as Shearer West, Jim Davis, Richard Foulkes and David Mayer) and new scholars, bringing fresh research materials into the mix.

The collection offers a set of essays around a theme of emerging interest in Victorian studies. There are few books focused on the theatre and the visual arts since Martin Meisel's *Realizations*. Since then, essay length pieces have been published by prominent theatre and art historians, several of whom are contributors to this work. The multi-author nature of this collection of essays allows a broader range of original material to be examined, and a number of critical approaches to be pursued. The collection is made coherent by the focus on John Ruskin's aesthetic and cultural theories, and their application to a re-evaluation of the popular theatre of the late nineteenth century. All contributors are working within a theoretical framework which challenges Modernist historiographical assumptions about a theatre in moral and aesthetic decline in this period.

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## REVIEWS

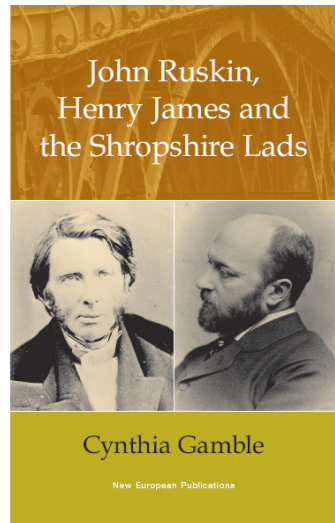


Image credit: Cynthia Gamble

Cynthia Gamble. 2008. *John Ruskin, Henry James and the Shropshire Lads*, New European Publications.  
Reviewer: Francis O'Gorman, University of Leeds

It is easy to forget the extent to which a university education in nineteenth-century England connected a man to a national network. We live now in a different age. Indeed, the networks of the ancient universities could link graduates to an international circle of friends, acquaintances, and their families across the world to whom a letter of introduction opened opportunities, secured hospitality, established even permanent associations of private, intellectual, and commercial consequence. John Ruskin, Gentleman Commoner at Christ Church, Oxford, was not the most sociable of students. But he was made lasting friendships among the undergraduates—Henry Acland most obviously—and tutors. Walter Lucas Brown was kind and stimulating when a don, but not the most inspiring of friends after he had left Oxford and sunk, as Ruskin saw it, into the all-too ordinary life of a parish clergyman at Wendlebury. But before that he had certainly provided Ruskin with a valuable figure and correspondent who sharpened his thinking about art and religion, the ethics of teaching itself, and what might be extracted of value from an educational system the passing of which Ruskin, in *Praeterita*, could not mourn.

Osborne Gordon (1813–83), too, was a tutor for whom Ruskin had time. He was a 'pearl' among them, he remembered, a man 'of curious intellectual power and simple virtue'. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) thinks a little differently, and records not only 'simple virtue' but a social climber with an 'overpowering love for a lord'. But that is not the worst one can say of a man. And in the unreformed University of Oxford, in a culture that had yet to invent anything like a career academic, Ruskin may have been pleased to over-estimate a man's possession of 'curious intellectual power' and 'simple virtue' simply because such things were more than ordinarily needed there. Gordon's colleagues were by no means all ambitious for their students, the possessors of gifted minds, or committed to their tasks as teachers. Many were profoundly suspicious of anything that looked like research. It revealed unstable convictions. The wiry intellectual energy of the Rector of Lincoln, Mark Pattison (1813-84), helped to change that by re-inventing

the academic as a man with a particular specialism and with original and fully-researched ideas. But before Pattison, intellectual accomplishment had to be prized where it could be found. Osborne Gordon seemed to Ruskin a happy exception in a college where intellectual distinction among students was, as *Praeterita* recalled, in horrible bad taste.

Osborne Gordon's network, to which Ruskin and his parents became attached, forms the major part of Cynthia Gamble's intriguing new history of Shropshire, Ruskin, and Henry James. Gordon's career before Oxford had involved schooling in Bridgnorth (without the 'e'), then a small market town on the banks of the River Severn. Bridgnorth was home for awhile for Richard Baxter, seventeenth-century Puritan theologian and hymn writer, and the birthplace of Thomas Percy of the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1765). But it also featured periodically in Ruskin's life. One of the many things this study achieves is to remind the reader just how much of Great Britain Ruskin knew and visited: how far his network of acquaintances took him. Osborne Gordon, of whom Bridgnorth became proud as a man of scholarly distinction, a figure who had once tutored the Prince of Wales, remained friends with the author of *Modern Painters* until close to the end of his life in 1883. He was one of the last visitors to Denmark Hill and one of the first at Brantwood. Ruskin visited him when Gordon became vicar of Easthampstead (a Christ Church living) in 1860. He was, as *ODNB* describes him, 'lean and haggard, with bright eyes, long reddish nose, untidy hair, odd voice, and uncertain aspirates, of quaint wit, exquisite scholarly tastes, extraordinary mathematical gifts, and of a very kind heart'.

Dr Gamble's engaging, anecdotal book retrieves an enormous amount of empirical material concerning any of Ruskin's connections with Shropshire. Its winding paths through Victorian high society, both city and country, find their way back, in the end, to a connection with the county. She is a searcher of primary records, and the foundation of empirical learning here is sure. Another example of the Shropshire connections that interest her is Ruskin's relationship with Edward Cheney, and John and Jane Pritchard. Jane was the only sister of Osborne Gordon. She married John, MP for Bridgnorth, friend and executor of John James Ruskin, and friend too of Edward Cheney, lover of Venice and eventual owner of Badger Hall, near Bridgnorth. Cheney, who inherited the Hall from his brother in 1866, had previously lived at the Palazzo Soranzo-Piovene on the Grand Canal, and was a friend of Rawdon Brown, whom Ruskin knew well too. (Palazzo Soranzo-Piovene, sometimes just called the Palazzo Soranzo, is three palazzi after the Loredan Vendramin Calergi, the Venice Casino, on the left hand side of the Grand Canal going towards Rialto.) Cheney filled Badger Hall with Venetian treasures, which were sold in Christies in 1885 after his death. Effie Ruskin had been a better friend of Cheney than Ruskin, and that, in due course, caused some difficulties. He would later disagree, as a trustee of the National Gallery, with some of Ruskin's suggestions for purchases for the national collection. But the Ruskins' brief visit to Badger in August 1850 offers a pleasing glimpse of Ruskin's social dutifulness, and his energy in exploring the diversities of English rural life, its customs, religious life, and architecture. An image from Much Wenlock Priory, just down the road, provided an illustration—drawn by Ruskin and engraved by J.C. Armytage—of a 'zigzag' decoration inside a gothic arch for the first volume of *The Stones of Venice*. As for Cheney, Shropshire and Venice were related.



Dr Gamble is extensive in her research into the details of Ruskin's life. This is a book bubbling with facts, like Tim Hilton's biographies. The reader may not always concur with the volume's interpretive comments—it is a little hard on Margaret Ruskin, for instance, who was always more than a Dickensian caricature. But the pleasure in detail, the sense of place, the exploration of interrelations between private lives and public figures, the minutiae of a great figure's biography, are much to be enjoyed. Enjoyable too, is the winning affection of the author for Shropshire and for the felt presence of Bridgnorth and its environs in this intricate story. It is no surprise to learn that Dr Gamble herself, who has published widely on Ruskin and on Proust, was educated in Bridgnorth, and the family affection and gratitude for a schooling there lends to this narrative a charming intimacy. Certainly, a reader's connection with Shropshire—and an interest in Ruskin or Henry James—makes this book all the more appealing. Its best audience is a local one, its ideal readers those who know the local terrain. So it is not wholly inappropriate for me to admit that, as it happens, I was born in Bridgnorth too and went to school there briefly. My mother taught French in the same Grammar School that the Reverend Osborne Gordon and Cynthia Gamble attended. Perhaps I am a peculiarly apt reader of this book, but all those with an interest in Ruskin, who know Shropshire or otherwise, will find it intriguing.

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## ARTICLE

Mark Frost, University of Portsmouth

The Organic Impulse: Ruskin, trees, architecture, and society (1843-60)

Fifty years ago, and with typical acuity, Raymond Williams argued that it was ‘one of the most important facts about English social thinking in the nineteenth century that there grew up, in opposition to a *laissez-faire* society, [an] organic conception, stressing interrelation and interdependence’. Placing Ruskin at the heart of this movement, Williams contended that Ruskin’s organicist view, inimical to socialism in its belief in hierarchy and obedience, and less clearly defined than other political discourses, was amenable to all critics of liberalism (Williams 1982, 140). Martin Warnke notes that ‘involving the landscape in human affairs and feelings, and representing these by means of internal contrasts’ had already become ‘a familiar dialectic technique’ long before Ruskin, because ‘landscape could be treated in such a way as to impart a political message’ (Warnke, 1994, 80). The tendency to turn, as Ruskin did, to mediaeval societies as models of organic culture was hardly new. Ruskin’s own immersion in this idealistic atavism began with his love of Romantic poetry, but it did not end there. His own form of organicism developed out of Romanticism’s preoccupation with this subject, but it was also profoundly influenced by his own discoveries in the fields of architecture and natural history.<sup>1</sup> Ruskin’s employment of organic analogies was not new, but was nonetheless wide-ranging and worthy of closer inspection.

The key task of this paper is to examine the manner in which trees operated as a significant source of Ruskin’s social organicism in a range of works from *The Stones of Venice* (3 vols, 1851-3) through to ‘Of Leaf Beauty’ from *Modern Painters V* (1860) and *Unto This Last* (1862). The significance of trees in Ruskin’s work has often been overlooked, and as a result there has been inadequate recognition that his abiding love of arboreal forms provided not merely material for his natural history or for his defence, in *Modern Painters* (5 vols, 1843-60), of Turner’s landscape art, but a powerful analogy for the construction of a beautiful environment and a just society. Ruskin’s first memory was of ‘the twining roots of trees’ on Friar’s Crag in the Lake District (5. 365), and throughout his life trees remained a symbol of creative co-operation – from his earliest work, *The Poetry of Architecture* (1837-8), which argued in Wordsworthian terms for the fittedness of buildings to their natural environments, until his autobiography *Praeterita* (1885-6), where trees often occur at moments of epiphany.

In what follows I will analyse how and why trees shaped Ruskin’s work on environment, building, and social organisation. Beginning by briefly analysing the manner in which Ruskin turned from synthetic to organic models of epistemological organisation, I will argue that organic order became central to his thinking during the 1850s and 1860s, and that trees provided one of the most important means to articulate this notion of order. A brief historical review of the interplay in Europe between architecture, religion, and forests will contextualise the detailed study that follows of the relationship between trees and buildings in Ruskin’s *The Stones of Venice* and *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (1854). I will then turn to ‘Of Leaf Beauty’, in order to demonstrate that the interpenetration of architectural and organic discourse in Ruskin’s work was not unidirectional: his use of tree analogies to describe buildings is matched by employment of architectural

figures to describe trees. I will suggest that the co-operative social principle found in the life of trees provided one template for the kind of society Ruskin envisaged in *Unto This Last*. These enquiries as a whole will reveal that for Ruskin, creativity – whether in art, architecture, nature, or society – was conceived as an act of growth, described in narratives of connection, development, interaction, mutuality, and generation. Trees acted as a multivalent analogy for creative process, so that the organic impulse Ruskin described in his work on trees extended to all of his discourses: as I intend to demonstrate, there was essentially no difference in Ruskin's mind between the growth of a tree, the building of Gothic architecture, and the development of harmonious societies.

## I. Organic order

In 1860, in the preface to *Modern Painters V* (1860), Ruskin acknowledged that many had found *Modern Painters* disorganised and digressive, but he responded by arguing that his evolving concerns were not evidence of weakness. Such 'oscillations of temper, and progressions of discovery, extending over a period of seventeen years, ought not to diminish the reader's confidence in the book', he insisted, but instead indicated that the work was sound, its state of growth a marker of truthful creative energy. A thinker whose ideas became ossified was to be mistrusted, because 'unless important changes are occurring in his opinions continually, all his life long, not one of those opinions can be on any questionable subject true'.<sup>2</sup> In a statement that reveals the degree to which Ruskin's intellectual vision was transformed during the writing of *Modern Painters*, he declared that 'all true opinions are living, and show their life by being capable of nourishment; therefore of change'. 'Their change', he insisted, 'is that of a tree – not of a cloud' (7. 9).

The choice, at this time, of tree growth as the template for intellectual creativity is worth noting. This selection of an arboreal model for intellectual enquiry marked a clear rejection of the previous means by which he had shaped his intellectual enquiries. When he began *Modern Painters* in 1843, he had conceived of knowledge as a static realm of logical categorisations and synthetic abstractions, and had organised his work into an elaborate Lockean cabinet of parts, sections, chapters, and sub-divisions designed to 'prove' the superiority of J.M.W. Turner over ancient landscapists.<sup>3</sup> In 1856, as Ruskin wrote the preface to *Modern Painters III*, his position was already in a state of transformation. There, he abruptly declared to readers that he would now follow a 'not very elaborate structure' (5. 5) in his art criticism, or 'pursue the inquiry in a method so laboriously systematic'. His previous methods had become unhelpful to him: 'the subject may, it seems to me, be more usefully treated by pursuing the different questions which arise out of it just as they occur to us, without too great scrupulousness in making connections, or insisting on sequence (5. 18). This liberating abandonment of the logical principles that his system had entailed meant rejecting linear systematics in favour of a seemingly haphazard organising principle. That one should study subjects without worrying about the order of connections was both a rejection of sequential systems and the announcement of a conviction that had been growing at least since *The Stones of Venice*. Spurning not just his earlier approach, but systematisation as a whole, he argued that 'much time is wasted by human beings, in general, on establishment of systems' which were ultimately made up of 'artificial connection[s]' (5. 18).

Synthetic systems, which had underpinned his activities a decade earlier, now seemed unnatural. Ruskin's attack on his former purposes tellingly evoked a natural analogy. 'System-makers', he argued, 'are not of much more use, each in his own domain, than, in that of Pomona, the old women who tie cherries upon sticks, for the more convenient portableness of the same' (5. 18). Ruskin argued that it was better if the cherries 'can be had in their own wild way of clustering about their crabbed stalk'. This original organic order, he insisted, was 'a better connection for them than any other', so that if it had to be disrupted by an act of external ordering, 'it makes to a boy of a practical disposition not much difference whether he gets them by handfuls, or in beaded symmetry on the exalted stick (5. 18). Only the original, organic organisation was genuinely truthful. All subsequent efforts to take this original apart in acts of analysis, to isolate and re-organise components, were inherently flawed. Whether one chose to take 'handfuls' or 'beads' of truth was irrelevant once dismemberment had occurred. How to proceed became in part a personal choice, and in declaring this, Ruskin divested himself of the absolute commitment to objectivity upon which his earlier work had insisted, and re-modelled himself as 'a boy of practical disposition' whose subsequent studies would follow organic order. His crucial realisation in *Modern Painters III* – that whatever order of enquiry was chosen, all subjects were connected at an organic level – had already begun to be articulated in the major architectural works of the early 1850s, to which I will turn shortly. By the time he wrote the preface to *Modern Painters V*, he had fully embraced this organic model, and elaborated it further. By examining *The Stones of Venice* and other architectural writings, it will become clear that the organic model that became useful to Ruskin as a template for intellectual enquiry and personal growth, arose out of its genesis in his descriptions of the process of building.

## II. The Verdant Cross

A second context now needs to be addressed. Simon Schama's studies of forest iconography in Christian art and architecture are useful in contextualising the discussion that will follow of Ruskin's contribution to debates about forests and Gothic. Schama points out that the impact of forest landscapes on the built environment was located in processes of cultural formation that helped societies define themselves in relation to history, spirituality, and ethics. Use of forest iconography within Christian iconography derived from pagan nature-worship. While the spread of Christianity into northern Europe was often disrupted by tree cults, with missionaries taking draconian measures to curb adherence to sacred groves, pagan tree cults profoundly influenced the culturally acquisitive Christianity that sought their destruction (Schama 1995, 214-8). Throughout Europe, the image of a dead tree which sprang to life was a persistent feature of paganism, and had obvious parallels with church teachings. Christianity, Schama argues, was unable to resist 'the irresistible analogy between the vegetable cycle and the theology of sacrifice and immortality', and instead drew upon a tradition in which holy trees 'function as symbols of renewal' (Schama 1995, 218). The story of the crucifixion (on a wooden cross) of the carpenter Christ incorporated this iconography, and the verdant cross retained symbolic potency in Christian art (Davies, 1988, 39-40). The tradition of sacred pagan groves was transmuted into holy trees, such as the Glastonbury Thorn, while Marian pilgrimage sites were frequently found in woods or next to venerable trees (Schama, 217-8; Davies, 34). Schama identifies a

physical destruction of pagan groves, but also their re-working as sites for churches, hermitages or monasteries – a re-inscription of the sacredness of the original site (Schama 1995, 217-8).

The relationship in Ruskin's Venetian work between trees and architecture was, therefore, already deeply embedded within the complex of European religious culture. In charting a relationship between forest and cathedral, Ruskin followed another well-established tradition. Vitruvius's *De Architectura* (c. 15 BCE) provided the first argument that architecture evolved from the primitive wooden hut. In the middle ages, fanciful variations on Vitruvius's narrative abounded, suggesting that early humans had fashioned rude shelters from the branches of trees; that the use of tree trunks prefigured Classical columns; or that Gothic arches owed their genesis to the lashing together of crude tree branches to form roofs (Schama 1995, 228-9). The organic spirit behind such ideas formed a strong thread in the minds of Gothic builders themselves, particularly in fifteenth and sixteenth century Germany, where a style developed that was 'something like the opposite of classical theory' because 'instead of conceiving sacred space as a shelter closed off against the forest wilderness, it was meant to embody it'. This 'attempt to inscribe organicism into the features of the building itself, to dissolve the boundaries between nature and architecture', was 'the culmination of the long process by which the ancient Germanic and Celtic pagan groves had become fully converted to Christian use' (Schama 1995, 228). The eighteenth century witnessed a resurgence of interest in mediaeval architecture that led a host of writers to speculate on the relationship between Gothic and environment. At the heart of their concerns was an attempt to explore and sometimes to dissolve the 'boundaries between nature and architecture'.<sup>4</sup> While Ruskin clearly shared such concerns, his project was broader still in its implications.

As a Christian, Ruskin faced difficulties in reconciling his abiding love of nature with an Evangelical creed that promoted distrust of physicality and nature. Just as the early church was unwilling to acknowledge appropriations of arboreal symbols, so Ruskin faced the problem of celebrating a natural realm described in *Genesis* as fallen. In so doing, he reclaimed nature as a positive force, and found there an originary model of creativity. For many early Christians, he noted, 'the indeterminate, boundless forest' was 'Europe's version of the Hebraic desert wilderness' to be reclaimed and pastoralised by missionaries. For mediaeval minds, woods were morally suspect: 'to Dante the idea of a forest is [so] exceedingly repulsive [that] he cannot express a general despair about life more strongly than by saying he was lost in a wood so savage and terrible, that "even to think or speak of it is distress"' (5. 273). Ruskin's geographical determinism contrasted a southern European love of 'open air and open meadows' to an 'English' passion for woodlands: while Southern European forests were remote, 'a type of lonely and savage places', English woods came 'up to the very walls of the towns, [and] it was possible to be "merry in the good greenwood," in a sense which an Italian could not have understood' (5. 273-4). In 'Of Leaf Beauty', he would go further, describing trees as a 'race of plants, deserving boundless affection and admiration from us' and which represented such a 'perfect test of our being in right temper of mind' that 'no one can be far wrong in either who loves the trees enough, and every one is assuredly wrong in both who does not love them, if his life has brought them in his way' (7. 16). This devotion to forests, like his passion for Catholic architecture, sat uneasily alongside Evangelical doctrine, but his enthusiasm for both was unwavering.

### III. The Naturalness of Gothic

In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), Ruskin argued that Gothic spires evoked the form of coniferous trees and a desire to ascend to heaven. Gothic forms were beautiful, 'not *because* they are copied from nature' but because 'it is out of the power of man to conceive beauty without her aid' (8. 141). That Ruskin rooted aesthetic pleasure in nature inevitably had broader implications. By drawing on the animate energies of nature, rather than on formalistic human laws of design, Gothic workers expressed faith in a God who had 'stamped those characters of beauty which He has made it man's nature to love' (8. 142). Classical architecture, seen as mechanical, repetitive, and obsessed with symmetrical proportion, was condemned as a denial of the aesthetic gifts bestowed upon humanity.

In defining 'the Nature of Gothic' in *The Stones of Venice II* (1853), Ruskin identified key characteristics (Savageness, Changefulness, Naturalism, Grotesqueness, Rigidity and Redundance) which, when 'mingled', revealed its essence. All of these reflected its roots in northern European forests (10. 184). Savageness recalled the forest's 'creatures of ungainly shape and rigid limb [...] full of wolfish life' (10. 187). Changefulness reflected both natural cyclicity and the individual expressive freedom of the Gothic worker: anticipating the preface to *Modern Painters V*, he argued that 'change and variety is as much a necessity to the human heart and brain in building as in books'. Only Gothic innovation produced forms 'capable of perpetual novelty' (10. 207, 208). 'Of Truth of Vegetation' in *Modern Painters I* had already elegised this 'perpetual novelty', but also argued that changefulness was kept within bounds by organic laws that meant nature was capable of self-expression, but incapable of arbitrary forms:

One of the most remarkable characters of natural leafage is the constancy with which, while the leaves are arranged on the spray with exquisite regularity, that regularity is modified in their actual effect [and] gives rise to a thousand strange and differing forms in the group; and the shadows [...] still farther disguise and confuse the mass, until the eye can distinguish nothing but a graceful and flexible disorder (3. 588).

In a letter to a Miss Lockwood, Ruskin commented that the 'anatomical laws in trees are [...] just as stern as laws as those of the growth of animals' (5. 431): as he would reveal in 'Of Leaf Beauty' (1860) leaf buds occurred on branches according to a series of species-specific patterns (opposite, alternate, or spiral forms), and in 'Of Truth of Vegetation' he pointed out that the exigencies of climate and accident ensured that actual tree growth was never entirely formalised. Nature avoided Classicist regularity, on the one hand, and disorder on the other, so that 'however regular and mathematical may be the structure of parts, what is composed out of them is as various and infinite as any other part of nature (3. 588). Ruskin's rapture at the multiplicity of forms arising from the mathematical-environmental organisation of leaf formation led to a significant eulogy. In discovering that 'there is no bush on the face of the globe exactly like another bush', no 'two trees in the forest whose boughs bend into the same network', nor even 'two leaves on the same tree which could not be told one from the other' he found a maxim for what he found valuable about the forms of environment: 'the truths of nature are one eternal change, one infinite variety' (3. 145). By closely examining this 'mass of various, yet agreeing beauty' in leaf form, one could identify 'the conception of the constant character—the ideal form—hinted at by all, yet assumed by none' (3. 145- 6). Leaving aside – until later –

the seemingly Classicist tone of the final sentence, it is clear that Ruskin recognised that trees were involved in a dynamic and complex series of environmental interactions.

All of the features of Gothic reveal Ruskin's belief in its natural roots. Naturalism, the third feature, represented 'the love of natural objects for their own sake, and the effort to represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistical laws' (10. 215). The Grotesque, a 'delight in fantastic and ludicrous, as well as in sublime images', arose from experience of forests and moorlands (10. 239). Within Ruskin's complex definition of Rigidity was an evocation of an 'active rigidity', a 'peculiar energy which gives tension to movement', demonstrated in the laws of organic growth which made 'the stoutest oak-branch angular rather than bending' (10. 239). In Gothic tracery Ruskin found 'a stiffness analogous to that of [the] fibres of a tree' (10. 240). The final characteristic – Redundance, or the accumulation of lavish decoration – acted as tribute to nature's abundant variety. Rather than reproaching Gothic architecture for its embellishments, as one might expect of an Evangelical writer, Ruskin regarded decorative luxury as a mark of humility, superior to the 'haughty' architecture, consisting of 'a few clear and forceful lines' which implied, 'in offering so little to our regards, that all it has offered is perfect' (10. 244). In opposition to an ascetic Protestant withdrawal from physicality, Ruskin delighted in exuberance, excess, and growth, and this five years before his famous 'unconversion' from Evangelicalism. During the 1840s and 1850s, Ruskin stood apart from fellow Evangelicals in his passion for nature. By 1860, he even doubted the relevance of its doctrines, arguing that 'there may, indeed, have been a Fall of Flowers' but that 'creatures such as we are can now fancy nothing lovelier than roses and lilies, which would grow for us side by side, leaf overlapping leaf, till the Earth was white and red with them, if we cared to have it so' (7. 13). For Ruskin the promise of redemption through nature was not withdrawn, but remained immanent, a daily opportunity to be actively sought in woods, meadows and mountains, and amongst architecture that expressed the organic impulse inscribed upon Creation.

#### **IV. *the trees of Venice***

Denis Cosgrove (1995, 88) argues that Ruskin followed a mediaeval system of dividing the world into frigid, temperate and torrid climatic zones. Ruskin located 'Venice as *axis mundi*, at the centre of the world, the meeting point of the three great cultural streams, each originating in one of the broad climatic zones: the Gothic from the frigid zone, the classical from the temperate, and the Arab from the torrid' (Cosgrove 1995, 88). The key architectural styles of Europe – Greek, Byzantine, and Gothic – each reflected the physical conditions in which they arose. Nature acted both as template for art and architecture, and as one of the principal factors in the creation of cultures. The perfection of Venetian architecture lay in its ability to assimilate what Ruskin believed to be the three great cultures of the world. In this geographical conceptualisation of cultural formation, vegetation was crucial, for gardens were seen as key markers of civilisation: 'wherever men exist in a perfectly civilized and healthy state, they have vegetation around them'. Such a 'dressing of garden' might 'approach' a state 'of innocence or perfectness,' or even 'of Paradise', for even the most 'abstract or fragmentary form' of natural decoration had value: 'a single leaf laid upon the angle of a stone, or the mere form or framework of the leaf drawn upon it, or the mere shadow and ghost of



the leaf' all possessed 'a charm which nothing else can replace; a charm not exciting, nor demanding laborious thought or sympathy, but perfectly simple, peaceful, and satisfying' (9. 279). Vegetation and civilisation collide in these writings, their boundaries blurring in a manner that indicated a retreat from Evangelical mistrust of nature and of pre-Christian cultures. While Ruskin suggested that 'the full recognition of leaf forms, as the general source of subordinate decoration, is one of the chief characteristics of Christian architecture', he also traced the roots of this tendency to 'pagan' cultures. 'The Greek acanthus, and the Egyptian lotus' were foundational sources of decoration, so that 'all the florid capitals of the richest Northern Gothic on the one hand, and the arrowy lines of the severe Lombardic capitals on the other' would be 'founded on these two gifts of the dust of Greece and the waves of the Nile'. (9. 279-80).

Ruskin's frequent references to leaves, flowers and trees in *The Stones of Venice* make clear that he viewed Gothic as sylvan architecture:

Many forest trees present, in their accidental contortions, types of most complicated spiral shafts [...] nor, indeed, will the reader ever find models for every kind of shaft decoration, so graceful or so gorgeous, as he will find in the great forest aisle, where the strength of the earth itself seems to rise from the roots into the vaulting (9. 358).

Arguing for an arboreal source for Gothic, Ruskin saturated his description of trees with architectural terminology: the avenue of trees became an 'aisle', the canopy 'vaulting', and, as the description continued, the tree trunk became a 'shaft', 'barred as it expands', 'fretted with traceries of ivy', 'marbled' with moss, and 'veined' with lichen. This reading of the source of Gothic ornament attended to tree structure, but also to the 'decoration' that grew on their surfaces as part of dynamic relationships with other organisms. The blurred boundaries between vegetation and architecture indicated their shared creative practices. In addition, what Ruskin perceived as the free creativity of the Gothic worker in the production of decoration meant that the process of building was also organic, rather than delimited by restrictive prior design. These central features of Gothic – the primacy of ornament and the free creativity of the sculptor – were at the heart of the generally flawed attempts of Ruskin and others to produce an organic Gothic architecture for the modern world.<sup>5</sup>

The relationship between forests and architecture was more widespread and complex, illustrating the multivalent power of organic metaphors. Earlier in the volume, for example, trees symbolise the development of Gothic itself:

For some time [...] the sculpture of trees was confined to bas-relief; but it at last affected even the treatment of the main shafts in Lombard Gothic buildings, —as in the western façade of Genoa, where two of the shafts are represented as gnarled trunks: and as bas-relief itself became more boldly introduced, so did tree sculpture, until we find the writhed and knotted stems of the vine and fig used for angle shafts on the Doge's Palace, and entire oaks and apple-trees forming, roots and all, the principal decorative sculptures of the Scala Tombs at Verona (9. 278).

Ornament engaged directly with living forest forms, and again the emphasis was on trees as dynamic organisms: shafts are 'gnarled', 'writhed and knotted', and rooted into the earth. As the passage unfolded, the tree analogy even provided a narrative of Gothic decline:

It was then discovered to be more easy to carve branches than leaves [...] The system reached full development in a perfect thicket of twigs, which form the richest portion of the decoration of the porches of Beauvais. It had now been carried to its richest extreme; men wearied of it and abandoned it, and like all other natural and beautiful things, it was ostracised by the mob of Renaissance architects [...] The Renaissance frosts came, and all perished (9. 278).

By using the figure of a tree's development as a seamless image of maturation and decline, Ruskin implied that Gothic architecture was organic, limited by the same environmental exigencies as trees, while at the same time rendering Renaissance architecture a wintry, inorganic force. In a pre-echo of his remarks in the preface to *Modern Painters V*, Ruskin described Gothic creativity as inextricably linked to organic processes and natural forms:

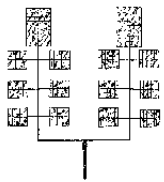
It is interesting to observe how the human mind, in its acceptance of this feature of ornament, proceeded from the ground, and followed as it were, the natural growth of the tree. It began with the rude and solid trunk as at Genoa; then the branches shot out, and became loaded with leaves; autumn came, the leaves were shed, and the eye was directed to the extremities of the delicate branches (9. 278).

As I will now demonstrate, Ruskin argued that because Renaissance thinkers were unable to express the broader truths of nature – and in particular its creativity and growth – they were only able to idealise and distort its forms through Classicist rules (9. 278).

## V. Gothic and Classical Trees

Having indicated the manner in which Ruskin conflated vegetation, civilisation, and spirituality, it is also evident that he erected a sharp division between Gothic organicism and Classical synthetics. His critique of

Classicism was amplified in one of his 1853 Edinburgh public engagements, published in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (1854), where trees were again at the heart of attempts to persuade the audience of the primacy of Gothic. In the first lecture, 'Architecture', and echoing his remarks in *Lamps*, he contended that the pointed arch was beautiful 'because its form is one of those which, as we know by its frequent occurrence in the work of Nature around us, has been appointed by the Deity to be an everlasting source of pleasure to the human mind' (12. 24). Engaging audience and readers in an imaginary empirical investigation of woodlands, Ruskin asked them to gather a branch of a mountain ash tree, and offered 'a sketch of the clusters of leaves which form the extremity of one of its young shoots', a sketch, he argued, that 'will furnish us with an interesting illustration of another error in modern architectural systems (12. 24; see fig. 4 below). Mountain ash leaves, he noted, 'spring from the stalk *precisely as a Gothic vaulted roof springs*, each stalk representing a rib of the roof, and the leaves its crossing stones' so that their beauty was 'altogether owing to its terminating in the Gothic form, the pointed arch' (12. 25).



Spring of Ash-tree, and Improvement of the same on Gothic Principles.

Having established a correlation between nature and Gothic, Ruskin used apostrophe to draw an Edinburgh audience into an unlikely alliance against neo-Classicism: 'you know how fond modern architects, like foolish

modern politicians, are of their equalities, and similarities; how necessary they think it that each part of a building should be like every other part', he told them (12. 25). Nature, though, 'abhors equality, and similitude, just as much as foolish men love them'. The characteristic leaves of the mountain ash take 'the form of a cross', but while the audience might 'at first [...] suppose the four arms of the cross are equal', the truth was more complex (12. 25-6). Urged to look 'more closely', they would find 'that two opposite arms or stalks have only five leaves each, and the other two have seven; or else, two have seven, and the other two nine; but always one pair of stalks has two leaves more than the other pair' (12. 25). As in 'Of Truth Of Vegetation', leaf forms united mathematical law and environmental dynamics, defying perfect symmetry, and achieving a beauty unavailable to Classical design:

Do you think you would have liked your ash trees as well, if nature had taught them Greek, and shown them how to grow according to the received Attic architectural rules of right? I will try you. Here is a cluster of ash leaves, which I have grown expressly for you on Greek principles [fig. 6 above]. How do you like it? (12. 26).

The deft critique, emphasised by the sarcastic title of the illustrations to figures 4 and 6 – 'Spray of Ash-tree, and Improvement of the same on Greek Principles' – echoed an attack in *The Stones of Venice I* on Classicist 'improvements' on nature, where he argued that 'there is material enough in a single flower for the ornament of a score of cathedrals' and that new designers might build 'a score of cathedrals, each to illustrate a single flower' (9. 406).

Against this position, Ruskin quoted 'not the least intelligent' of modern architects, Mr Garbett, who suggested that architecture involved exactly the 'renovation' of nature that Ruskin would parody in 'Architecture'. Garbett argued that 'it is not true that all natural forms are beautiful' and that when natural forms, such as individual leaves are 'exhibited alone (by sculpture or carving)' they are 'not all fitted for ornamental purposes'. Perhaps none of them, he argued, 'are so fitted without correction'. Garbett's emphasis was unambiguous:

Yes, I say *correction*, for though it is the highest aim of every art to imitate Nature, this is not to be done by imitating any natural form, but by *criticising* and *correcting* it,—criticising it by Nature's rules gathered from all her works, but never completely carried out by her in any one work.

This 'correction' rendered forms 'more natural, *i.e.*, more conformable to the general tendency of Nature (9. 407).<sup>6</sup> Garbett invoked Raphael's maxim that, "the artist's object was to make things not as Nature makes them, but as she WOULD make them;" as she ever tries to make them, but never succeeds' (9. 407). Ruskin's reference in 'Of Truth of Vegetation' to nature's 'mass of various, yet agreeing beauty' from which is found 'the conception of the constant character—the ideal form—hinted at by all, yet assumed by none' (3. 145- 6) must now be understood. At first, this appears to coincide with Garbett's notion of 'ideal form', but Ruskin's 'ideal nature' was never an attempt to improve upon or to correct nature. Ruskin described Raphael's maxim as 'stale, second-hand, one-sided, and misunderstood', arguing that as 'a painter of humanity', he 'assuredly [...] *had* something to mend', but that nature was a different matter: 'I should have liked to have seen him mending a daisy!—or a pease-blossom [...] or any other of God's slightest works'. If he could do that, 'one might have found for him more respectable employment,—to set the stars in better order, perhaps (they

seem grievously scattered as they are, and to be of all manner of shapes and sizes,—except the ideal shape, and the proper size). Increasingly acerbic, Ruskin bemoaned ‘these unhappy arrow shots of Nature’, regretting that as ‘she will never hit her mark with those unruly waves of hers, nor get one of them into the ideal shape’ we must ‘send for a Greek architect to do it for her’ (9. 407-9). For Ruskin, a Classicist preoccupation with form never acknowledged that nature was in a state of growth. The artist’s work, Ruskin concluded, was not to merely ‘copy, and again copy, for ever, the imagery of the universe’ but to respond to a universe that was ‘infinite’, ‘unfathomable’, and ‘inconceivable, in its whole’ in order to ‘set forth what he [sic] has learned of it for those beneath him’. Through contemplation of divine nature, it became possible for a human being to ‘write upon it the history of his [sic] own soul’ (9. 409-10).

## VI. The building of trees

Ruskin’s architectural writing demonstrates that trees provided a primary exemplar for architectural endeavour, and offered physical templates for particular features, direct metaphors for the building process, and for the development of Gothic. At the heart of this was his rejection of Classical synthetics in favour of organicism. In turning to Ruskin’s descriptions of tree growth, we find the relationship between vegetation and architecture remained intact, though inverted. In ‘Of Leaf Beauty’, as Ruskin sought to describe the development of trees from germination to maturation, he drew on architectural terminology, and made direct comparisons between stone and wood. The botanical classification he outlined in 1860 depicted trees as ‘building plants’, and as ‘architectural edifices’ (7. 21). Each stage of growth which Ruskin subsequently narrated extended these metaphors. Trees were ‘a spire built downwards from the heaven’; the spiral formation of leaf buds on oak twigs recalled ‘a twisted spire’; whilst one year of a twig’s growth represented ‘one pinnacle of the tree-cathedral (7. 62, 34, 25). Such metaphors emphasised the designing hand of the Maker in the processes shared by tree growth and Gothic building. These parallel metaphors were sustained until they became analogies for the construction of just societies. For Ruskin, building was a basic – and deeply significant – act, through which cultures could be understood: the morality of Venice or Britain was inscribed in stone, and their morality rested not merely upon faith, but upon love of nature. Ruskin’s painstaking descriptions of tree growth in ‘Of Leaf Beauty’ and of the construction of Gothic forms in *The Stones of Venice* carried the same fundamental message: good buildings arise from good builders, and good builders learn from the divinity of nature.

In both texts, architecture represented a means of entry to political commentary. For Ruskin, it was impossible to speak of architectural work without analysing the societies from which they arose: the decline of Gothic coincided, he felt, with the decline of Guild social organisation and a turn towards Renaissance corruption. In his narrative of the contribution of each individual leaf bud to the eventual form and style of the finished ‘tree building’, there was the same recognition of the role of builders. In the analogy between tree development and architectural construction, and in his description of the yearly work of each tree bud within the grand architectural project, Ruskin stressed the dependence of present generations on the acts of their forbears. In ‘Of Leaf Beauty’, leaves were endowed with a form of will that permitted them to express a Gothic faith in God, nature, and community:

Each [leaf bud] works hard with solemn forethought all its life. Perishing, it leaves its work in the form which will be most useful to its successors - its own monument, and their inheritance (7. 21).

The *monumental* nature of tree building revealed that each human generation also had the opportunity to foster the spiritual, creative and cultural growth of the next. The long development of his ideas in the direction of social policy, and towards an attack on Victorian liberalism was, by 1860, being articulated even in his botany.

In Ruskin's architectural figures trees were likened to *buildings*, but also described as *builders*. It might appear paradoxical that these 'architectural edifices' constructed themselves, but this merely emphasised that the boundary between builders and building had dissolved: interchangeable, indivisible, both articulated an organic order which Ruskin wished modern architects and society to adopt. His attempts to highlight the shared practices of nature and architecture called upon contemporaries to learn from tree growth that only co-operation and faith could produce beauty. Ruskin's trees pursued a creative process that was neither taught nor learnt, but inherent: by taking a tree model for the act of building, Ruskin argued that social progress was possible only by willing adherence to the needs of others, and by the renunciation of personal gain. Beautiful trees, buildings, and societies were all reliant on a careful balance between freedom and submission. The failure of Victorian Gothic to become anything more than a shadow of its illustrious forebear was in the end an illustration of a modern inability to understand the lessons of tree life.

## VII. Building the Society of Trees

As 'Of Leaf Beauty' unfolded, social metaphors emerged from Ruskin's botany, clearly revealing the context in which his tree studies must be located. Ruskin's invocation of trees as builder-communities was one means by which he advanced his social critique at the end of the 1850s. That his tree studies and the incendiary collection of essays on political economy in *The Cornhill Magazine* (published in 1862 as *Unto This Last*) were both released in 1860 was not coincidental, for both works articulated the same critique of liberalism and the same call for the creation of organic communities.

In 'Of Leaf Beauty', each leaf bud was described as an architect or builder, a decidedly Gothic individual restrained willingly by social network and blood ties, and immersed in a monumental collective act of creativity. The 'perfect fellowship' of tree buds was dependent on 'harmony, obedience, distress, and delightful inequality' (7. 98). Individual buds were permitted to follow their 'individual pleasure, freedom, and caprice', but only 'so far as may be consistent with the universal good' (7. 98). Each leaf bud struggled to add to the architectural edifice of the tree, but many perished in this articulation of common will. Indeed, it was only through 'trouble and death', 'distress, trial, and pleasure' that buds experienced fellowship and created beauty (7. 98). Ruskin wholeheartedly commended this society as a model:

We men, sometimes, in what we presume to be humility, compare ourselves with leaves; but we have as yet no right to do so. The leaves may well scorn the comparison. We, who live for ourselves, and neither know how to use nor keep the work of past time, may humbly learn [that] the power of

every great people, as of every living tree, depends on its not effacing, but confirming and concluding, the labours of its ancestors (7. 99-100).

Against Victorian mechanical values, Ruskin promoted an organicism which, like his concept of Vital Beauty in *Modern Painters II* (1846), promised ‘the felicitous fulfilment of function in living things [...] of the joyful and right exertion of perfect life in man’ (4. 64). Ruskin’s attack on liberalism and its materialisation of the human soul was predicated on a call for a return to Guild-style communitarianism, an organic social organisation that might reverse the disintegration of society into unconnected individuals. His tree metaphor was both conservative and radical. Quite unlike Edmund Burke and other eighteenth-century conservatives, Ruskin was uninterested in figuring trees as symbols of an unchanging aristocratic order – the tree iconography of the French Revolutionary period is barely relevant here – but at the same time his trees called for the adoption of values of self-abnegation and subservience to broader needs that could certainly be described as conservative.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, his primal model of growth, interaction, mutuality, co-operation and change, located in nature, but also in Gothic architecture, rested upon a radical refusal to envisage human beings as walking matter, atoms disconnected in sympathy from those around them, and motivated only by competition. As I will suggest a little later, one could also find almost anarchistic views in Ruskin’s tree figuration.

Both Ruskin’s architectural work and his tree studies articulated a concern for the social repercussions of building, but it was in ‘Of Leaf Beauty’ that he first articulated in full the organicist social vision that had begun to form in *The Stones of Venice*. Ruskin had long argued that Gothic workers, rooted in Guild culture, freely expressed their organic social values in stone. On an individual and collective level, tree societies were equally engaged in co-operative social dynamics:

Every branch has others to meet or to cross, sharing with them, in various advantage, what shade, or sun, or rain is to be had. Hence every single leaf-cluster presents the general aspect of a little family, entirely at unity among themselves, but obliged to get their living by various shifts, concessions, and infringements of the family rules, in order not to invade the privileges of other people in their neighbourhood (7. 48).

These social units regulated their growth ‘by the sense of each other’s remote presence, and by a watchful penetration of leafy purpose in the far future’ (7. 48). Leaves refused to compete with one another for light, and instead arranged themselves in ways which sought to enable all to share common resources. Leaf communities presented a figurative model for a highly organised society, composed of individuals who expressed in their building the spiritual and physical hurdles they had overcome: the ‘ruggedness and ill-temperedness’ of many branches was ‘an essential source of branch beauty: being in reality the written story of all the branch’s life, – of the theories it formed, the accidents it suffered, the fits of enthusiasm to which it yielded in certain delicious warm springs; the disgusts at weeks of east wind, the mortifications of itself for its friends’ sakes; or the sudden and successful inventions of new ways of getting out to the sun’ (7. 93). The life of tree builders was a narrative of struggle in the face of seemingly insurmountable environmental difficulties. What saved them was an unerring instinct for co-operation. Ruskin directed readers to emulate a leaf’s ‘steady inheritance of resolution to reach forward in a given direction, or bend away from some given

evil influence' (7. 86). The desires of leaf and Gothic builder alike to reach towards God were exemplars for a Victorian society which Ruskin believed was becoming irreligious and immoral.

Ruskin's evocation of a harmonious tree society in which 'every leaf [...] connects its work with the entire and accumulated result of the work of its predecessors' (7. 99) acted as a call to abandon the competitive, industrial society that had arisen in his lifetime. In the dramatic culmination of 'Of Leaf Beauty', this unambiguous call was couched in tones of biblical prophecy, as he casts an eye 'back to the history of nations' in order to 'date the beginning of their decline from the moment when they ceased to be reverent in heart, and accumulative in hand and brain'. If only humans had 'protected the precious works of their fathers, with half the industry they have given to change and to ravage, they would not now have been seeking vainly, in millennial visions and mechanic servitudes', the promise God had long ago made to them: "As the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands; they shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them" (7. 100; *Isaiah*, lxxv. 23). Here, Ruskin's own spiritual doubts were overcome in yet another arboreal metaphor, and his continuing belief that the pages of the Divine book of nature were still legible was forcefully expressed.

### VIII. The economics of trees

The 'family' of leaves at the heart of Ruskin's figuration of tree behaviour were not exemplars of the self-interested *Homo economicus* of mainstream economics, but co-operative builders who produced beauty through solidarity. Ruskin unfavourably compared the formation of mineral crystals with the growth of a tree, taking the former as a symbol of laissez-faire economics: 'mineral crystals group themselves neither in succession, nor in sympathy' but instead 'recklessly strive for place, and deface or distort each other as they gather into opponent asperities' so that 'the confused crowd fills the rock cavity, hanging together in a glittering, yet sordid heap, in which nearly every crystal, owing to their vain contention, is imperfect or impure' (7. 49). Tree builders, on the other hand, eschewed competition, and 'the order of the leaves is one of soft and subdued concession' to a shared will, in which each individual leaf bud 'awaits its appointed time, accepts its prepared place [and] yields its required observance'. Despite the pressures of environment, 'the group yet follows a law laid down in its own heart; and all the members of it, whether in sickness or health, in strength or languor, combine to carry out this first and last heart law' (7. 49-50).

This inbuilt sense of community, a challenge to human social organisation, was extended in Ruskin's treatment to the 'economic' organisation of leaves. Because 'the more leaves the stalk has to sustain, the more strength it requires' it made sense that this physical expenditure should be funded:

Each [leaf], from the moment of his complete majority, pays a stated tax to the stalk; that is to say, collects for it a certain quantity of wood, or materials for wood, and sends this wood, or what ultimately will become wood, *down* the stalk to add to its thickness (7. 59).

The community of leaves, made up of households or families, operated in Ruskin's mind as an ideal society, in which harmonious relations were dependent upon sense of place, belonging, and duty. As Ruskin's account continued, political analogies became more elaborate:

A tree is born without a head. It has got to make its own head. It is born like a little family from which a great nation is to spring; and at a certain time under peculiar external circumstances, this nation, every individual of which remains the same in nature and temper, yet gives itself a new political constitution, and sends out branch colonies, which enforce forms of law and life entirely different from those of the parent state. That is the history of the state. It is also the history of a tree (7. 73).

A society that builds itself from its most humble constituents shares little with a society based on rule and hierarchy. There is, perhaps, something anarchistic about the idea of a nation that makes its own 'head' and which provides for itself a constitution. Despite the anti-democratic tone of much of Ruskin's later work, the society conceived in Ruskin's tree narrative was built from below, empowered by creative acts of building. Rather than a passive society, submitting to environment, this one strived against external imperatives, and in doing so, came to define itself. The ruling authority was not an embodied authority (a ruler), but a shared conviction. When, in the 1870s and 1880s, Ruskin attempted to put his social ideas into practice, he was unable to reproduce the harmonious order he discerned in the realm of trees. Instead of an unreflexive adherence to shared principles of co-operation, Ruskin's St. George's Guild, conceived as a series of environmentally-sustainable communities of co-operative artisans, inflicted a top-down structure on its members, in which 'a hierarchy ranging from the supreme 'Master' through provincial 'Marshals', 'Landlords', and 'Labourers', was drawn up' (Armytage, 1961, 291). The breakdown of the Guild amidst recrimination and failure was in part a result of a failure by Ruskin to effectively pursue the Carlylean leadership role he envisaged for himself. That he eschewed the more open and libertarian model of trees was perhaps also a marker of the impossibility of putting into practice the social organicism articulated there, but it is clear that in practice he diverged from the vision he had celebrated in 'Of Leaf Beauty'.

## **IX. Afterword: *Unto This Last***

Despite his later difficulties, the social order that Ruskin had described in tree communities had substantial echoes in the economic work that emerged in the same year as 'Of Leaf Beauty'. The co-operative principles at the heart of *Unto This Last* shared much with the vision articulated in his botany. *Unto This Last* rejected the tenets of laissez-faire liberalism on a number of issues. One of these was its failure to recognise that human beings, like leaf buds, were living organisms engaged in organic relations with those around them. The fundamental error of economists, Ruskin contended, was their belief 'that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection' (17. 25). In 'Of Leaf Beauty', Ruskin claimed that the beauty and strength of the tree society was based upon a sense of 'fellowship', but mainstream economics, according to Ruskin, believed that 'the social affections [...] are accidental and disturbing elements in human nature', whilst 'avarice and the desire for progress are constant elements' (17. 25). By reducing the human being to 'a covetous machine', such economists aimed to 'examine by what laws of labour, purchase, and sale, the greatest accumulative result in wealth is obtainable' (17. 25). To do so was to claim that political economy was a discrete discipline, entirely



unconnected from aesthetics, ethics, biology, or religion. Constituting itself as a separate 'social science', Victorian political economy had pretensions to grand and lofty impartiality that Ruskin wanted to undercut. The 'economic laws' offered by its practitioners were to Ruskin unworthy of association with the scientific laws of physical or organic phenomena, and one of the aims of *Unto This Last* was to examine economic 'laws' carefully in a context that would deliberately embrace exactly those fields excluded from mainstream study. 'I neither impugn nor doubt the conclusions of the science [of political economy], if the terms are accepted', he claimed. Rather, he was 'simply uninterested in them, as I should be in those of a science of gymnastics which assumed that men had no skeletons' (17. 26). He added that such a science of gymnastics might show 'that it would be advantageous to roll the students up into pellets, flatten them into cakes, or stretch them into cables' and that economists would argue from this only that 'the re-insertion of the skeleton would be attended with various inconveniences to their constitutions'. Because 'modern political economy' assumed that human beings were 'all skeleton', it based 'an ossifiant theory of progress on this negation of a soul' (17. 26). By assuming that in economic terms human beings were reducible to essentially antagonistic relations, like the mineral crystals he described in 'Of Leaf Beauty', competition became a byword for social relations: by following mainstream political economy it became 'convenient to consider men as actuated by no other moral influences than those which affect rats or swine' (17. 27). Economists, Ruskin remarked, assert that 'the greatest average of work will be obtained from the servant' by providing the minimum quantity of wages, and the minimum quality of accommodation and working conditions which would still permit the servant to continue functioning:

It would be so if the servant were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But he being, on the contrary, an engine whose motive power is a Soul, the force of this very peculiar agent, as an unknown quantity, enters into all the political economist's equations, without his knowledge, and falsifies every one of their results (17. 29).

Instead of a competitive model that rendered human beings machine-like automata, Ruskin desired that human relations be more like those of leaves.<sup>8</sup> Underpinning all of the recommendations of *Unto This Last* and his other social works of the 1860s and 1870s (welfare for all; re-training programmes; the minimum wage; regulated work hours; rent controls; public inspection of company accounts; graduated income tax; legal limits to income and profit; fixed prices for essential items; banning of advertising and sales; national agencies for the arts and for heritage), was a desire for a co-operative social model rooted in the organic way of life that he had described in the same year in 'Of Leaf Beauty'.<sup>9</sup>

Ruskin's immersion in the scientific, architectural, and social lessons of the forests are, I hope to have demonstrated, worthy of analysis. The sustained power of tree analogies in Ruskin's work was articulated throughout the 1850s and 1860s, displaying an ability to grow in a manner that indicated its own creative development. From the way in which Ruskin's descriptions of the forms and processes of Gothic architecture were saturated with arboreal analogies to the manner in which trees were used to deny Classicist logic and to promote an organic method of building, and from here to the manner in which trees themselves were celebrated as organic constructions that taught Christian ethics, social co-operation, and communitarian

purpose, trees are pivotal in Ruskin's work as a central and significant metaphor for all purposive and moral creativity.

### Notes

1. In particular, I believe that Ruskin responded to modern discoveries in a range of sciences, including ecology, geology, and anatomy, in a way that has not been adequately acknowledged. To treat the subject of Ruskin and science, however, is not possible within the remit of this article.
2. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, eds., *The Library Edition of John Ruskin's Works*. London: George Allen, 1903-12, 39 vols, 7. 9. All subsequent references to this edition will be given parenthetically within the text, in the form of volume and page numbers.
3. J. C. Sherburne was the first to point out similarities between the first two volumes of *Modern Painters* and Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). See Sherburne, J. C. 1972. *John Ruskin, or Ambiguities of Abundance: A Study in Social and Economic Criticism*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 11.
4. In the century before Ruskin writers, including Marc-Antoine Laugier, Goethe, Rousseau, William Stukeley, and Sir James Hall, commented on the relationship between Gothic and organicism. Hall, writing at the close of the eighteenth century, believed that Gothic architecture evolved from green buildings made by planting fresh rods in the ground and tying them together to form arches, and whilst many of Hall's contemporaries, including Schlegel, ridiculed his ideas, they indicate the growing interest in Gothic architecture which would reach perhaps its finest expression in the work of A. W. Pugin. Schama describes the work of Bishop Warburton, who argued in 1751 that a combination of Visigothic and Moorish influence created wholly new architectures which were 'conscious imitations of the ancient Germanic groves'. Warburton found correspondence between pointed arches and the 'curve which branches make by their intersection with one another', and between stained glass and 'the openings between leaves "concurring to preserve that gloomy light inspiring religious horror"' (Schama 1995, 230; Schama quotes from William Warburton, 'an Epistle to Lord Burlington' in Pope, Alexander, *Collected Works* (London, 1751).
5. Ruskin's involvement in the building of the Oxford Museum in the 1850s was illustrative of the difficulties of implementing his vision of Gothic architecture as organic, creative building. While Benjamin Woodward, the architect of the museum, was deeply indebted to Ruskinian ideas, and while the team of legendary Irish sculptors who worked on the decoration of the building were given a great deal of freedom, the building was seen by Ruskin, in later life, as something of a failure. In 1877, he wrote to Richard St. John Tyrwhitt acknowledging his own responsibility for the building, but declaring that 'I knew from the moment [Woodward] allowed iron work, it was all over with the building' and claiming in retrospect that 'nor did I ever approve the design' (Claiborne, 1969, 345-6). His early enthusiasm for the project – he hoped to 'get all the pre-Raphaelites to design me each an archivolt and some capitals and we will have all the plants in England and all the monsters in the museum' (Surtees, 1979, 95) – gave way to frustration and disillusionment. It could be argued that the museum exemplifies what Michael W. Brooks (1989, 128) describes as 'the same problem that we face with all Ruskinian architecture: that of determining how far Ruskin's doctrines were altered when they were applied by his admirers'. The key difficulty illustrated by the Oxford Museum debacle, however, was the impossibility of transferring a spiritually-rooted mediaeval organicism into a modern, industrial context. For Ruskin, the museum was built, but it simply did not grow.
6. Ruskin is probably referring to Edward Lacy Garbett's *Rudimentary Treatise on the Principles of Design in Architecture* (1850), but provides no clear reference. Edward Lacy was one of at least three generations of Garbett's who wrote on architectural theory, and represents the more orthodox views of trained architects against which Ruskin was contending in *Lamps and Stones*.
7. Although not particularly recent, probably the best account of the figurative uses of trees in eighteenth-century political culture is Stephen Daniels's 'The Political Iconography of Woodland in later Georgian England' (Daniels and Cosgrove, 1988, 43-73). Daniels demonstrates the manner in which trees offered iconographic potential to both radical and conservative figures in the years surrounding the French Revolution, and discusses the work of Burke, Thomas Paine, William Cobbett, Robert Southey, Oliver Goldsmith, and a range of romantic poets. Daniels argues that trees were deployed as symbols to naturalise the political positions adopted by various figures.
8. In *John Ruskin, Economist* (Edinburgh: William Brown, 1884), one of Ruskin's most influential acolytes, Patrick Geddes, saw *Unto This Last* as a work of biological and environmental economics, arguing that 'the general correspondence in principle and detail between biological principles on the one hand, and Mr Ruskin's most "unpractical" teaching on the other, is most remarkable' (Geddes, 1884, 34-5). If

followers of Darwin 'are indeed to draw full consequences from their greatest law – that organism is made by function and environment', they must recognise – as Geddes claimed Ruskin had done – that 'man, if he is to remain healthy and become civilised [...] must take especial heed of his environment' (Geddes, 1884, 35). Geddes rubbished the idea that in the 'sentiment *versus* science' debate, Ruskin was on the (wrong) side of sentiment'. Instead, 'his aesthetic economics was, because of its recognition of the lessons of function-environment, more scientific than the abstractions of mainstream economists', who fall prey to 'sheer blindness to the actual facts of human and social life' and produce a metaphysical mish-mash of ideas 'frozen into dismal and repellent form by a theory of moral sentiments which assumed moral temperature at its absolute zero' (Geddes, 1884, p. 36).

9. I am indebted to Professor Jim Spates for the listing of Ruskin's practical proposals. The list appears in 'Why Ruskin?', a paper given on February 23, 2001 as part of the Faculty Lunch Presentation series at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, New York; and now forthcoming in *The Friends of Brantwood Newsletter*, June 2009.

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## CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Ruskin: A Novel

Octavia Randolph

Part the second: The Lamp of Truth

One

Summer 1877

Ruskin determined to view the paintings at the Grosvenor Gallery alone. The faintness and bouts of dizziness were less frequent, and if he were mindful and above all avoided chatter and disruption, the viewing might allow him to add a few words about this new gallery's maiden exhibition to the issue of *Fors* he had nearly completed. He must go alone, and view the imagined extravagances and, he suspected, vulgarities of this new gallery without the yammering distraction of a companion. It was enough he would dine afterwards with Ned and Georgiana Burne-Jones; their undemanding company soothed and comforted him.

He finished his toilette in the top floor of the old Herne Hill house—"my old nursery-room, feeling like my true home" he had told his diary— by wrapping his habitual blue stock about his throat before pulling on a light coat appropriate to the June weather. The stock was silk, of corn-flower blue: a colour to be found in the miniatures gracing a medieval missal. It suited him, and his eyes, still blue and bright, brighter perhaps than loving friends should like to see. It was old-fashioned, that wearing of a stock, but he would no more surrender it than go out in public in his dressing gown. He caught a glimpse of himself in the looking glass by the door of his aerie and for the briefest of moments shuddered. He had gone out into the streets in his dressing gown, not here in London, but months ago in Verona, gone out of his rented rooms into the campo wearing his dressing gown of Turkey-red damask, and only became sensible of this commission by the admiring glances and La Giaconda half-smiles of the Veronese he passed. And he had written about this episode—why not?—in the following issue of *Fors*. Odd, how the attention wandered!

He kissed the sleeping image of St Ursula and left.

The Grosvenor Gallery on New Bond Street had opened in May. The product of Sir and Lady Coutts Lindsay's cultural aspirations (and Lady Mary's considerable fortune) was yet another alternative to the strictures of the selection committee over at the Royal Academy. This first exhibition was an outgrowth of Sir Coutts and Lady Mary's "artists' dinners" where prospective exhibitors had come to meet and mingle with hopes of an invitation to show at the new venue. It was purpose-built, and at great expense, as an art gallery, contained the suspect innovation of a restaurant, and had been hailed by several reviewers for its "Venetian atmosphere". As Ruskin approached the massive mahogany doors he wondered how Sir Coutts' decorators had conjured Venice.

Venice! Ruskin was lately returned from nine months wandering that hoary ruin, from glimmering September through the dank and frosty depths of winter and out again to the brilliance of May. He had spent more than three years of his life resident in La Serenissima, and knew her for the fickle and painted mistress she was—the allure of glittering mosaic and glinting water distracting the eye from the crumbling of rotten stone, the silent leaching of lime from ancient pallazi stripped naked of their marble by mercenary Austrians or the rapacity of Venetians themselves, the faded indecency of the hollow-eyed empty warehouses, once splendid with the world's mercantile treasures.

Thank God back in the '40's and '50's he had been there to document what he could. He had made notebook after notebook of measured drawings, delicate sketches of marble and limestone tracery, whole aspects of buildings before they fell to the brutal hands of the "restorers" and were spoilt forever! And what was left carted away, booty taken from this greatest repository of booty—doorways and archivolts prised out, window jambs, porphyry roundels, well heads, downspouts, even chimney pots wrenched off, crated up and shipped away for the delectation of American oil magnates and Liverpool button manufacturers. This very Grosvenor Gallery doorway had been ripped from the main portal of Santa Lucia in Venice! And hideous it was, too, the work of Andrea Palladio, that standard bearer of the Renaissance—the end of all honesty in architecture and painting, the beginning of conceit and corruption made manifest in stone and tempera.

But the paintings of Venice! In Doge's Palace and locked chapels in forgotten side canals they remained, in their majesty and quiet dignity—the Bellinis, the Tintorets, the intimate Annunciations and Visitations and Nativities and poignant palm-bearing martyrs. And above them all, Carpaccio, in the Accademia, with his cycle of the life and death of the little bear, Ursula, Celtic princess trothed to a pagan British king, choosing God and death.

Venice. His fingers brushed the raised carving of that entry door, and he recalled his Christmastide in Venice, tourists fled, few shops and restaurants open, even the beggars gone. Where? He'd walk each night as was his wont, fog rising from still canals, the dark water smoking and invisible beneath it, unlit calles forcing him to grope the peeling stone building fronts with his hands to make his way from campo to campo, the stone powdering under his fingertips. That brush with the carving of these looted doors recalled his then-eagerness to return to his rented rooms in the Calcina, back to the gimcrack gilded furniture and the sputtering coal fire and his copy of St Ursula, sleeping. Waiting for him.

Too much, too long had he studied that Carpaccio, crossing the palm of the superintendente of the Accademia to take it from the wall and set it up in an unused side room where it was his alone. The young princess-saint asleep in her high-canopied bed, receiving from the brilliant angel in her doorway the dream of the quest which would lead her to martyrdom. How he laboured over his copy, morning after morning with pencil and water-colour wash and over-glaze. His hand had trembled each time his brush touched her face. She was so like—so like—another who now slept, and eternally. He had spent too long on it, and too long in that city of glorious decay. His wits had strayed.

Today he had walked part of the way, a mistake. It was no longer possible to breathe deeply in London without the stink of sulphur burning one's nostrils and stinging one's lungs. A mephitic stench seemed to cling to his very garments. Even his home in the Lakes was fallen prey. Fewer and fewer clear days graced Brantwood; it too was being swallowed up by the miasma of locomotive smoke and the ghastly belchings of drifting factory fires. Soon all of England would be despoiled, and the deadly pall of industrialism overshadow and pollute every virgin loveliness with its choking dust and blackness. Filth and more filth, all to line the pockets of industrialists and the madness of consumers clamouring for ever cheaper and more degraded goods. England was as good as gone, and at this rate, could any part of Europe escape? Could even the Alps survive?

Now he was inside, blinking against the sky-lit harshness of the main gallery room beyond. A mildy astringant odour of freshly brushed shellac wafted to his nose. He picked up his programme and scanned the list of exhibitors: Burne-Jones of course; Watts; Poynter; Alma-Tadema; Moore; that clever girl Marie Stillman (she could show some of these men a thing or two about colour and subject!); Sir Coutts and Lady Mary Lindsay (that was rich—showing their own work in their own gallery); Whistler; the Frenchman Tissot; Millais...

Millais. There was genius! Natural, God-granted greatness, cast aside, lost and mired and squandered now in cranking out chocolate-box prettiness. Millais, a young David, his harp a paint-brush, fountainhead of the little band of truth-seekers who called themselves the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, who Ruskin had taken up as a younger brother—and then who had fallen in love with Ruskin's wife! He blinked again. That was twenty years past. More.

It was Saturday afternoon, late, an unfashionable time to be out, and there were blessedly few viewers in the main gallery. But the absence of attendees meant that the full force of the decoration of the place hit him without the mitigation of human figures in the foreground. All was of a matter of course, achingly new; the aniline dyes from the surplus of upholstery stung his eyes. The walls were covered in patterned crimson, the floors with Persia carpets. Tables and benches in white alabaster, looking for all the world as if your hand would freeze if you touched them, stood next to couches of dark green velvet. There was gaslight blazing overhead, and glass globes fashioned in rainbow colours, and looming vases of flowers and Minton china and painted silver stars and moons upon the ceiling coving.

He caught himself swaying under this assault, and sat down, perching on the edge of a velvet couch. From one of the entryways to the smaller galleries emerged the leonine figure of Sir Coutts, handsome as an actor. The baronet scanned the gallery and with a start of recognition caught sight of Oxford's Slade Professor of Art. One paragraph, nay one epigram, from the Master's pen could assure the success of his venture. The standard press had so far been kind, but should Ruskin endorse it—!

Smiling, Sir Coutts began to stride forward to meet the eminent personage, but was checked in his progress with a single yet severe nod from Ruskin's head. He was here as Art Critic, and must not be fawned upon or

distracted. Sir Coutts retreated, with a word to one of the uniformed attendants to be attentive to any needs or requests of Mr. Ruskin's. Ruskin rose and addressed himself to the task at hand.

Yes, he would write about this exhibition in this month's *Fors*. A representative slice of modern art-commerce lay around him. Here was a fit battleground on which to examine and joust with the pressing matter of honest value for work honestly done. Words began forming in his head, not rushing nor tumbling but an orderly march to conscious utterance. He had the unerring ability—an absolute ability—to ascertain from the opening word the conclusion of every sentence, regardless of length, subsidiary clauses, digressions—and drive towards it with utmost confidence. Not an ability he of a sudden realized, for that implied the acquisition of a skill—it was instinct with him.

An hour passed.

It was not all new work shown at the Grosvenor; some had been displayed in other galleries or in their artist's studios or the drawing rooms of fashionable London and Manchester and Birmingham. But there was enough fresh work, and fresh artists, and artists known to be "the coming thing" to offer variety, and enough really well-known men, like Watts and Millais, to pull a cross section of the art-viewing world through the looted doorway. It did not all exert the same demands on him; sight and time were too precious to be thrown away on amateur production or wrong-headedness. He studied his programme and planned the visit to leave the best for last, as a treat, and made his steady way through the rooms, stopping when warranted.

He was aware of a little murmur as he was recognized by the few viewers, some polite coughing and subtle gesturing behind him, and an almost imperceptible parting of onlookers making way before him. Some of them knew him by sight, or from photographic prints, and perchance some had even attended on his words at open lectures he had delivered. None approached him though, for which he was grateful not to be interrupted in his course of effort.

Near the end of his circuit he quickened his pace. His eyes felt tired and one was watering a little. In the past he had admired the realism of the veins in the Carrara marble depicted by Alma-Tadema's evocations of the ancient world. Today he passed by some "Roman" scenes of the Dutchman's, inhabited by sloe-eyed, milky-fleshed young women clad in film of gossamer, wanton and vacuous at once.

That Tissot—he had an eye, and a hand too, but was soul-starved for want of worthy subjects. Airless, trivialized studies of vulgar "smart" society, young women with an awful macadamized look of hardness; the men cachectic "swells" who might be guilty of Uranism.

What a relief to escape to the room dedicated to darling Ned's work! Much of course he'd seen before, but never quite together like this, and there were two new paintings as well, unfinished things, which in theory Ruskin didn't approve of showing but the temptation must have been great—and an unfinished Burne-Jones could have as much finish as a handful of other painter's completed works. This invitation to exhibit had been

important to Ned; since his nude Phyllis and Demophöon had been removed in an uproar from the Old Water Colour Society exhibition seven years ago he had scarcely been able to show anywhere. Now he was given a single gallery room to himself, save for a few pieces by that odd American-French chap Whistler.

The crowd was thicker here, more viewers in fact than in any other room, which irked him for his own sake but made him happy for his friend.

The centre piece of Burne-Jones' work was the six-panel Days of Creation, each panel presenting a life-size angel bearing a luminous globe in which was depicted the work of God's hand for that day. He felt the tension draining from his body as he stood before Ned's angels, placidly presenting the handiwork of the Creator. *Fiat lux*. Their round eyes and finely drawn lips belonged to neither man nor woman, rollicking putti nor sword-bearing archangel; and their manifest and yet neutral beauty made gazing upon them almost an salvific activity in itself. Surely these were what seraphim, if they possessed any corporality whatsoever, would resemble, an unknown and impossible mixed sex, lacking all carnality but combining the physical perfection of an idealized youth and maiden.

All of Burne-Jones' figures, be they kings or angels, were thus. All possessed a natural elegance of expression in their solemn but not sorrowing faces; and if the torsos and legs were unnaturally attenuated, well, it was the artist's ideal scotching Truth, and if anything was to attempt to scotch Truth, it had better be a well-conceived and executed ideal.

He was wearied now, and nearly sleepy. He had not slept well in months. But there was more of Ned to see, the Merlin. The Beguiling of Merlin, Ned called it, with the old and unwise sorcerer sinking to the earth amongst a fall of blossoms under the charms of the unscrupulous enchantress Nimuë. Both figures were swathed in dusky draperies, and Nimuë bore the strikingly beautiful face and form of Maria Zambuco, who Ned had made such a fool of himself over. The eyes of victim and prey were locked, Merlin's long-fingered hands powerless to rise against the female to whom he had lost his heart. His robes were midnight blue, with a sash fallen away from his neck to reveal the vulnerability of his throat. How terrible was love! Ruskin looked at his haggard face, the dark-rimmed eyes suffering under the pitiless gaze of the temptress he had succumbed to. Merlin, the great adept of Arthur's fabled court, wise man and magician and sage. Stricken, stricken.

He roused himself, turned from this to face the end wall. The Whistlers hung there, six or eight of them, but he had turned so as to be directly in line of one, and did not move. It was dark, very much so, of an indistinct blackish green. A golden sprinkling of dots and smears, bright as phosphorescence, ran down one side and dropped into a void of blackness. They were specks of fire falling through an impenetrable murk, vaguely illuminating some unknown or unspeakable terror. Sparks of destruction glittering in an unholy night. There was a foulness to it, something innately unwholesome, like the worst of the plague winds darkening the skies of modern Britain. Ruskin felt held in place by the very sense of revulsion that urged him to look away. He pulled out his programme. James McNeill Whistler. *Nocturne in Black and Gold*. Ruskin exhaled sharply, and



a Mayfair matron with her son up from Cambridge caught the great man's single ejaculatory verdict: "Coxcomb," he uttered, and turned on his heel and left.

Whistler lay sprawled in a lounge chair in the dim smoking room of the Arts Club. His dark and curly-haired head lay cushioned on a pile of shapeless crewel-worked pillows, and—heedless of the upholstery—his polished boots on the arm of the next chair. With his narrow silver-crowned walking stick he idly beat the top of the low table before him, nearly upsetting a shallow copper ash-tray. If the walking stick had been a sabre Whistler's resemblance to a bored dragoon in mufti would have been complete.

The smoking room was called the "Dugout" by its frequenters for its small size and knotty wood panelling, but was empty and smokeless today. It was nearly six p.m., Whistler had had no lunch, and with yet another dunning bill in his pocket reminding him of his overdue account here, felt little inclination to rise and seek out tea. In an upstairs room he had just lost £15 at cards to an art dealer named Wilmer, who he had been unsuccessfully attempting to entice in making good on a prior expression of interest in stopping by his studio to view a few works in progress.

George Boughton rounded the corner and entered the Dugout, clutching a folded-open magazine. He checked his speed and stood above Whistler, wordless. Their eyes met, and Whistler gave a tug to one of his moustaches as he began to greet his friend. But Boughton thrust the magazine into Whistler's hand, and with an index finger stabbed at the lower left column. It was the new number of the *Architect*, and Whistler scanned the piece and saw the title, "Mr Ruskin on the Grosvenor Gallery". In one indented block of text his own name leapt out at him, and he backed up to find the context: John Ruskin in his monthly *Fors Clavigera*, number 79, July 1877.

For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsey ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approaches the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.

A long moment passed, far longer than required to read two sentences. Whistler raised his eyes to see Boughton, almost pop-eyed, staring at him, waiting for his reaction. He did not toss the offending words across the room, as Boughton had expected, but quietly handed the folded paper back.

"His style of criticism is debased," was what he said.

Then Whistler began to laugh. It began with a snort, and ended in a full-throated mirthless howl. Boughton stood by silently, eyeing his friend. Whistler was pugnacious by nature and relished comment on his work, and typically the harsher it was the better he enjoyed it, for it cleared the path for him to expound his own theories on the nature and purpose of art. Boughton had the right to expect a stream of witty invective, but his friend was oddly silent.

“Hand me a gasper, George, and read it once more,” he said, and Boughton dutifully opened his enamelled cigarette case and lay it on the table before them. Boughton rolled them extremely thin, and for his efforts had won a place as Whistler’s favoured tobacco benefactor. Boughton was provincial, American, a complete hack as an artist, even tempered and steady. He also regarded Whistler as a genius. Besides keeping his friend in cigarettes, he lent him canvas and oils without expecting repayment.

Boughton read the excerpt again as Whistler sucked the life from his cigarette.

“And that’s it, there’s no more of this, that’s all he said of me?” asked Whistler. He turned his head and looked towards the library room. “Do we take that blasted Fors? Any one here read it?”

Whistler rose and both men went from room to room in the club. Fors Clavigera was not a publication the Arts Club subscribed to, but old Meriwether had by chance brought his own copy from home to peruse in the quiescence of his club and they lifted it from him and carried it back to the Dugout. Albert Moore and Joseph Boehm came with them, intrigued by the search and clued in by Boughton’s digest. Moore had exhibited his paintings at the Grosvenor as well, and Boehm was a sculptor and friend of many year’s standing, currently adding some decorative embellishments to the exterior of Whistler’s new London home to satisfy the requirements of the Metropolitan Board of Works who had found the plain white façade too severe.

The little party gathered around the lounge chair Whistler had reinhabited. Boughton dropped the offending journal on the small table between them. It was a modest production, eighteen or twenty pages, closely printed on pale yellow paper. “Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain” was the subtitle, “by John Ruskin, LL.D Letter the Seventy-ninth July 2nd 1877”.

Whistler coned the plain cover with a quick glance. “Workman and labourers,” he snorted. “Ha!” The scavenger hunt about the club’s rooms had restored his spirits, and he seemed almost sanguine. “He means ‘Antediluvian dreamers snug in their Oxford and Cambridge redoubts.’”

Boehm looked down at the light yellow cover. “For the workman of Britain? What honest labourer can throw his chink around like that?”

“Yes, ten pence an issue! It’s not much value for money,” agreed Boughton, weighing the slight publication in his hand.

After his cursory glance at the cover Whistler leaned back in his chair and crossed his legs. Boughton rifled through the pages, picking out key themes, scanning paragraphs. It was a wildly discursive colloquy, and Boughton had an image of Ruskin as a heedless boy running on a beach, snatching up one shell or shiny pebble after the next, only to cast the first down and reach for another.

“Here, here it is, the Grosvenor bit,” said Boughton. “...Sir Coutts Lindsey is at present an amateur both in art and shopkeeping. He must take up either one or the other business, if he would prosper in either. If he intends to manage the Grosvenor Gallery rightly, he must not put his own works in it until he can answer for their quality; if he means to be a painter, he must not at present superintend the erection of public buildings, or amuse himself with their decoration by china and upholstery...”

There was a hoot of laughter from Whistler, and snickers from the other men.

Boughton went on scanning and reading. “Ah...puffing on about Burne-Jones...his ‘is simply the only artwork at present produced in England which will be received as “classic”...the best that has been or could be...I know that these will be immortal...’—Oh, here’s a scold coming—the mannerisms and errors of his pictures, whatever may be their extent, are never affected or indolent. The work is natural to the painter, however strange to us...Scarcely so much can be said for any other pictures of the modern schools: their eccentricities are always in some degree forced; and their imperfections gratuitously, if not impertinently, indulged.”

Boughton took a breath and slowed down. “For Mr. Whistler’s own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsey ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approaches the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public’s face.”

As abruptly as the attack began, it was over. Boughton read a few more bits aloud. Ruskin went on to Tissot’s paintings, citing their dexterity but chiding him for producing “mere coloured photographs of vulgar society” and Millais, in which he lamented how much greater his achievement would have been if he “had remained faithful to the principles of his school when he first led its onset...you will never know what you have lost in him...”

The concluding passage was a maudlin tale of a race horse, a Derby contender, grown ill upon being separated from his stable-mate kitten, and the resumption of his appetite and fulfilment of his owner’s racing dreams when his feline castellan was returned to him. It was bathos of the sort a desiccated unmarried aunt would tell a fretful child to assure him of ultimate happy endings. Coming on the heels of the vituperative attack on Whistler made it seem even more absurd.

“He is cracked,” said Whistler, unfolding his legs.

“Yes,” agreed Boughton, but in a very different tone. “The great Ruskin is cracked.” The once-inerrant had erred, grievously in this case, but Whistler (as usual, it seemed to Boughton) did not appear to grasp the significance of the situation—the Master’s utterance as it pertained to him.

Moore clucked his tongue. "And this was the man who as a boy proclaimed the genius of Turner when everyone else accused the man's sea-scapes of looking like soap-suds!" He shook his head and rapped out the contents of his meerschaum into the ash-tray.

Boehm's response was more measured. "His is the greatest voice in art criticism, not only here, but the world," he said. But he too shook his head. "It is some gibe."

"He's hopeless," answered Whistler. "The enemy of art today is convention, and Ruskin's blathering only confirms the narrowness of his conceptions. He knows nothing. Once again the cause of us doers and workers is at stake against the mere writers and praters. Mine is modern painting. It doesn't 'mean anything' nor does it intend to entertain or scold the viewer in 'relating a story'. I seek to convey an atmosphere, nothing else."

They had all heard this before. Boughton still stood, now with pursed lips, above his friend, and looked down at Whistler's grin. "I believe this to be actionable."

Whistler blinked. His single lock of white hair stood out from his dark curls like a tongue of Pentecostal fire.

"I'm a painter and no solicitor, you'll have to obtain a professional consultation—ask Rose or any other good man—but this"—here Boughton waved the offending number of Fors— "this, coming from such a one as Ruskin, this might be libel."

"Libel?"

"Yes, and if it hinders your sales or in any way injures your reputation, it might be actionable."

"With a settlement?"

"Yes, should you win; a settlement, damages, court costs, everything."

Whistler's eyes, which had been glued to Boughton's face during this startling allegation, now dropped to the floral tracery of the maroon carpet. He hadn't sold a major painting in two years, and was far from having the resources to embark upon the Venetian trip which he hoped would result in a series of always-lucrative etchings. His greatest client and patron, Frederick Leyland, was now sending him bills for materials and incurred expenses in the unauthorised (so said Leyland) decoration of his fantastic Peacock Room. Leyland, once so warm a friend, was so enraged he had threatened to publicly horsewhip Whistler should they meet. The building of Whistler's new home and studio in Chelsea, which he had rashly pursued despite his financial difficulties, was straining him even further. And he feared that Maud Franklin, his long time model and mistress, was again with child.

His friend spoke again. "But it all hinges on whether or not it's actionable."

Whistler rose and lit a second cigarette. "Well, that I shall try to find out," he answered, and left.

*Octavia is a member of the William Morris Society, the Pre-Raphaelite Society, The Society of Architectural Historians, the Bibliographic Society, and the Authors Guild.*

## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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## BOOK

### *One author*

N: 1. Wendy Doniger, *Splitting the Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 65.

B: Doniger, Wendy. *Splitting the Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

T: (Doniger 1999, 65)

R: Doniger, Wendy. 1999. *Splitting the difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### *Two authors*

N: 6. Guy Cowlshaw and Robin Dunbar, *Primate Conservation Biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 104–7.

B: Cowlshaw, Guy, and Robin Dunbar. *Primate Conservation Biology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

T: (Cowlshaw and Dunbar 2000, 104–7)

R: Cowlshaw, Guy, and Robin Dunbar. 2000. *Primate conservation biology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### *Four or more authors*

N: 13. Edward O. Laumann et al., *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 262.

B: Laumann, Edward O., John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, and Stuart Michaels. *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

T: (Laumann et al. 1994, 262)

R: Laumann, Edward O., John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, and Stuart Michaels. 1994. *The social organization of sexuality: Sexual practices in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### *Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author*

N: 4. Richmond Lattimore, trans., *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 91–92.

B: Lattimore, Richmond, trans. *The Iliad of Homer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.

T: (Lattimore 1951, 91–92)

R: Lattimore, Richmond, trans. 1951. *The Iliad of Homer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Editor, translator, or compiler in addition to author*

N: 16. Yves Bonnefoy, *New and Selected Poems*, ed. John Naughton and Anthony Rudolf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 22.

B: Bonnefoy, Yves. *New and Selected Poems*. Edited by John Naughton and Anthony Rudolf. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

T: (Bonnefoy 1995, 22)

R: Bonnefoy, Yves. 1995. *New and selected poems*. Ed. John Naughton and Anthony Rudolf. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Chapter or other part of a book*

N: 5. Andrew Wiese, “‘The House I Live In’: Race, Class, and African American Suburban Dreams in the Postwar United States,” in *The New Suburban History*, ed. Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 101–2.

B: Wiese, Andrew. “‘The House I Live In’: Race, Class, and African American Suburban Dreams in the Postwar United States.” In *The New Suburban History*, edited by Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, 99–119. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

T: (Wiese 2006, 101–2)

R: Wiese, Andrew. 2006. “The house I live in”: Race, class, and African American suburban dreams in the postwar United States. In *The new suburban history*, ed. Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, 99–119. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Chapter of an edited volume originally published elsewhere (as in primary sources)*

N: 8. Quintus Tullius Cicero. “Handbook on Canvassing for the Consulship,” in *Rome: Late Republic and Principate*, ed. Walter Emil



Kaegi Jr. and Peter White, vol. 2 of *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization*, ed. John Boyer and Julius Kirshner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 35.

B: Cicero, Quintus Tullius. "Handbook on Canvassing for the Consulship." In *Rome: Late Republic and Principate*, edited by Walter Emil Kaegi Jr. and Peter White. Vol. 2 of *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization*, edited by John Boyer and Julius Kirshner, 33–46. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Originally published in Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, trans., *The Letters of Cicero*, vol. 1 (London: George Bell & Sons, 1908).

T: (Cicero 1986, 35)

R: Cicero, Quintus Tullius. 1986. Handbook on canvassing for the consulship. In *Rome: Late republic and principate*, edited by Walter Emil Kaegi Jr. and Peter White. Vol. 2 of *University of Chicago readings in western civilization*, ed. John Boyer and Julius Kirshner, 33–46. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Originally published in Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, trans., *The letters of Cicero*, vol. 1 (London: George Bell & Sons, 1908).

*Preface, foreword, introduction, or similar part of a book*

N: 17. James Rieger, introduction to *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), xx–xxi.

B: Rieger, James. Introduction to *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, xi–xxxvii. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

T: (Rieger 1982, xx–xxi)

R: Rieger, James. 1982. Introduction to *Frankenstein; or, The modern Prometheus*, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, xi–xxxvii. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Book published electronically*

If a book is available in more than one format, you should cite the version you consulted, but you may also list the other formats, as in the second example below. If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the first example below.

N: 2. Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner, eds., *The Founders' Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/> (accessed June 27, 2006).

B: Kurland, Philip B., and Ralph Lerner, eds. *The Founders' Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>. Also available in print form and as a CD-ROM.

T: (Kurland and Lerner 1987)

R: Kurland, Philip B., and Ralph Lerner, eds. 1987. *The founders' Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.

## JOURNAL ARTICLE

### *Article in a print journal*

N: 8. John Maynard Smith, "The Origin of Altruism," *Nature* 393 (1998): 639.

B: Smith, John Maynard. "The Origin of Altruism." *Nature* 393 (1998): 639–40.

T: (Smith 1998, 639)

R: Smith, John Maynard. 1998. The origin of altruism. *Nature* 393: 639–40.

### *Article in an online journal*

If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the fourth example below.

N: 33. Mark A. Hlatky et al., "Quality-of-Life and Depressive Symptoms in Postmenopausal Women after Receiving Hormone Therapy: Results from the Heart and Estrogen/Progestin Replacement Study (HERS) Trial," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 287, no. 5 (2002), <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v287n5/full/joc10108.html#aainfo>.

B: Hlatky, Mark A., Derek Boothroyd, Eric Vittinghoff, Penny Sharp, and Mary A. Whooley. "Quality-of-Life and Depressive Symptoms in Postmenopausal Women after Receiving Hormone Therapy: Results from the Heart and Estrogen/Progestin Replacement Study (HERS) Trial." *Journal of the American Medical Association* 287, no. 5 (February 6, 2002), <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v287n5/full/joc10108.html#aainfo>.

T: (Hlatky et al. 2002)

R: Hlatky, Mark A., Derek Boothroyd, Eric Vittinghoff, Penny Sharp, and Mary A. Whooley. 2002. Quality-of-life and depressive symptoms in postmenopausal women after receiving hormone therapy: Results from the Heart and Estrogen/Progestin Replacement Study (HERS)

trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 287, no. 5 (February 6), <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v287n5/rfull/joc10108.html#aainfo> (accessed January 7, 2004).

#### POPULAR MAGAZINE ARTICLE

N: 29. Steve Martin, "Sports-Interview Shocker," *New Yorker*, May 6, 2002, 84.

B: Martin, Steve. "Sports-Interview Shocker." *New Yorker*, May 6, 2002.

T: (Martin 2002, 84)

R: Martin, Steve. 2002. Sports-interview shocker. *New Yorker*, May 6.

#### NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Newspaper articles may be cited in running text ("As William Niederkorn noted in a *New York Times* article on June 20, 2002, . . .") instead of in a note or an in-text citation, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography or reference list as well. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations.

N: 10. William S. Niederkorn, "A Scholar Recants on His 'Shakespeare' Discovery," *New York Times*, June 20, 2002, Arts section, Midwest edition.

B: Niederkorn, William S. "A Scholar Recants on His 'Shakespeare' Discovery." *New York Times*, June 20, 2002, Arts section, Midwest edition.

T: (Niederkorn 2002)

R: Niederkorn, William S. 2002. A scholar recants on his "Shakespeare" discovery. *New York Times*, June 20, Arts section, Midwest edition.

#### BOOK REVIEW

N: 1. James Gorman, "Endangered Species," review of *The Last American Man*, by Elizabeth Gilbert, *New York Times Book Review*, June 2, 2002, 16.

B: Gorman, James. "Endangered Species." Review of *The Last American Man*, by Elizabeth Gilbert. *New York Times Book Review*, June 2, 2002.

T: (Gorman 2002, 16)

R: Gorman, James. 2002. Endangered species. Review of *The last American man*, by Elizabeth Gilbert. *New York Times Book Review*, June 2.

#### THESIS OR DISSERTATION

N: 22. M. Amundin, "Click Repetition Rate Patterns in Communicative Sounds from the Harbour Porpoise, *Phocoena phocoena*" (PhD diss., Stockholm University, 1991), 22–29, 35.

B: Amundin, M. "Click Repetition Rate Patterns in Communicative Sounds from the Harbour Porpoise, *Phocoena phocoena*." PhD diss., Stockholm University, 1991.

T: (Amundin 1991, 22–29, 35)

R: Amundin, M. 1991. Click repetition rate patterns in communicative sounds from the harbour porpoise, *Phocoena phocoena*. PhD diss., Stockholm University.

#### PAPER PRESENTED AT A MEETING OR CONFERENCE

N: 13. Brian Doyle, "Howling Like Dogs: Metaphorical Language in Psalm 59" (paper presented at the annual international meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, Berlin, Germany, June 19–22, 2002).

B: Doyle, Brian. "Howling Like Dogs: Metaphorical Language in Psalm 59." Paper presented at the annual international meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, Berlin, Germany, June 19–22, 2002.

T: (Doyle 2002)

R: Doyle, Brian. 2002. Howling like dogs: Metaphorical language in Psalm 59. Paper presented at the annual international meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, June 19–22, in Berlin, Germany.

#### WEB SITE

Web sites may be cited in running text ("On its Web site, the Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees states . . .") instead of in an in-text citation, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography or reference list as well. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations. If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the second example below.

N: 11. Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees, "Evanston Public Library Strategic Plan, 2000–2010: A Decade of Outreach," Evanston Public Library, <http://www.epl.org/library/strategic-plan-00.html>.

B: Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees. "Evanston Public Library Strategic Plan, 2000–2010: A Decade of Outreach." Evanston Public Library. <http://www.epl.org/library/strategic-plan-00.html> (accessed June 1, 2005).

T: (Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees)

R: Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees. Evanston Public Library strategic plan, 2000–2010: A decade of outreach. Evanston Public Library. <http://www.epl.org/library/strategic-plan-00.html>.

#### WEBLOG ENTRY OR COMMENT

Weblog entries or comments may be cited in running text (“In a comment posted to the Becker-Posner Blog on March 6, 2006, Peter Pearson noted . . .”) instead of in a note or an in-text citation, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography or reference list as well. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations. If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the first example below.

N: 8. Peter Pearson, comment on “The New American Dilemma: Illegal Immigration,” The Becker-Posner Blog, comment posted March 6, 2006, [http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/archives/2006/03/the\\_new\\_america.html#c080052](http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/archives/2006/03/the_new_america.html#c080052) (accessed March 28, 2006).

B: Becker-Posner Blog, The. <http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/>.

T: (Peter Pearson, The Becker-Posner Blog, comment posted March 6, 2006)

R: Becker-Posner blog, The. <http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/>.

#### E-MAIL MESSAGE

E-mail messages may be cited in running text (“In an e-mail message to the author on October 31, 2005, John Doe revealed . . .”) instead of in a note or an in-text citation, and they are rarely listed in a bibliography or reference list. The following example shows the more formal version of a note.

N: 2. John Doe, e-mail message to author, October 31, 2005.

#### ITEM IN ONLINE DATABASE

Journal articles published in online databases should be cited as shown above, under “Article in an online journal.” If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the first example below.

N: 7. Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, ed. John Bostock and H. T. Riley, in the Perseus Digital Library, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plin.+Nat.+1.dedication> (accessed November 17, 2005).

B: Perseus Digital Library. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>.

T: (Pliny the Elder, Perseus Digital Library)

R: Perseus Digital Library. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>.