

Université de Montréal

**Symbolic Geography in John Ruskin's *Modern Painters*,
Volumes III, IV, V.**

par

Corina Reian

Département d'histoire de l'art et d'études cinématographiques

Faculté des arts et sciences

Thèse présentée à la Faculté des études supérieures en vue de l'obtention du grade de
Philosophiae Doctor (Ph.D) en Histoire de l'art

Octobre, 2014

Copyright, Corina Reian, 2014

Résumé

Modern Painters vol. III, IV et V est un œuvre tripartite développée après 1850, en synchronie avec la guerre de Crimée (1854-56), la répression de la révolte indienne (1857-59) et la deuxième guerre d'indépendance d'Italie (1859). Marqué par ces événements politiques, Ruskin met en œuvre une stratégie complexe pour configurer dans un langage symbolique les frontières et les taxonomies impériales de l'espace européen. Il développe des stratégies de présentation qui combinent le texte et les illustrations pour créer allégories mentales et visuelles efficaces, construites à partir des stéréotypes littéraires et culturels véhiculés dans le monde britannique. L'auteur met ses derniers volumes de *Modern Painters* sous le signe de « la crise de la civilisation » représentée pour lui par les conflagrations de Crimée, d'Inde et d'Italie, en exprimant son soutien pour la nouvelle alliance entre l'Angleterre et la France. Un autre motif est son obsession avec la réforme sociale via un retour aux valeurs chrétiennes traditionnelles.

Mots clefs

John Ruskin, histoire de l'art, art et politique, dix-neuvième siècle, Grande Bretagne, Empire britannique, impérialisme, historiographie, stéréotypes, *Modern Painters*, géographie symbolique.

Abstract

John Ruskin writes *Modern Painters* Volumes III, IV, and V as events such as The Crimean War (1854-56), the Indian Mutiny (1857-59), and the Second Italian War of Independence (1859) unfold. As such, Ruskin's work tends to reflect and respond to the political context of his time. In these works, Ruskin tries to symbolically interpret and represent geopolitical and taxonomical characteristics of the European continent, generally in an imperial narrative, paying particular attention to British identity and national stereotypes. Ruskin articulates his ideas using a unique style that combines visual and written elements to create powerful allegories. In these volumes, Ruskin is especially concerned with what he sees as an impending "crisis of civilization" of which the aforementioned conflicts are symptoms. As a response, Ruskin strongly advocates societal reform in the form of a return to old Christian values. He also supports a military alliance between Britain and France.

Key words

John Ruskin, art history, art and politics, nineteenth century, Great Britain, British Empire, imperialism, historiography, stereotypes, *Modern Painters*, symbolic geography.

Abbreviations

Following the method used in Ruskin studies, the works of John Ruskin are cited in an abbreviated form, after *The Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin*, edited by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, London, George Allen, 1903-1912, as follows:

Works (title in italics), followed by the number of the volume in Latin numerals and the number of the page in Arabic numbers. For instance, *Works*, V, 21.

Also, due to the number and complexity of some internet sources, like the Tate Gallery or The Ruskin Research Centre, that demand different methods of citation pertaining to their different sections, and also to the necessity of adding some arguments and quotes in the footnotes, I tried to avoid a too eclectic presentation of the critical apparatus and used a more traditional approach in the bibliographic presentation.

Table of Contents

Résumé	ii
Abstract	iii
Abbreviations	iv
List of Illustrations	vi
Introduction	1
01. The Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin.....	6
02. Symbolic geography and civilization.....	9
03. Preliminaries to Modern Painters Volumes III and IV	14
03.01. The Crimean War and Anglo - German antagonism	14
03.02. Bibliographical links, tropes and illustrations	20
Chapter 1 <i>Modern Painters</i> Volume III	25
1.01. Preface and annexes: Ruskin on method, public, and reader.....	25
1.02. Poetry is made with words and colors	34
1.03. Strategies of persuasion: associations, selective omissions, and contrasts	40
1.04. War as an apparent evil and German philosophy as an apparent good.....	47
Chapter 2 <i>Modern Painters</i> Volume IV	58
2.01. Switzerland: experiments in associationism and perception.....	60
2.02. Frontispieces for a composite art	66
2.03 Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como).....	69
2.04. The Gates of the Hills	75
2.05. Dreaming creative geography	80
2.06. Picturesque and social anesthesia	83
2.07. Stereotypes and fear of contagion.....	88
2.08. Crimean War and Modern Grotesque	94
Chapter 3 <i>Modern Painters</i> Volume V	100
3.01. Preliminaries	102
3.02. Tartan and Cashmere; heaven and hell	108
3.03. North and South; discipline and hubris.....	114
3.04. A moral North in the West.....	117
3.05. National stereotypes and types of mind	123
3.06. Ancilla Domini.....	123
3.07. The healing power of The Hesperid Aeglé	127
3.08. Peace is a fortress.....	134
Conclusion	141
Illustrations	146
Bibliography	178

List of Illustrations

Fig.1. John Ruskin, *The Lombard Apennine*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* III as Plate 14.

Fig. 2. John Ruskin, *St George of the Seaweed*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* III as Plate 15.

Fig.3. John Ruskin, *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)*, 1856, engraving, frontispiece for *Modern Painters* III.

Fig.4. Luke Howard, *Clouds*, 1803, engraving, illustration to “Essay on the Modification of Clouds,” *Philosophical Magazine*, 1803.

Fig. 5. Luke Howard, *Storm Clouds*, 1803, engraving, illustration to “Essay on the Modification of Clouds,” *Philosophical Magazine*, 1803.

Fig. 6. J.W. Whymper, *The Cirro-Cumulus or Sonder-Cloud*, 1846, woodcut, illustration for Charles Tomlinson, *The Rain Cloud, or the Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World*, London, 1846.

Fig.7. J.W. Whymper, *The Cumulo Stratus, or Twain-Cloud*, 1846, woodcut, illustration for Charles Tomlinson, *The Rain Cloud, or the Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World*, London, 1846

Fig.8. J.W. Whymper, *Different Appearances of the Same Clouds to Different Observers*, 1846, woodcut, illustration for Charles Tomlinson, *The Rain Cloud, or the Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World*, London, 1846.

Fig.9. John Ruskin (after JMW Turner), *Pass of Faido: Turnerian Topography*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* IV as Plate 20.

Fig.10. John Ruskin, *Pass of Faido: Simple Topography*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* IV as Plate 21.

Fig. 11. John Ruskin (after JMW Turner), *The Gates of the Hills*, 1856, engraving, frontispiece for *Modern Painters* IV.

Fig.12. JMW Turner, *The Pass at Faido. St. Gotthard*, cca. 1843, watercolor and graphite, Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

Fig. 13. JMW Turner, *Mt. St. Gotthard. Pass*, 1806-7, watercolor, sketch for *Liber Studiorum*, Tate Gallery, London.

Fig.14. John Ruskin, *Faido*, 1869, ink on paper, sketch from a letter to Charles Eliot Norton, August 15, 1869.

Fig.15. John Ruskin (after Domenico Ghirlandajo and Claude Lorrain), *The Transition from Ghirlandajo to Claude*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 18.

Fig.16. John Ruskin (after Clarkson Frederick Stanfield and JMW Turner), *The Picturesque of Windmills. Pure Modern and Turnerian*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 19.

Fig.17. JMW Turner, *Windmill and Lock*, 1811, etching and watercolor, Tate Gallery, London.

Fig.18. John Ruskin, *Fig. 35*, 1856, woodcut, illustration for *Modern Painters IV*.

Fig. 19. John Ruskin, *The Towers of Friburg*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 24.

Fig. 20. John Ruskin, *Things in General*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 25.

Fig.21. John Ruskin, *The Law of Evanescence*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 26.

Fig. 22. John Leech, *General Février Turned Traitor*, 1855, woodcut, published in *Punch*, March 10, 1855.

Fig.23. John Ruskin, *Light in the West, Beauvais*, 1860, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 66.

Fig.24. John Ruskin (after Fra Angelico), *Ancilla Domini*, 1860, engraving, frontispiece for *Modern Painters V*.

Fig.25. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Ecce Ancilla Domini*, 1850, oil on canvas mounted on panel, Tate Gallery, London.

Fig.26. John Ruskin, (after Salvator Rosa), *Fig. 99* inserted into the page 371, 1860, woodcut, illustration for *Modern Painters V*.

Fig.27. John Ruskin (after Albrecht Dürer), *Fig. 100*, 1860, woodcut, illustration for *Modern Painters V*.

Fig.28. John Ruskin (after A.M. Zanetti II), *The Hesperid Aeglé*, 1860, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 79.

Fig.29. Anton Maria Zanetti II “the Younger,” *Standing Female Nude After Giorgione*, 1760, engraving, British Museum, London.

Fig.30. Giorgione (Giorgio da Castelfranco), *La Nuda (Fondaco dei Tedeschi)*, cca. 1508, fresco, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice.

Fig. 31. JMW Turner, *The Goddess of Discord Choosing the Apple of Contention in the Garden of the Hesperides*, 1796, oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London.

Fig. 32. JMW Turner, *Apollo and Python*, 1811, oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London.

Fig.33. John Ruskin (after JMW Turner), *The Nets in the Rapids*, 1859, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 82.

Fig.34. John Ruskin, *The Bridge of Rheinfelden*, 1859, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 83.

Fig.35. John Ruskin, *Peace*, 1860, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 84.

Fig. 36. JMW Turner, *Winchelsea, Sussex*, 1807-8, graphite and watercolor on paper, Tate Gallery, London.

Introduction

In 1846, John James Ruskin, John Ruskin's father, writes in a letter (to W. H. Harrison) about his son's new approach in studying architecture, which consists in accumulating details and fragmentary representations, "fragments of everything...but in such bits that it is to the common eye a mass of Hieroglyphics – all true – truth itself, but Truth in mosaic."¹ John Dixon Hunt shows that this approach is integrated in Ruskin's way of writing so that his books gain a kaleidoscopic quality.² This is especially true for the last three volumes of *Modern Painters*, written in a period when Ruskin's interests outside the art field accumulate and penetrate the fabric of his books. *Modern Painters* Volume III, IV, and V seem indeed to be large and complicated mosaics but ones in which the composing fragments do not form a coherent general image. In the end they create distortions and anamorphoses.

Therefore, the research conducted on John Ruskin's works asks for an effort of elimination, in order to retrieve the consistency of at least some of his arguments which are broken down and mixed together in a convoluted text. With this thesis I propose to retrieve the parts that are usually ignored by Ruskin scholars. More specifically, I will try

¹ Cited in John Dixon Hunt, "Oeuvre and Footnote," in John Dixon Hunt, Faith Holland, *The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the Imagination of John Ruskin*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982, p.12.

² *Ibidem*, pp.1-20.

to see how imperial politics influenced Ruskin's writings on art and to investigate the cultural constructs and stereotypes that he advances in order to build a European art and political taxonomy.

John Ruskin was a quintessential Victorian, as he was born in the same year as Queen Victoria, 1819, and died one year before she did, in 1900.³ He was one of the greatest critics of his century and a defining figure of his time, being eventually considered the most influential writer on art in nineteenth-century Britain.⁴ However, in the last half of the nineteenth century, Ruskin's art research gives way to social and political interests. Ruskin never missed an opportunity to use his writings on art as vehicles for his political vision which had at its core a paradox: his interest in building a post-capitalist order coupled with his devotion to an Empire which was in its essence the epitome of nineteenth-century capitalism. In Ruskin's opinion, the global dominance of the British Empire based on commerce and technological superiority was not morally legitimate if absolute social justice could not be provided inside the metropole-country. His solutions included ethical consumerism, fair trade, sustainability, ecology and the welfare-state. The impact of Ruskin's political message was only felt after his death, when both the Labour Party and Gandhi's movement in India benefited from his teachings. Like most of the great critics of capitalism, from Robert Owen to Noam Chomsky, Ruskin envisaged a utopian alternative to the modern world although, in opposition to the secular trend followed by the various progressive reformers, he proposed a model built on basic moral Christian values coupled with a reinforced work ethic. This was nevertheless an imperial project, as England's expansionism overseas was seen as the best civilizational tool of the day. As Immanuel Wallerstein showed, "the nineteenth century became the century of renewed direct imperialism with this added nuance. Imperial conquest was no longer merely an action of the state, or even of the state encouraged by the Church. It had become the passion of the nation, the duty of the citizens."⁵ Be it "manifest destiny," the "white man's burden," or "la mission civilisatrice," the imperialist expansion was generally associated with the idea of progress

³ Asa Briggs, *Collected Essays of Asa Briggs, Vol. II: Images, Problems, Standpoints, Forecasts*, University of Illinois Press, 1988, p.119.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis. An Introduction*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2004, p.66.

and with the “diffusion of the concept of civilization – in the singular, as opposed to the plural. The pan-European world [...] defined itself as the heart, the culmination, of a civilizational process which it traced back to Europe’s presumed roots in Antiquity.”⁶

It was only at the end of the century that anti-imperialist voices began to be heard sporadically in British political life.⁷ Until then, however, no alternative to imperial expansionism had been formulated, much as in France, where political right and left were both invested in an imperial enterprise seen as a stand for civilization in the fight against barbarism.⁸ Moreover, the imperial idea was at the very core of the construction of a generic British identity, which had to be able to include and assimilate the Celtic fringe⁹ from Scotland, Cornwall, and Wales. In this context, Ruskin’s works represent the beginning of the development of an imperial narrative that began to take shape with the Napoleonic wars, was crystallized after 1848, when Britain was spared the revolutionary turmoil gripping the Continent, and was reinforced after the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition, which showcased British technological superiority. This grand narrative, adopted and adapted in the last part of the twentieth century to the needs of American foreign policy,¹⁰ is closely linked to the concept of geoculture advanced by Immanuel Wallerstein as parallel to geopolitics, referring “to norms and modes of discourse that are widely accepted as legitimate within the world system” and that “do not come into existence automatically ... but rather have to be created.”¹¹

As Wallerstein argues, modern geoculture has at its core the civilization vs barbarity argument through which it justifies expansionism and interventionism. The nineteenth-century British variant of European geoculture includes some of the most popular ideas of our time, such as: the dichotomy between good and evil empires; the beneficent powers of the free market; the menace of perverted scientific vision; and also

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York, Toronto, Random House Inc, 1993, p.291.

⁸ Todd Porterfield, *The Allure of Empire, Art in the Service of French Imperialism. 1798-1836*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 105-106.

⁹ See Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

¹⁰ Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival. America’s Quest for Global Dominance*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2004, pp 4-45.

¹¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis. An Introduction*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2004, p.93.

the European Christian civilization, subsuming democracy, human rights and the balance between freedom and individual responsibility.¹²

The generality of these concepts makes them easily adoptable and adaptable, and their meaning fluctuates depending on the ideological needs of the moment. Ruskin expressed his geocultural imaginary in a prolix and sometimes confused way due to the deep-seated contradiction in his convictions. His belief in the potential positive role of the Empire clashes with his revolt in the face of unjust relations of power.

By linking his work with the politics of the day and by looking at how art could be used for knowledge rather than entertainment, Ruskin was also addressing a perennial middle-class prejudice against art and writing on art, which are to this day associated in Great Britain with an idle and hedonistic ruling class.¹³ Ruskin tried to break the old puritan reflex of his time and to build the case for a useful art, capable of revealing and teaching the truth about nature, which in turn could be used as a model for society and politics. In this respect, Volumes III, IV, and V of *Modern Painters* are the most telling example of Ruskin's approach, as they are conceived as a mosaic of natural sciences, theology, art history, comparative literature, and politics. These volumes are published in a period (1856-1860) when defining imperial conflicts took place influencing Ruskin's writing, giving it a sense of urgency.

As Geoffrey DeSylva eloquently shows,¹⁴ despite sharing the same title, the first two volumes and the last three volumes of *Modern Painters* are in fact two different books, with a ten-year gap between them, and different objectives, methods and text organization. Moreover, only *Modern Painters* vol. III, IV and V are illustrated with both reproductions of ancient masters and original landscapes by Ruskin himself. My project argues that the last three volumes of *Modern Painters* are directly influenced in their comparative presentation of English and Continental landscape by British Foreign policy of the time linked to important military conflicts of the short period between 1854 and 1859: the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, and the Second Italian War of Independence.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ Joy Starkey, "History of Art: A Degree for the Elites?," *The Guardian*, 9 January 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2013/jan/09/history-of-art-a-degree-for-the-elite>. 9 January 2013.

¹⁴ Geoffrey DeSylva, *John Ruskin's Modern Painters I and II. A Phenomenological Analysis*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Press, 1981.

Ruskin used his books on landscape painting as mediators for his imperial political vision, which combined social reform, Euro-skepticism, and war as a tool for civilization. Apart from textual strategies, Ruskin's original landscapes are instrumental in the construction of his imperial narrative, as they take on symbolic meanings which turn them into allegories of geopolitical notions and identities.

Art history usually assesses Ruskin's illustrations for *Modern Painters* in isolation, separated from the accompanying text and included in larger thematic or formal analyses of Ruskin's visual work.¹⁵ As for the text, it is generally contextualized only in terms of the author's biography and local social and cultural life.¹⁶ By contrast, Elisabeth Helsinger¹⁷ develops an analysis that considers the text and illustrations together, and offers a complex interpretation of some of Ruskin's illustrations from *Modern Painters* Volume IV and V. In this thesis I will follow Helsinger's example but I will place my analysis in the context of British imperial policy, which begins to shift slowly from an informal imperialism toward the Neo-Imperialism that will take definite shape after 1870. Moreover, I consider that the theoretical premises of the late volumes of *Modern Painters* can actually be found in Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*, which preceded Volume III and IV, and also in *The Two Paths*, which predates Volume V. Both these books overtly linked art with an imperial vision based on cultural geographic taxonomy and were concerned with North-South rhetoric.

¹⁵ Paul Waltman, *The Drawings of John Ruskin*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972; Jeanne Clegg, *John Ruskin. An Arts Council Exhibition*, London, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1983; John Hayman, *John Ruskin and Switzerland*, Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1990; Susan Casteras, (ed.), *John Ruskin and the Victorian Eye*, New York, H.N. Abrams, 1993.

¹⁶ Dinah Birch, *Ruskin's Myths*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1988; George P. Landow, *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1971; David Sonstroem, "Prophet and Peripathetic in *Modern Painters* III and IV," in Robert Rhodes and Del Ivan Janik, *Studies in Ruskin. Essay in Honor of VanAkin Burd*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1982; John D. Rosenberg, *The Darkening Glass: A Portrait of Ruskin's Genius*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1986.

¹⁷ Elisabeth Helsinger, *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder*, Cambridge, Mass, and London, Harvard University Press, 1982.

01. The Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin

From a bibliographical point of view, the project is based on the *Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin*¹⁸ which is the standard reference work for Ruskin studies. This impressive collection was edited between 1903 and 1912 by Edward Tyas Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, and it counts 39 volumes issued by George Allen & Sons, Ruskin's publishing house since 1871. The volumes were printed on hand-made, linen rag paper with a double watermark of Ruskin's monogram and seal.¹⁹ Volumes III, IV, and V of *Modern Painters* are contained in the fifth, the sixth and the seventh volume of the Cook-Wedderburn publication.²⁰ All the volumes of *Modern Painters* have on their title page a quotation from Wordsworth's "The Excursion."²¹

Volume III of *Modern Painters*²² is reprised in the fifth volume of the *Library Edition*. It bears the subtitle *Of Many Things* and its text is organized in 18 chapters circumscribed by a "Preface" and an "Appendix." It contains 17 plates (engravings and photogravures) and 8 figures (woodcuts). The 427 pages of Ruskin's work are annotated by the editors and completed with an introduction by Wedderburn, a bibliographical note,

¹⁸ *Works*, I-XXXIX.

¹⁹ Ray Haslam, "Cook and Wedderburn," note for "The Electronic Edition of John Ruskin's *Modern Painters* I," <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ruskin/empi/notes/hcookwed01.htm>. The *Library Edition* is also available on CD-Rom which was issued in 1996 by Cambridge University (compatible with Windows 96 and Windows 2000).

²⁰ *Modern Painters* was originally written and published in five installments, between 1842 and 1859. The first edition comprising all the five volumes dates from 1873, being followed in 1888 by a "New and Complete Edition," containing an "Epilogue" added by the author together with three new plates.

²¹ "...Accuse me not

Of arrogance, ...
If, having walked with nature,
And offered, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their Divinity
Revolts, offended at the ways of men,
Philosophers, who, though the human soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe
No more than as a mirror that reflects
The proud self-love her own intelligence."

See also William Wordsworth, *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, vol. VI, BiblioLife, 2008, p. 142.

²² Its first edition was issued in 1856, at the same publishing house, George Allen.

9 plates and 2 facsimiled pages of the manuscript. Also added is a final section entitled “Minor Ruskiniana” which includes a number of primary sources, namely selected letters and extracts from Ruskin’s diary, together with reminiscences of Ruskin by George Allen, Thomas Sulman, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Joan Severn. The 17 plates illustrating *Modern Painters* Vol. III were originally engraved by J.C. Armitage, R.P. Cuff, J.H. Le Keux, J. Cousen, Maclagan & Cumming, Thomas Lupton and John Ruskin. However, the editors were compelled to use for mostly photogravures, as most of the plaques were worn out. They also added nine plates to illustrate Wedderburn’s introduction and some of the works analyzed by Ruskin, like Dürer’s *Melancholy* and *Knight, Death and the Devil*. From the seventeen original illustrations, seven were engravings after Ruskin’s own drawings.

Volume IV of *Modern Painters*²³ can be found in the sixth volume of the *Library Edition*, with the original subtitle *Of Mountain Beauty*. The text has 482 annotated pages and is organized in 20 chapters with a “Preface,” an “Appendix,” 33 plates (photogravures after engravings) and 116 figures (woodcuts). The original engravings were realized by J. Cousen, J.H. LeKeux, T. Boys, J.C. Armitage, R.P. Cuff, Thos. Lupton and John Ruskin. Twenty-two of them reprise Ruskin’s own drawings, and one of them reproduces a daguerreotype. The editors added an “Introduction” by Wedderburn, a bibliographical note, 2 plates, and 2 facsimiled pages of the manuscript. They also added to the original “Appendix” Ruskin’s preface to *Coeli Erarrant* (1885) and they continued their selection of primary sources with extracts from Ruskin’s letters and diary under the title “Minor Ruskiniana.”

Volume V of *Modern Painters*²⁴ is to be found in the seventh volume of the *Library Edition*. Even though it has no generic subtitle, the title page displays the headings of the four sections of the book: *Of Leaf Beauty*; *Of Cloud Beauty*; *Of Ideas of Relation. Of Invention Formal*; *Of Ideas of Relation. Of Invention Spiritual*. These sections are each developed in a number of chapters; there are 10 chapters for “Of Leaf Beauty,” 4 chapters for “Of Cloud Beauty,” 4 chapters for “Of Ideas of Relation. 1. Of Invention Formal,” and 12 chapters for “Of Ideas of Relation. 2. Of Invention Spiritual.”

²³ Its first edition dates from the same year as the third volume, 1856.

²⁴ The first edition was issued in 1859.

This main body of the text is flanked by a “Preface” and an “Epilogue,” the last added by Ruskin in the 1888 complete edition of *Modern Painters*. Ruskin’s work has 476 annotated pages, including 101 figures (woodcuts) and 36 plates reproduced after the original engravings made by Wm. Holl., J.C. Armitage, G. Cook, J. Cousen, J. Emslie, R.P. Cuff, J. H. Le Keux, John Ruskin, John Ruskin and Thos. Lupton. To this, the editors added an introduction by Wedderburn, a bibliographical note, an “Appendix,” 7 plates reproduced from *Drawings by John Ruskin*, 16 figures (woodcuts) to illustrate the appendix, and two facsimiled pages from the manuscript. They also proposed a section of “Minor Ruskiniana,” comprising extracts from Ruskin’s diary, letters, and note-books, as well as reminiscences of Ruskin by Austen Layard and Charles Eliot Norton.

The corpus of illustrations of the three volumes can be roughly divided into two categories: plates and figures. The figures are woodcuts, usually of a small format; they are generally inserted into the text and have more of an illustrative role. As for the plates, they are the size of a page and are mainly photogravures made after the original, carefully elaborated steel engravings. A number of testimonials cited by Alexander Wedderburn speak about the close collaboration between Ruskin and the engravers, a kind of collaboration where the author sought to have absolute control on the visual side of his work. Ruskin often refers to the engravers as mere executants, going sometimes to great pains to show that various formal choices in the presentation of the plates were not the result of the engraver’s choice but were decided by the author. Whilst in the third volume the plates simply illustrate a description or an art history reference, beginning with the second volume they gradually gain a metaphorical quality and are often used to synthesize and convey the authorial message, which is both emotional and ideological. The plates can be seen as marginal glosses of the text that can give us – more or less explicitly - the themes, the premises, or the conclusions of the different parts of the books. However, in the same way that Ruskin’s footnotes sometimes gain their own autonomy and an equal importance with the main text, the usually small woodcut figures can lose their role of simple denotation, taking up a whole page and morphing into more complex visual statements.

The illustrations gradually increase through the three volumes with Volume III having 17 plates, Volume IV having 33 while Volume V displays 36 plates. Moreover, a more dramatic crescendo is used in the orchestration of the figures that soar from eight in Volume III to over a hundred in Volume IV and V. Despite the fact that, in the beginning, the author presents these images as neutral representations of certain places or works of art, by the end of the fifth volume he openly charges them with symbolic significance. Therefore, the last images in *Modern Painters* Volume V take the function of metaphors, a quality enhanced by the added combination of explanatory text, footnotes, and titles. For instance, *The Hesperid Aeglé* (Fig. 28) reprises an obscure Giorgione fragmentary figure and turns it into an allegorical representation of western light. *Peace* (Fig. 35) depicts a Swiss fortress wall as a symbol of the border of a troubling Central-Eastern Europe, dominated by the military ascension of Prussia and the Russian Empire.

02. Symbolic Geography and Civilization

In his seminal books, *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said showed that, during the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries, the world was organized as a global Eurocentric system of power, actively legitimized by the cultural productions of the time. Furthermore, Said initiated a survey of the metropolitan representations of the various colonial peripheries and also of some of the ways in which the colonized absorbed and sometimes influenced metropolitan culture. The present project proposes a diversification of this postcolonial perspective, by means of examining the effects of colonial power struggle on the representation of the Other inside Western Europe. Therefore, I will be looking at the heterogeneous aspect of European identity during the nineteenth-century, by examining the conflictual discursive images inside this supra-national cultural construction that is Western Europe. More specifically, I intend to

investigate John Ruskin's contribution in the building of the Victorian taxonomy of Europe by combining imagology²⁵ and postcolonialism, using textual and image analysis.

To begin with, imagology and postcolonialism are in fact related fields, both born from the domain of comparative literature and fueled by the geopolitics of the second half of the twentieth century. In addition, both of them share as a main object of study - the representation of the Other. However, imagology is mainly interested in identifying, describing, and circumscribing national stereotypes, as well as in underlining their fictional character. In contrast, postcolonialism focuses more on the ideological subtext and on the relations of power behind the production and circulation of these cultural constructions. Images in imagology are discursive, mobile, and changeable, always referring to mental representations derived from a text. Postcolonialism, on the other hand, having a more flexible theoretical frame,²⁶ allows more room for an interdisciplinary approach, and can be adapted to the analysis of visual representations.

Apart from Edward Said, I will also consider other contributions made by scholars like Larry Wolff²⁷, Ezequiel Adamovsky²⁸ and Vesna Goldsworthy²⁹, who looked at how Western commentators perceived and represented Eastern Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. They showed that this geographical space was constructed as a half-civilized, liminal place, linking the West with the East, and consequently, borrowing characteristics from both sides and sometimes blending in the older geographic symbolism of the North-South axis that is superimposed over the West-East opposition. Also, concepts like semi-orientalism (Wolff), Euro-orientalism (Adamovsky), or "Wild-East" (Goldsworthy) were proposed, in order to mark and explain this refinement brought to Edward Said's theory.

²⁵ See Manfred Beller, Joep Leersen (ed.), *Imagology. The Cultural Construction and Literary Representations of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, Amsterdam, New York, Rodopi Publishers, 2007.

²⁶ See Michael Hatt, Charlotte Klonk, *Art History. A Critical Introduction to Its Methods*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006, pp. 224-225.

²⁷ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1994.

²⁸ Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Euro-Orientalism. Liberal Ideology and the Image of Russia in France (1740-1880)*, Oxford and New York, Peter Lang, 2006.

²⁹ Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania. The Imperialism of Imagination*, Yale University Press, 1998.

Symbolic interpretations have always accompanied geographical research and representations.³⁰ We could very well pair the quest for longitude during the eighteenth century with the emergence of Orientalism and its interest for interpreting, organizing, and classifying the world according to the west-east divide. When this quest ended with the invention at the end of the eighteenth century of the marine chronometer, England was symbolically placed at the center of the earth becoming, because of the prime meridian at Greenwich, the meeting point of the West with the East. However, the nineteenth century will be furthermore marked by a new global geographical pursuit raising the search for the Northern Pole to almost mythological dimensions, and launching once again the north-south axis into the cultural discourses of the time.³¹ The two geographical axes were also accompanied by similar axial stereotypes that often were superimposed one over another so that the cultural north and west became one in the same way that the cultural east and south merged together. A telling example can be found in Ruskin's *Modern Painters* Volume V where he develops deliberately a composite symbolic locus, placed in the north and bathed in a western light, which I will discuss in the final chapter of this thesis.

These cultural assessments and stereotypes that accompany these geographical divides have at their core the concept of civilization, which helps classify and taxonomize the world according to Eurocentric standards. Also, the concept is often used to initiate, explain or justify imperial power struggles, inter-regional conflicts, and colonial expansionism,³² which are promoted as civilizational enterprises. As Edward Said shows

³⁰ See Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, Madison, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998; Denis Cosgrove, *Apollo's Eye. A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imagination*, Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 2001; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia. A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974; Alan R. Baker and Mark Billinge (ed.), *Geographies of England. The North-South Divide, Material and Imagined*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004; Kenneth Robert Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic. From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World*, Madison, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002; Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, Toronto, Random House of Canada, 1995.

³¹ See Denis Cosgrove, *Apollo's Eye. A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imagination*, Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 2001.

³² For instance, in 1850, Lord Palmerston, British Foreign Secretary, spoke about Spanish America, Portugal, and China, as "half-civilized Governments...(which) all require dressing every eight or ten years to keep them in order. Their minds are too shallow to receive an impression that will last longer than some such period...they must not only see the stick but actually feel it on their shoulders." Cited in Michael Levin, *J.S. Mill on Civilization and Barbarism*, New York, Routledge, 2004, p 103.

in *Culture and Imperialism*,³³ even the most benign cultural figures of the time, from Jane Austen, Elizabeth Gaskell, Charlotte Bronte, and Dickens to Ruskin and Mathew Arnold integrated without questioning the Empire into their visions of the world and into their works where it stood as a necessary and permanent backdrop, gaining more and more importance with the passage of time.

The Imperial idea was the main ingredient of British identity helping to enforce the concept of civic nationalism and to bring together the various ethno-cultural nations of the islands under the banner of a civilized and civilizing empire. The task of the politicians and thinkers of the time was to enforce the moral justification for the imperial policy, which had to be seen, not as an aggression, but as the duty of the most developed and civilized country in the world for the general progress of humanity. The lack of popular risings in 1848 was thought to give complete legitimacy to the Monarchy and to the British policies of the time. Thus, in an 1851 letter to Lord Granville, Queen Victoria underlined the uniqueness of a situation when “England alone displayed that order, vigor, and prosperity which it owes to a stable, free, and good government.”³⁴ Therefore, England considered itself to be the most evolved representative of European civilization, a notion that John Stuart Mill had already analyzed in 1838,³⁵ defining it as human improvement. In Mill’s view, the main markers of civilization were private property and education, and its main vehicle was the growth of the middle class. Also, he showed that “as civilization advances, property and intelligence become widely diffused among the millions.”³⁶ Moreover, he argued that the force that assured the stability of the civilized social aggregate was that of co-operation, developed gradually in a democracy through the discipline of commerce, manufacture, and military operations.

Mill proposed a secular concept of civilization based on the notion of progress and on economic causality, which did not totally respond to the ideological needs of a time and place profoundly marked by the Protestant experience. In contrast to Mill, John Ruskin began to define in *Modern Painters* a religious variant of the concept of

³³ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York, Vintage Books A Division of Random House, 1994.

³⁴ James Joll, *Britain and Europe. Pitt to Churchill. 1793-1940*, London, Nicholas Kaye, 1950, p.132.

³⁵ John Stuart Mill, “Civilization”, in John Stuart Mill, *Essays on Politics and Society*, (J. M. Robson, ed.), Toronto, University of Toronto Press, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.

³⁶ Cited in Michael Levin, *JS Mill on Civilization and Barbarism*, London, New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 18.

civilization derived from Anglicanism. He showed that material improvement was not enough justification for expansionism because it provided only the superficial exterior appearances of civilization. For Ruskin the main markers of civilization were the principles of the work ethic and responsibility for the common good, thus echoing the ethos of the missionary movement. A close link was developed during the nineteenth century between the British missionary enterprise and the geographical exploration of the outskirts of the empire.³⁷ It was in fact a missionary, the eminent geographer and explorer David Livingstone, who popularized in 1858 at Cambridge the Imperial motto “Christianity, commerce, civilization.”³⁸ This formula defined the modern universalistic project of a global, civilized empire built on a combination of moral and economic principles, those of a generic Christianity and free trade. This was also the basis for the notion of European Christian Civilization, a constant in British ideology after 1858, put to work effectively by Churchill during the Second World War and the Cold War.

However, this ideological concept did not assure a unified vision regarding Christian Europe, but pointed actually to various differences and symbolic frontiers inside the continent. In his 1838 essay, John Stuart Mill used a profusion of terms to suggest the different nuances of civilization. He spoke about highly-civilized, civilized, and imperfectly civilized nations and also about savage, barbarian, half-savage, and semi-civilized ones.³⁹ The interest in defining the world through almost concentric degrees of civilization organized around Western Europe rapidly became a constant of the nineteenth century. Even the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), usually considered to be the most progressive program of its time, integrated this tendency and delivered a tripartite presentation of Europe, divided into civilized, semi-barbarian and barbarian countries, based on their stages of industrialization.⁴⁰ In the context of the military conflagrations of the 1850s, Ruskin himself constructed national stereotypes and symbolic geographies. He pointed to the starting moment of the construction of an imagined, pan-Germanic Central Europe and presupposed its attributes of authoritarianism in internal policy as well as

³⁷See Dana Lee Roberts (ed.), *Converting Colonialism. Visions and Realities in Mission History. 1786-1914*, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

³⁸ Robert Johnson, *British Imperialism*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

³⁹ See John Stuart Mill, “Civilization,” in John Stuart Mill, *Essays on Politics and Society*, (J. M. Robson, ed.), Toronto, University of Toronto Press, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.

⁴⁰ David Boyle, *Words that Changed the World. The Communist Manifesto*, New York, Barron’s, 2004, p.38.

secularism in culture.⁴¹ Due to its great popularity in the second part of the nineteenth century, Ruskin's *Modern Painters* played an important role in the configuration of symbolic, intra-European borders. Therefore, the study of the Ruskinian geographic imagery can be a heuristic tool. It reveals the roots of some of the concepts of modern geopolitics (Central Europe, the Iron Curtain, Euro-Atlantic Civilization) that make reference to supra-national communities and it seeks to legitimize the political system of international alliances or rivalries.

03. Preliminaries to *Modern Painters* Volumes III and IV

03.01. The Crimean War and Anglo - German Antagonism

Together, *Modern Painters* volumes III and IV constitute a diptych. Both volumes are published in 1856, (in January and April respectively) in the context of the Treaty of Paris (March 1856) that marked the end of the Crimean War.

I will argue that the two books are heavily influenced by the political context of the time in that they reflect the deep anxiety that resulted from the threat that the Crimean War posed to the European balance of power. In other words, Ruskin changed and adapted his theories of modern landscape painting to incorporate politics of his time such

⁴¹Shortly before the end of the Cold War, the question of Central Europe will be raised again by Milan Kundera but totally redefined in a more utopian way and outside linguistic criteria, as a cultural zone corresponding geographically to the ex Habsburg Empire and thus excluding Germany, possessing a specific ethos based mainly on the integrative powers of education, cultural creation, fulfillment of civic duties and the acceptance of difference. See Milan Kundera, "Un Occident kidnappé ou la tragédie de l'Europe Centrale," *Le Débat*, November 1983, no 27 and Milan Kundera, *Le rideau*, Paris, Gallimard, 2005.

as the problem of British identity relative to the rest of Europe as well as the new set of alliances brought on by the war.

An interesting thing about these art books is the fact that Ruskin anticipates certain political realities that do not become apparent until later. An important example is the strong British antagonism toward Germany that takes hold only after Germany's unification in 1871. By the end of Volume III, in 1856, Ruskin already builds a cultural dichotomy with "the idealistic German" at one end and the "naturalistic English"⁴² at the other. In so doing he foresees post-1871 British political that pits idealist Germanophiles against realist Germanophobes.⁴³

Britain has historically been interested in maintaining a certain balance of power throughout Europe. Before the British-German antagonism, France was the traditional British enemy.⁴⁴ However, France's economic and social decline in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars significantly lessened British paranoia about a possible French invasion.⁴⁵

Then, as Russia and Prussia adopted an active interventionist policy in Europe, Britain once again became worried about the Continental status quo. With the advent of this new threat, Ruskin's writings reflect this shift in political consciousness. He internalizes British wariness of threats to the nation's hegemony on the European continent. One way Ruskin does this is by developing a strategy of selective associations and omissions. For example, in the context of the Crimean War, Ruskin works to construct a positive image of France, which is at that time the main British ally. In his personal diaries, Ruskin dismisses both French painting and German art, but in his published work, *Modern Painters* volumes III, IV and V, he tries to avoid discussing contemporary French art. Instead, he dutifully praises the French landscape and buildings as well as the new Second Empire regime.

⁴² *Works*, V, 424.

⁴³ Paul M. Kennedy, "Idealists and Realists: British Views of Germany 1864-1939," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 25 (September 1974): 138-39. See also William F. Bertolette, *British Identity and the German Other*, Louisiana State University, <http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-01242012-200750/unrestricted/BertoPhD.pdf>. 28 October 2012, p.12-13, and Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914*, New York, Humanity Books, 1988.

⁴⁴ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation. 1707-1837*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994.

⁴⁵ See C.J. Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power. 1815-1853*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963.

Ruskin makes no mention of German landscapes, but instead criticizes Germany for its idealistic art and philosophy. Furthermore, Ruskin uses overgeneralizations and stereotypes to suggest a dangerous and modern, homogenous German nation before a German national state is actually created. In Volume III, Ruskin uses this cultural construct of Germany to compare with an ideal British identity that he builds by eliminating those “negative” traits highlighted in the so called “idealistic German mind.”

It is important to note that Ruskin’s commentary on Germany is not consistent with deteriorating British – German political relations. Moreover, academically and artistically, Germany was very well viewed when Ruskin was writing. Therefore, Ruskin’s attitude was unusual at a time when the German territories were still seen as the stereotypical “lands of poets and philosophers” described by Mme de Staël.⁴⁶ Ruskin’s dislike of German art is more likely linked to popular culture which appeared marred by the xenophobia generated by the Crimean conflict. During the war, strangely enough, Russia and Germany became in some ways interchangeable and Russians and Germans were conflated as quintessential foreigners. As Orlando Figes shows, even Prince Albert was repeatedly attacked in the British press “as a German or Russian (many people [seeming] incapable of distinguishing between the two). He was accused of treason [and] *The Morning Advertiser* even called for his execution,”⁴⁷ to the great distress of the Queen, who threatened to abdicate.⁴⁸ Therefore, in criticizing German art and culture, Ruskin was in this respect denouncing the Russian Empire, Britain’s enemy in Crimea. Still, Ruskin knew very little about Russian art and culture beyond stereotypes that painted a picture of Russia as a half-civilized empire, which hid its savage nature under a shiny veneer of sophistication.⁴⁹

Ruskin’s outright critique of German painting actually starts in Volume I of *Modern Painters* (1842). While Volume I mainly deals with Italian art, it also contains an

⁴⁶ See Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Cultural Representation of Characters. A Survey*, Amsterdam and New York, Rodopi, 2007, p.161.

⁴⁷ Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War. A History*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2010, p.149.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ This was not only a bellicose journalistic attitude but also a real conviction at some high political level, made evident for instance by Lord Palmerston in one of his letters from 1856 where he talks about Count Orlov, the leader of the Russian delegation in Paris: “As to Orlov, I know him well – he is civil and courteous externally, but his inward mind is deeply impregnated with Russian insolence, arrogance and pride. He will do his best to bully without appearing to do so...and he has all the cunning of a half civilized savage.” *Ibidem*, p.413.

early definition of “Germanism”: “all departure from natural forms to give fearfulness” and also “the work of fancy not of imagination,” which “instantly degrades whatever it affects to a third-rate level.”⁵⁰ However, Volume I lacks the kind of vitriolic critique of German culture that is typical of Volumes III and IV.

The anti-German attitude of the last three volumes of *Modern Painters* is definitely amplified by the war climate. Actually, before the Crimean War, in *The Stones of Venice* (1851-1853), Ruskin describes a much more open landscape of continental Europe, talking about a circulation of ideas and artistic forms flowing East to West and North to South. Also, at this point, he acknowledges the existence of similarities between Germany and Britain, such as common North Germanic origins and similar religious attitudes.

Ruskin’s mid-Victorian associations between Germany and Russia are examples of the beginning of a cultural process that becomes more evident at the end of the nineteenth-century. During this process, the Germans gradually go from being seen as benign intellectuals and somewhat poor British relatives to being perceived, by the beginning of the First World War, as ruthless, even if highly cultured, *huns* (the epitome of savage invaders), tricked by a superb but poisonous *kultur* back into a state of barbarity.⁵¹

In counterpart to this Germanic construct, in Volume IV Ruskin imagines a mythical Switzerland and represents the Swiss Alps as a naturally fortified border guarding against the Black Forest (Germany), as I will show in Chapter II. Moreover, in another exercise in transference through association, Ruskin presents Switzerland as a nation similar in aspirations to Britain, sharing the highest common values: freedom, organic rural communities, rejection of authoritarianism, and an authentic Christian faith.

Ruskin’s books before *Modern Painters* Volume III, IV, and V (mainly *Modern Painters* I and II, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and, to a certain extent, *The Stones of Venice*) are marked by what Ruskin himself calls “rabid Protestantism”⁵² in his 1872

⁵⁰ *Works*, III, 582.

⁵¹ See Peter Edgerly Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin. Variations on a Literary Stereotype. 1890-1920*, Lewisburg PA, Bucknell University Press, 1986

⁵² *Works*, III, 54.

preface added to *Modern Painters* Volume I. However, Volumes III and IV reflect a changing religious attitude in their author; Ruskin gradually moves towards a more inclusive and tolerant personal faith that even reaches beyond Christianity. He goes as far as stating that there are universal moral laws that give a certain sense of continuity to history and form the basis of all religions and authentic aesthetic experience. In other words, he affirms the existence of a “moral law – common to the Jew and Arab, to the Greek and Christian, the past world, the present world, and the world to come...as the basis of religion itself, – not religion as the basis of it, and the first condition of true delight in the contemplation of any visible thing, or the conception of any invisible one.”⁵³ Additionally, Ruskin also starts to see classical antiquity as a positive cultural heritage and legitimate source of knowledge, whereas before he sees it as an alien and inappropriate pagan influence.

This rejection of his initial extreme Evangelicalism helps Ruskin appreciate the alliance with powers like the Ottoman Empire. As in the case of the German-Russian equivalence, bizarre counterfactual considerations regarding Turkey are put in place in Britain during the Crimean conflagration with the purpose of justifying and supporting the alliance in a war that had actually started under a religious (Orthodox Christian vs. Catholic) pretext. Orlando Figes writes that “in the popular imagination, the struggle against Russia involved ‘British principles’ – the defense of liberty, civilization, and free trade. The protection of Turkey against Russia was associated with the gallant British virtue of championing the helpless and the weak against tyrants and bullies ...Hatred of the Russians turned the Turks into paragons of virtue in the public estimation.”⁵⁴ Therefore, Turkish-British friendship is assured without hesitation in the public discourse and, as Figes shows, “the mere mention of the Sultan’s name was enough to evoke tumultuous applause.” Furthermore, speakers ranked the Sultan “with the Alfreds and the Edwards” of England and showed that “the Turk was not [an] infidel. He was Unitarian. (...)The leitmotif of this anti-Russian propaganda was the ‘crusade of civilization against barbarism’.”⁵⁵

⁵³ *Works*, IV, 6.

⁵⁴ Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War. A History*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2010, p.150.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 151-152.

On the other hand, Ruskin is still very critical of the secularism of the Western civilizational model, which in his view gave way to an obsession with technological progress. He also criticizes the marginalization of art in the school system of the time. At the time when he writes Volume III and IV, Ruskin believes that the identity of a nation can be moulded through art, as art can encourage a deep emotional life that could counteract the effects of a pragmatic, modern world. Ruskin specifically envisions the perfectibility of British identity through the inclusion of emotion and cooperation to counterbalance impassivity and competition, features that are characteristic of the British boarding school system.⁵⁶ As Rudyard Kipling shows towards the end of the century, in these schools, the pupils “were learning (...) the lesson of their race, which is to put away all emotion and entrap the alien at the proper time.”⁵⁷

It is interesting to note that Ruskin does not have a public school education; that is to say, he never attended one of those private institutions of learning which were seen as breeding grounds for future public and military service careers.⁵⁸ This can explain his nonconformist attitudes and novel approaches in almost all his activities. Ruskin lacks this experience common to the ruling classes, which many believed to be essential to shape the “official mind” of the British Empire.⁵⁹ Instead, he was home schooled under the supervision of his strict but adoring Evangelical parents. Therefore, Ruskin arrived at Oxford with a background that was different from that of most of his peers. More specifically, he had extensive experience in travel, arts, theology, and natural sciences, but he lacked skills that were highly valued by these schools, mainly classical languages, mythology, and team sports.

Ruskin’s initial opinion of classical antiquity as a heathen and foreign culture (which also informs his rejection of the Renaissance) is in many ways a result of his stern Evangelical upbringing. However, as Dinah Birch shows,⁶⁰ in Volume III, this view is gradually overcome. Still, the value he attaches to expressing emotion and challenging

⁵⁶ J.A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism. Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal*, London, Frank Cass Publishers, 1998.

⁵⁷ Rudyard Kipling, *Stalky & Co.*, Herdefordshire, Hertfordshire, Wordsworth Editions, 1994, p. 26.

⁵⁸ In Britain the word “public” when attached to “school” changes its meaning into its opposite, “private,” pointing to the goal of the institution and not to its funding.

⁵⁹ See Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher, Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians. The Official Mind of Imperialism*, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1981.

⁶⁰ See Dinah Birch, *Ruskin’s Myth*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988

competition in the name of charitable cooperation remains unchanged. Finally, beginning with Volume III, Ruskin also develops an imagological attitude,⁶¹ believing that the traits of a nation can be found in the qualities of its visual culture. To illustrate this point, Ruskin often references the difference between British and various continental approaches. Briefly, Ruskin suggests that by influencing and promoting the arts in conformity to “the moral law,” the possibility exists of moulding the attitudes and creeds of his time.

03.02. Bibliographical Links, Tropes, and Illustrations

Modern Painters III builds upon a main theme explored in Volumes I and II: the construction of a generic British identity. It also works from ideas found in *The Stones of Venice*, most importantly, the question of imperial decline.

Volumes I (1842) and II (1846) are written in a Moderns vs. Ancients vein. In these volumes, Ruskin is very critical of the British education system. Ruskin believes that the British school system fosters secularization and cosmopolitanism and by so doing undermines the Protestant aspect of British identity. Furthermore, Ruskin believes that as someone who had gone through the process, he was well placed to criticize the system. In fact, Ruskin signs the first edition of Volume I as “A Graduate from Oxford,” thus underlining his position of privilege: white, male, moneyed, and well educated. In other words, his insider status suggests his familiarity with the system and therefore somewhat vindicates both his right and his ability to criticize and to suggest ways of improving it. Ruskin’s theory is built around the figure of William Turner, whom he considers to be the quintessential British artist. Specifically, Ruskin believes that Turner painted moral

⁶¹ With reference to the construction of fictional national stereotypes, see Manfred Beller, Joep Leersen, (ed.), *Imagology. The Cultural Construction and Literary Representations of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, Amsterdam, New York, Rodopi Publishers, 2007.

lessons for the use of his compatriots and did not relent when his style was criticized for not corresponding to the Royal Academy's canon.

Ruskin attacks Joshua Reynolds' writings, which provided a theoretical framework for Academy training. He also resolves to dismiss the artistic values of the aristocratic establishment, which were embodied by the late Renaissance and by seventeenth-century Italian and Dutch painting. Instead, Ruskin proposes as models the Italian primitives and the northern Gothic. In his view, these schools were linked to times of authentic faith, that gave them moral legitimacy.

Ruskin develops Volume I and II after a model that was coherently articulated for the first time in seventeenth-century France as an ideological program that Joan Dejean called the "culture wars,"⁶² more specifically known as the "quarrel between the ancients and the moderns." This kind of program implies polemics and antinomies where art productions and theories stand for social and political realities. The same is true for the first two volumes of *Modern Painters*, which constructed a polarized conflict of epic proportions between Turner and modern British landscape painting on the one side and the Academy and the Italian and Dutch masters on the other.

Ruskin adapts the now-traditional tropes of "ancients vs moderns" and also *Ut Pictura Poesis*, which debates if poetry or painting have the primacy in arts. To these motifs he later adds in the *Stones of Venice* the theme of decline and fall that had also been an important part of the original "ancients vs moderns" cultural conflict.⁶³ All these three topics come together in Volume III.

Ruskin conflates the reformation of the Academy with that of the society. He does not advocate the destruction of the old system but rather its reformation through the reinforcement of its somewhat forgotten core values. In fact, Ruskin envisages British society's return to a (fictional) Golden Age of Early Christendom. Even though he tends to be an absolute defender of the moderns of his time, Ruskin nevertheless has a tendency to look for solutions in the past. What he proposes here is basically a regressive utopian model

⁶² See Joan Dejean, *Ancients Against Moderns. Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1997.

⁶³ *Ibidem*.

Consequently, in light of the expansion of the topic of change and reformation to include British national and imperial identity, Victorian terms such as progress and civilization, enter the discussion. While in the first two volumes, Ruskin remains vague in regard to these key concepts, he starts to develop his position starting with Volume III. From this point on Ruskin gradually advances his position and complicates his definitions by adding successive layers of associations, comparisons, case studies, and illustrations.

In Volume III Ruskin only tentatively uses images for his cultural construction. His illustrative program improves in the next two volumes as Ruskin fine tunes it. However, as a whole, Volume III is characterized by a traditional illustrative presentation that emphasizes the denotative character of the images, closely linked to certain descriptions in the text.

However, at the end of Volume III, Ruskin lists two of his own original landscapes which, surprisingly enough, we are told by the author have no direct link with the text but are put there in order not to encumber the volumes to follow. They are *The Lombard Apennine* (Fig.1) and *St George of the Seaweed* (Fig.2). The two images deal with the mountain-church and the island-church, two themes that feature prominently in Ruskin's later writings. The illustrations depict two northern Italian landscapes seen at sunset. They are horizontal compositions, realized in a dramatic style, with simplified masses and volumes and dynamic dark surfaces. *The Lombard Apennine* in particular has an abstract-symbolist quality. They both represent the effect of sunset light, which we will see in the next chapters translated by Ruskin as "light in the west," symbolizing his notions of spiritual reform and his regressive utopia. They also depict Ruskinian symbolic constructs that will return frequently both in his writing and in his drawing: the mountain-church and the island-church. With the first one, Ruskin links the mountain as a cathedral of the earth to the medieval cathedral as a bible of stone and the earth as sacred text. The island-church is directly linked to Britain's specific geography. This identity indicator is reinforced by the name of St. George and the association with Venice.

By using these illustrations, Ruskin implies the ideational continuity with *The Stones of Venice* and, thus, with the theme of decline and fall. Actually, the illustrations

represent two main geographical references from the text of *The Stones of Venice*. There, these locations were poetically described as St George church rising from the Venetian lagoon like Britain from the Northern Sea and the Lombard Apennines seen from Parma, as a source of creative energy for the artists of the early Renaissance. Both of them were described at twilight, as holy monuments giving hope to their viewer after a day of toil. *The Lombard Apennine* and *St George of the Seaweed* were actually a natural church and a man-made church of the Italian North. These two illustrations are used as a link between future and past, as they not only look toward Volumes IV and V, the original places for which Ruskin says they were intended, but they also look back to the message of *The Stones of Venice*, where their subjects were prominent. Thus, Ruskin implies that Volume III is based on the conclusions of *The Stones of Venice*. These conclusions are, generally speaking, concerned with questions of geography and history, showing that landscape in general is vital to building the identity of a nation. Moreover, the European landscape in particular is a cultural one, its perception and representation being permanently marked by history, by art and literature, and by memories of the past, both real and imagined. And lastly, and more specifically, Venice was a historic alter-ego of Victorian Britain warning about the danger of decline.

The Stones of Venice had been organized into three parts, *The Foundations*, *The Sea Stories*, and *The Fall*, suggesting the inexorable “anakuklosis ton politeion:”⁶⁴ the natural cycle of all imperial powers—birth, growth and decline. Ruskin thought that the fall of the British Empire could be avoided through a return into the past to *The Foundations*,⁶⁵ namely to original Christian values and traditions. To clarify, Ruskin is of the opinion that such traditions are vital for the moral legitimacy and survival of British power in the world. For Ruskin, this means a return to what he sees as a more innocent, organic, and inspired pre-modern age.

The Stones of Venice opens with a proclamation that England is the successor to the ancient states of Tyre and Venice, along with a warning about its future decline and

⁶⁴ Bernard Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp.44-45.

⁶⁵ See Steven B. Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism. Rights in Context*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1991, p. 37.

fall.⁶⁶ At the beginning of the second volume, Ruskin reinforces the equation between Venice and Britain by describing his sensations when he entered Venice by gondola from the canal of Mestre. He recalls how he found himself sailing in a sea that had nothing to do with the south but instead had “the bleak power of our northern waves,” taking him to a “lonely island church, fitly named ‘St. George of the Seaweed’.”⁶⁷ It becomes evident that Ruskin is not seeing the Venetian waters, but the British ones. By translating San Giorgio in Aliga into St. George of the Seaweed, Ruskin recalls St. George, patron saint of England and, by pointing out that the church is an island, he emphasizes one more time the association with Britain. This kind of associative strategy will become commonplace in Ruskin’s work. For example, in Volume V he uses the theme of the fight against the dragon to suggest an ideal British identity. Also, he translates the name of the Venetian painter Giorgione literally (Stout George) and symbolically (George of Georges); he does this in order to highlight the association of Venice and Venetian art with modern day Britain and its cultural challenges. In this way, the two landscapes from Volumes III and IV, *St George of the Seaweed* and *Lombard Apennine*, are not only reminders of the theme decline and fall but also announce the solution for avoiding the fall, namely reviving moral law through the scripture of nature taken from the mountain-church and the reformation of Britain into an island-church.

⁶⁶ “Since the first dominion of men was asserted over the ocean, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the First of these great powers only the memory remains; of the Second, the ruin; the Third, which inherits their greatness, if it forget their example, may be led through prouder eminence to less pitied destruction.” *Works*, IX, 4.

⁶⁷ “not such blue, soft, lake-like ocean as bathes the Neapolitan promontories, or sleeps beneath the marble rocks of Genoa, but a sea with the bleak power of our own northern waves, yet subdued into a strange spacious rest, and changed from its angry pallor into a field of burnished gold, as the sun declined behind the belfry tower of the lonely island church, fitly named “St. George of the Seaweed.” See also the extended description, *Works*, X, 4-5.

Chapter 1

Modern Painters Volume III

1.01. Preface and annexes: Ruskin on method, public, and reader

Ruskin divides the main text of Volume III in two parts; the first part criticizes what can be described as the established art theory that dominates the field within the Royal Academy in early Victorian times, mainly the ideas of Joshua Reynolds. In the second part, Ruskin presents his own art theories and links them to political issues such as the meaning of civilization and progress, the role of modern technology, and the issue of Crimea.

The text of Volume III of *Modern Painters* is buttressed by a number of metacritical segments - a preface and several annexes - which explain and elaborate on Ruskin's approach. Unlike Volume I, which opens with four subsequent,⁶⁸ quasi-apologetic, prefaces in which Ruskin gradually distances himself from the text,⁶⁹ Volume III opens with only the original self-explanatory preface, which shows that Ruskin fully endorses the message of *Modern Painters*. In this preface, the author hints at some general themes of his writing such as: work ethic as a force for societal cohesion, the need to reunify the realm of knowledge, which had become deeply divided into two

⁶⁸ The prefaces were added in 1843, 1844, 1846 and 1873.

⁶⁹ In the 1873 *Preface* he states: "It is with much regret, and partly against my own judgment, that I republish the following chapters in their present form" as the substance of the first volumes "is only justifiable on the ground of its absolute honesty." *Works*, vol. 3, p. 54.

divergent domains, science and liberal arts,⁷⁰ and finally, the recognition of art as an intellectual pursuit rather than one associated with pleasure, entertainment, and desire. Moreover, in the preface, Ruskin proposes an analogy that will constitute the basis of his interpretation of landscape painting: he presents the book itself as symbolic territory to be explored; thereby implying that landscape is also a symbolic book to be read. In fact, Ruskin sees nature as an ideographic and systemic divine book written in three-dimensional solid pictograms, which must be read or translated for people by artists such as writers or painters. In this sense, physical geography is an original text to which, as he shows in the last volumes of *Modern Painters*, humanity and history continually add multiple narratives transforming Europe into a cultural landscape. This accumulation of superimposed layers of understandings demands a method of reading that should combine empirical observation and symbolic interpretation.

Volume III (as well as IV and V) are developed like the landscapes that they refer to; they are complex, sometimes difficult journeys between prefaces and appendices, arguments and digressions, scientific descriptions and homilies, footnotes and marginal glosses, figures and plates. In addition, Ruskin's voice is always present, as if he were a work in progress himself, often disorganizing the presentation or complicating it through various textual tactics, sometimes changing his opinions or establishing links to conclusions of texts to come. Ruskin does this because he thinks that such an approach will allow him to engage the reader's attention and to maintain interest for future intellectual travels together.

For example, in the preface to Volume III, Ruskin compares the act of reading a book to a guided trip through a geographical terrain:

All I can secure, therefore is rightness in main points and main tendencies; for it is perfectly possible to protect oneself against small errors, and yet to make a great and final error in the sum of work: on the other hand, it is equally possible to fall into many small errors, and yet be right in tendency all the while, and entirely right in the end. In this respect, some men may be

⁷⁰ This idea, together with the British-Venetian analogies will be echoed by C.P. Snow in 1952 in his lecture *The Two Cultures*, which in turn influenced Immanuel Wallerstein in the construction of his binary equation : nomothetic (sciences) vs ideographic (humanities and arts). See C.P. Snow, *The Two Cultures*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, and Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis: An Introduction*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2004.

compared to careful travelers, who neither stumble at stones, nor slip in sloughs, but have, from the beginning of their journey to its close, chosen the wrong road; and others to those who, however slopping or stumbling at the wayside, have yet their eyes fixed on the true gate and goal (stumbling, perhaps, even the more because they have), and will not fail in reaching them. Such are assuredly the safer guides; he who follows them may avoid their slips, and be their companion in attainment.⁷¹

This passage shows how Ruskin sees authors as guides and readers as companions; the text has its own physical geography, marked by symbolic “stones” and “sloughs.”⁷² Ruskin also builds an axiology that shows how we can find “careful travelers”⁷³ making smooth journeys on the wrong road while others, “however slipping or stumbling at the wayside, have yet their eyes fixed on the true gate and goal.”⁷⁴ Here too, is also a methodological position, suggesting that proper academic form does not necessarily guarantee truth, which can just as well be delivered in a nonconformist approach, as long as the author is authentic. Ruskin places his text in a private sphere thereby implying a closer, more harmonious relationship between him and the “reader” than the hostile distance found in conflictual, public space:

I have now given ten years of my life to the single purpose of enabling myself to judge rightly of art, and spent them in labour as earnest and continuous as men usually undertake to gain position, or accumulate fortune. It is true, that the public still call me an “amateur”; nor have I ever been able to persuade them that it was possible to work steadily and hard with any other motive than that of gaining bread, or to give up a fixed number of hours every day to the furtherance of an object unconnected with personal interest. I have, however, given up so much of life to this object; earnestly desiring to ascertain, and be able to teach, the truth respecting art; and also knowing that this truth was, by time and labour, definitely ascertainable.⁷⁵

...it will be found, on reflection, that the range of inquiry engaged in demanded, even for their slight investigation, time and pains which are quite unrepresented in the result. It often required a week or two’s hard walking to determine some geological problem, now dismissed in an unnoticed sentence;

⁷¹ *Works*, V, 7.

⁷² *Works*, V, 7.

⁷³ *Works*, V, 7.

⁷⁴ *Works*, V, 7.

⁷⁵ *Works*, V, 4.

and it constantly needed examination and thought, prolonged during many days in the picture gallery...

For the labour of a critic who sincerely desires to be just, extends into more fields than it is possible for any single hand to furrow straightly. He has to take some note of many physical sciences; of optics, geometry, geology, botany, and anatomy; he must acquaint himself with the works of all great artists, and with the temper and history of the times in which they lived; he must be a fair metaphysician, and a careful observer of the phenomena of natural scenery.⁷⁶

The preface is constructed as an explanation of what Ruskin sees as the open state of animosity from the public sphere toward him and as a response to the main reproaches uttered by his critics. Therefore, we learn that Ruskin was seen as an amateur who wrote on art as a pastime and never did real work, who did not care for a consecrated academic approach based on syllogism and who had an inflexible, dogmatic vision that was not considered appropriate in the realm of writing on art. In response, Ruskin claims that in fact he is a unique scholar, a real polymath who had developed an inclusive, interdisciplinary method that bridges the fields of science and humanities.

Therefore, Ruskin presents himself in the preface to Volume III as a passionate, independent and original researcher with a vision, who had worked incessantly for a decade “in labor as earnest and continuous as men usually undertake to gain position, or accumulate fortune.” He is also convinced that studying art for reasons other than “gaining bread or position,” in other words, from an authentic desire to uncover and then teach the truth about art, could make it possible to detect and implement the laws of right and wrong.

Furthermore, Ruskin tries to circumvent this criticism by defining himself strictly through his work ethic. In other words, Ruskin manages to create for himself a hybrid status of “gentleman worker” as opposed to the traditional “gentleman amateur” by showing that he obtains no material reward from his research (remaining thus a gentleman) and also that he does not pursue personal pleasure in studying art, but is interested only in the common good and the search for truth.

Ruskin’s definition of the working man does not exclude those engaged in intellectual, artistic, or commercial pursuits, thus demonstrating the inclusive role of

⁷⁶ *Works*, V, 6.

work in society, as well as suggesting the natural state of equality of all working members of society in the same way that Christianity “recognized the individual value of every soul”⁷⁷ even if class barriers were still kept in place. Ruskin’s broad concept is somewhat novel and inclusive in a time when the word “worker” was usually taken to mean the lower-class laborer. By defining work as an inclusive endeavor that is conducive for social cohesion, Ruskin embraces the Protestant middle-class ethos and opposes emerging far-left-wing theories such as Marxism that separate people into antagonistic classes. In Raymond Williams’ words, Ruskin, along with the Pre-Raphaelites, “in their effective moment, for all their difficulties, were not only a break from their class [...] but a means toward the next stage of development of that class itself.”⁷⁸ Instead, Ruskin embraces a centrist trend, defined by Disraeli⁷⁹ as progressive conservative or “one nation,” which recurs periodically in British politics,⁸⁰ as an attempt to combine elements from the right-wing and the left-wing of the political spectrum.

Modern Painters Volumes III, IV and V, are written in an interesting context; Ruskin writes in an unconventional style at a time when art history is in the process of becoming defined as an academic discipline in the realm of the ideographic sciences in Europe. At the time, the system of knowledge was already split between nomothetic and ideographic sciences,⁸¹ a binary organization made on the basis of methodology, specifically empirical quantitative methods versus qualitative hermeneutical ones.

Ruskin sees artistic production as a complex activity that involves specific materials and specific physical sciences employed to represent aspects of the internal and external world of the artist. Therefore, he believes that writing on art is the perfect way to demonstrate the unity of knowledge. For this reason, he deliberately avoids using a traditional, systematic method, instead linking art history, literary analysis, science,

⁷⁷ *Works*, V, 160.

⁷⁸ “Indeed this happens again and again with bourgeois fractions. [...] It is a revolt against the class but for the class, and it is really no surprise that its emphasis of style, suitably mediated, should become the popular bourgeois art of the next historical period.” Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, London, Verso, 1980, p. 159.

⁷⁹ Peter Dorey, *British Conservatism. The Politics and Philosophy of Inequality*, London and New York, I.B.Tauris, 2010.

⁸⁰ See Harold Mac Millan, *The Middle Way*, London, Macmillan, 1938, and also Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way. The Renewal of Social Democracy*, Cambridge, Oxford, Boston, Polity Press, 1998.

⁸¹ See Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis: An Introduction*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2004.

religion, and politics in an attempt to build a complex interdisciplinary approach. Beginning with Volume IV, Ruskin develops a hybrid methodology that relies heavily on the natural sciences; most notably he uses botany, geology, and thermodynamics, fields that were rapidly gaining in prestige due to their importance as exploration tools, and therefore means for symbolically controlling territories in the Empire.⁸² In addition, Ruskin's methodology includes Protestant doctrine and ideology that resonates with British identity debates of the time and also with the growing importance of missionary endeavors in the exploration of the overseas empire.⁸³ He uses optics as well, as a necessary field for studying a visual domain, together with literary criticism and analysis, as he considered visual art and literature to be complementary.

While developing his own unorthodox method of research and writing, Ruskin is also actively trying to undermine the conventional model by implying the existence of a certain mercenary quality in modern specialists who are paid to conduct research or who work to gain social prestige. In Ruskin's view, the nobler motivation is a devotion to justice and truth – his own case being a perfect example. Ruskin only hints at his mistrust of the academic establishment in the Volume III preface, yet expresses it openly in one of the appendixes of the same volume; here, he states that he does not write for “scholarly men, who have leisure on their hands, by reading all they have to read, for and against, and arming themselves at all points for controversy with all persons (but) for busy and practical people, who want merely to find out how to live and to die ... simple and busy men, concerned much with art, which is eminently a practical matter, and fatigues the eye, so as to render much reading inexpedient.”⁸⁴

Therefore, we can see that Ruskin comes to develop in Volume III a transparent and self-referential prose as well as an authorial voice that is very unlike the more common neutral and distant narrator; this voice resembles that of a real person, with a particular nationality, social status, and political opinions, who tries to explain his approach, his dilemmas, his creeds, and his choices. In this way, Ruskin becomes a hero

⁸² See Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive. Knowledge and the Fantasy of the Empire*, London, New York, Verso, 1993.

⁸³ See Dana Lee Roberts (ed.), *Converting Colonialism. Visions and Realities in Mission History. 1786-1914*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

⁸⁴ *Works*, V, 425-426.

of his own imperial landscape narrative from Volumes III, IV and V, which thereby gain a certain *Bildungsroman* quality.

Overall, Ruskin's ideal model of an art writer is that of a heroic polymath, most likely inspired by Carlyle's rhetoric from *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*.⁸⁵ In this work, Carlyle identifies specific types of heroes and uses case study examples of historical figures possessing the ability to rally huge crowds around them. Similarly, two years before publishing Volume III, Ruskin confesses in one of his letters his desire for a mass audience and for absolute authority in the realm of writing on art; he claims: "I don't say I wouldn't care for reputation if I had it, but until people are ready to receive all I say about art as 'unquestionable,' just as they receive what Faraday tells them about chemistry, I don't consider myself to have any reputation at all."⁸⁶

In the preface to Volume III, Ruskin suggests that although he stands by the theoretical premises laid out in Volumes I and II, he sees that they are based more on personal intuitions rather than on professional training. Almost two decades later, in 1873, Ruskin reinforces this allusion by adding a new preface to Volume I in which he states that the substance of the first two books "is only justifiable on the grounds of its absolute honesty,"⁸⁷ thus making authenticity a link between all the volumes. Therefore, by Volume III, Ruskin thinks that he has successfully proven to his critics that he is one such altruistic author - an independent scholar who was not looking for any profit other than that of finding and revealing the truth for the sake of the common good. In response, Ruskin demands from his readers the same kind of absolute trust that one would normally place in a scientist. He argues that art is not an autonomous field determined solely by aesthetic criteria, but a "science (based on the) laws of truth and right [...] just as fixed as those of harmony in music, or on affinity in chemistry."⁸⁸ Furthermore, he boasts the same discipline and inflexible work ethic demanded of a scientist. In other

⁸⁵ See Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993.

⁸⁶ *Works*, V, 5, note 1.

⁸⁷ *Works*, III, 54.

⁸⁸ *Works*, V, 5.

words, Ruskin describes art as a science of ethics codified in a visual language which, if properly studied and interpreted, can teach us “how to live and die.”⁸⁹

Volumes I and II of *Modern Painters* (written to defend Turner’s late works) are addressed to a specialized audience – mainly art critics and academics. Conversely, with Volumes III, IV and V, Ruskin wants to reach a wider audience. More specifically, Ruskin wants to convince the middle classes that the visual arts were as prestigious and respectable as literature. Therefore, the last three volumes of *Modern Painters* are generally intended for the educated English reader, a person with a strong literary background, a good knowledge of art, a basic understanding of natural sciences, and finally an interest in European continental history and travel. Furthermore, to follow Ruskin’s argument, the reader must also have a working understanding of not only European painting (Renaissance to the nineteenth century), but also of classical and current trends in literature (Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, the metaphysical poets, romantic poetry and the historical romantic novel). As a result, the broad range of Ruskin’s knowledge resonates strongly with artists, poets, and writers including the likes of George Eliot. George Eliot actually reviews Volumes III and IV and concludes that the book “must be stirring up young minds in a promising way.”⁹⁰ In this, she follows in the

⁸⁹ “It is an idea too frequently entertained, by persons who are not much interested in art, that there are no laws of right or wrong concerning it; and that the best art is that which pleases most widely. Hence, the constant allegation of “dogmatism” against any one who states unhesitatingly either preference or principle respecting pictures. There are, however, laws of truth in painting, just as fixed as those of harmony in music, or of affinity in chemistry. Those laws are perfectly ascertainable by labour, and ascertainable no otherwise. It is as ridiculous for any one to speak positively about painting who has not given a great part of his life to its study, as it would be for a person who has never studied chemistry to give a lecture on affinity of elements; but it is also as ridiculous for a person to speak hesitantly about laws of painting who has conscientiously given his time to their ascertainment, as it would be for Mr. Faraday to announce in a dubious manner that iron has an affinity for oxygen, and to put the question to the vote of his audience whether it had or not. Of course there are many things, in all stages of knowledge, which cannot be dogmatically stated; and it will be found, by any candid reader, either of what, I have before written, or of this book, that, in many cases, I am *not* dogmatic. The phrase “I think so,” or, “it seems so to me,” will be met with continually; and I pray the reader to believe that I use such expression always in seriousness, never as a matter of form.” *Works*, V, 5.

⁹⁰ “I venerate (Ruskin) as one of the great Teachers of the day – his absurdities on practical points do no harm, but the grand doctrines of truth and sincerity in art, and the nobleness and simplicity of our human life, which he teaches with the inspiration of a Hebrew prophet, must be stirring up young minds in a promising way... The last two volumes of *Modern Painters* contain, I think, some of the finest writing of this age.” George Eliot, in Gordon S. Haught (ed), *The George Eliot Letters*, Hew Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1954-55, pp. 422-423.

steps of Charlotte Bronte, who praises Volume I, writing that: “I feel as I had been walking blindfold – this book seems to give me eyes.”⁹¹

The political message of *Modern Painters* also appealed to many readers. More specifically, Ruskin’s openly expressed political critique attracted various moderate reformists of the time – individuals who preferred to avoid the kind of violent and radical change manifest in the Continental revolutions. *Modern Painters*’ nonconformist style, specifically the criticism of academia and of the establishment, arouses the interest of the younger generation of intellectuals. It is easy to see how the complex and interactive Ruskinian method which affirmed a passionately opinionated author and involved the readers in a lively textual adventure appealed to a young public informed by Romantic literature and poetry. In addition, the combination of art and politics gave a novel and engaging and almost entertaining quality to Ruskin’s works. As William Morris expressed in a recollection of his formative years, “I cannot help saying, by the way, how deadly dull the world would have been twenty years ago but for Ruskin! It was through him that I learned to give form to my discontent, which I must say, was not by any means vague. Apart from the desire to produce beautiful things, the leading passion of my life has been and is hatred of modern civilization.”⁹²

⁹¹ “I have been lately reading *Modern Painters*, and I have derived from the work much genuine pleasure and, I hope some edification; at any rate, it made me feel how ignorant I had previously been on the subject which it treats. Hitherto I have only had instinct to guide me in judging of art; I feel more as if I had been walking blindfold – this book seems to give me eyes. I do wish I had pictures within reach by which to test the new sense. Who can read these glowing descriptions... without longing to see them?”

Charlotte Bronte, in Clement King Shorter, *Charlotte Bronte and her Circle*, BiblioLife, 2009, p. 457.

⁹² William Morris, “How I Became a Socialist”, *Justice*, June 16th, 1894, and at <http://www.morrissociety.org>. “Before the uprising of modern Socialism almost all intelligent people either were, or professed themselves to be, quite contented with the civilization of this country. Again, almost all of these really were thus contented, and saw nothing to do but to perfect the said civilization by getting rid of a few ridiculous survivals of the barbarous ages. To be short, thus was the *Whig* frame of mind, natural to the modern prosperous middle-class men, who, in fact, as for mechanical progress is concerned, have nothing to ask for, if only Socialism would leave them alone to enjoy their plentiful style.

But besides these contented ones there were others who were not really contented, but had a vague sentiment of repulsion to the triumph of civilization, but were coerced into silence by the measureless power of *Whiggery*. Lastly, there were a few who were in open rebellion against the said *Whiggery* – a few, say two, Carlyle and Ruskin. The latter, before my days of practical Socialism, was my master to the ideal aforesaid, and, looking backward, I cannot help saying, by the way, how deadly dull the world would have been twenty years ago but for Ruskin! It was through him that I learned to give form to my discontent, which I must say, was not by any means vague. Apart from the desire to produce beautiful things, the leading passion of my life has been and is hatred of modern civilization.”

1.02. Poetry is made with words and colors

Ruskin thinks that literature is overvalued as a component of culture at the expense of visual art. In the first chapters of Volume III, Ruskin tackles the high art–low art dichotomy and shows that it is an artificially constructed dualism. Ruskin believes that this is true of the majority of established conceptualizations of art – namely that they have been construed theoretically and interpreted in an abstract way that ignores much of the mass of nuances and particularities that characterize both the process of art creation and the natural world in general. According to Ruskin, the reason behind this erroneous art theory is a deep-seated misunderstanding of art arising from the tendency to put words and language at the core of modern understandings of culture and education.

Ruskin shows that there exists also a visual language that does not follow the rules of linguistics and therefore is difficult to study and explain. For example, even an eminent practitioner of art like Reynolds can be admired in his visual work but criticized in his writing on art because he employs literary concepts to analyze visual art. While Ruskin does not deny that there is a link between literature and visual arts, he believes that the use of purely literary concepts in describing and explaining painting leads to errors in classifying and theorizing. Such an approach forces the entire visual domain into a literary framework and thereby reduces its standing to the point where arts are an ancillary field to literature; according to Ruskin, this categorization creates false problems such as that of the sister-arts (ut pictura poesis). Similarly, George Landow claims that in Victorian times “painting had not achieved anything like the popularity or prestige of literature. Education of increasing numbers of people and new publishing practices had produced a sizeable reading public in England, and part of Ruskin's purpose in *Modern Painters* was to create and attract a similar audience among those, largely the middle classes, who were unaware of the art of painting.”⁹³

⁹³ George P. Landow, *The Aesthetic and Critical Theory of John Ruskin*, <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/atheories/1.1.html>, 28 October 2012.

Ruskin looks at three texts on painting published by Joshua Reynolds in the *Idler*, specifically letters 76, 79 and 82. In these, Reynolds discusses eighteenth-century art taxonomy in reference to the Italian and Dutch schools of painting. Reynolds theorizes that painting can be divided into two main categories based on links to the literary domains of poetry and history; these are “high art” and “low art,” each of them characterized by specific and opposed traits in subject, technique, and representation. Reynolds’ high art, which supposedly represents poetry, is imaginative and it usually depicts religious and literary subjects. Additionally, reality is depicted in an idealized but general way that does not place any emphasis on particularities. The epitome of high art is late Renaissance Italian painting which tends to focus on artificial pictorial effects. On the other hand, in Reynolds’ description, low art is associated with historical writing and mechanical imitation, a feat “in which, the slowest intellect is always sure to succeed best.”⁹⁴ Furthermore, low art usually deals with everyday non-fiction subjects and places emphasis on detail; from a technical point of view, low art favors practiced *trompe l’oeil* effects and emphasized smooth surfaces. Low art is best represented by the Dutch school.

However, Ruskin criticized Reynolds for this categorical dissociation of these two allegedly contrary styles - an Ideal Style that was taught in academies and a Vulgar or Realist Style which was marginalized. Furthermore, Ruskin argues that if painting is to be classified, then morality should be the main criterion. He argues that it is preferable for art to be “strong, healthy and humble (rather) than High,” and that High Art in many cases consisted only of “courtly manners and robes of state.”⁹⁵

To restate, Ruskin believes that Reynolds’ classification is wrong because the latter makes an inappropriate link between poetry and painting. Also, Ruskin believes that Reynolds mistakenly looks mainly into questions of precedence. Ruskin proposed an alternative to this traditional mode of classification described by Reynolds by destroying the traditional dualism. To explain, Ruskin denies the hierarchical relationship between visual arts and literature and instead presents the two fields as equal and separate. More specifically, Ruskin believes that visual arts and literature correspond to two fundamental human ways of communication: images and words. He writes that:

⁹⁴ *Works*, V, 21.

⁹⁵ *Works*, V, 19

Infinite confusion has been introduced into this subject by the careless and illogical custom of opposing painting to poetry, instead of regarding poetry as consisting in a noble use, whether of colours or words. Painting is properly to be opposed to speaking or writing,⁹⁶ but not to poetry. Both painting and speaking are methods of expression.

Therefore, according to Ruskin, poetry is not so much a literary genre but a state of mind characterized by strong emotions expressed symbolically, either in painting or in writing.

The whole question of precedence in the case of the sister arts is now dismissed and Ruskin feels free to use from now on a broader conception of art. It is important to note that the connection between art and literature is reclassified but not denied; therefore Ruskin continues to use literature (both verse and prose) alongside painting in landscape representation analysis.

In order to prove his point regarding Reynolds's opposition between history and poetry writing, Ruskin presents himself in the process of writing in Switzerland, near a window presiding over a view of Lake Geneva. He then describes the landscape as accurately as possible, including all the details available to his sight in an effort to convey the correct topography of the place. This historical type of depiction is contrasted with a poetic one borrowed from Lord Byron who, in the *Prisoner of Chillon* had described the same Swiss location. Ruskin shows, in this case, that poetry does not elude particularities, as Joshua Reynolds claimed, in order to represent an ideal form of reality. If anything, poetry works with symbolic representation through a strategy of associations by selecting certain details and motifs that underline the specificity and not the generic quality of a phenomenon.

In Ruskin's view Reynolds exemplifies the wrong way of writing on art, a way which excludes intuition, emotion, personal stance, and moral values. Incidentally, Ruskin criticizes Reynolds' art theory but admires his work. In fact, Ruskin thinks that Reynolds actually made the "right" choices when painting: "an artist may be unconscious of the principles of his own work, and how he may be led by instinct to *do* all that is right, while he is misled by false logic to *say* all what is wrong. For nearly every word

⁹⁶ *Works*, V, 31.

that Reynolds wrote was contrary to his own practice.”⁹⁷ Therefore, Ruskin believes that good artists are guided by instinct and in such a way they can act in a way that is contrary to their rationalized ideas. To Ruskin, because of the separation between his theory work and his art work, Sir Joshua Reynolds himself personifies the modern divorce of reason and emotion - logic and instinct. Furthermore, Ruskin discusses the corresponding split between theory and practice.

Because theory and practice are held separate, false categories and classifications can arise. Then, these false categories can easily be perpetuated by prestigious personalities who adopt them and end up taking over the Academies. From this point of view, Ruskin tries to show that “true criticism of art never can consist in the mere application of rules; it can be just only when it is founded on quick sympathy with the innumerable instincts and changeful efforts of human nature, chastened and guided by unchanging love of all things that God has created to be beautiful, and pronounced to be good.”⁹⁸ Consequently, true criticism operates in a teleological way, underlining “the purpose of (a) work” no matter what subject or technique it employs, leading to a taxonomical effort in moral rather than technical terms.

Ruskin proposes his own (counter) dichotomy: great art and mean art; by so doing he uses both aesthetics and ethics to interpret and classify art. It is important to understand that in Ruskin’s view, artists are more than entertainers: they are enlightened masters who convey noble truths and emotions in a visual language.

Ruskin goes even farther, suggesting that art ought to preserve an organic understanding of the artistic process promoting beauty and goodness, the two essential qualities of the “nature-scripture.”⁹⁹ In Ruskin’s opinion, because of the flawed education system that does not favor natural science, it is incumbent on art to instruct in these areas. However, Ruskin argues that while aesthetics and morals are always found together in nature, the art of his time did not reflect this close relationship. For example, Ruskin points out that eighteenth-century high art is disproportionately concerned with the subject of beauty at the expense of truth. Ruskin attributes some of the blame for this imbalance to the rapid technological development of the time that caused deep changes at

⁹⁷ *Works*, V, 45.

⁹⁸ *Works*, V, 43.

⁹⁹ *Works*, V, 191.

all levels of life and society and therefore threatened to sever the links between modern man and the natural world. To restate, Ruskin believes that these links had in the past constituted the basis both of a moral and an aesthetic code that starts to wash away with the advent of modernity.

As per Ruskin's definition, a good painting goes beyond questions of subject and technique; in a painting, he looks for a perfect unity of expression through a well-balanced composition that symbolically expresses the unity of nature. Ruskin claims that when a good artist observes the natural world closely, he becomes involved in a primordial act of creation and his composition is

always orderly, always one, ruled by one great purpose throughout, in the fulfillment of which every atom of the detail is called to help, and would be missed if removed; this peculiar oneness being the result, not of obedience to any teachable law, but of the magnificence of tone in the perfect mind, which accepts only what is good for its great purposes, rejects whatever is foreign and redundant, and instinctively and instantaneously ranges whatever it accepts, in sublime subordination and helpful brotherhood.¹⁰⁰

In this passage, Ruskin expands on the idea that he had already introduced in Volume I, namely that truth to nature is linked to expressing “the relations of visible things to each other,” for all of them were “capable of being joined in one great system of spacious truth.”¹⁰¹ Here, truth to nature means rendering natural unity and harmony through composition rather than through minute, exact reproduction of details. By insisting on the unity of nature, Ruskin also draws attention to the meeting of opposites that takes place in the natural environment, where opposed elements enhance each other while teaching lessons through their contrasts. For example, Ruskin posits that the world is marked by pairs of opposites - beauty and ugliness as well as light and darkness, joy and suffering, pleasure and pain, and so on. Given this fact, by making art that depicts only the positive half of a pair - beauty, light, joy, and pleasure - in the way high or idealist art did, the artist is not being true to nature. As a result, even if the final result is aesthetically accomplished, it remains impoverished and incomplete in its message.

¹⁰⁰ *Works*, V, 187-188.

¹⁰¹ *Works*, V, 59.

Therefore, in Ruskin's view, artists have a responsibility to depict the world as it really exists - not by copying every single detail but by systematizing the elements in a coherent, harmonious whole. For Ruskin, the natural landscape was a perfect example of communion of a multitude of diverse living elements adapted and adjusted to coexist within the unavoidable restrictions of a geographic and climatic environment. Landscape therefore becomes Ruskin's model for an ideal nation, welded together as a helpful brotherhood, rejecting everything "foreign and redundant,"¹⁰² in order to adapt organically to its natural environment. Nevertheless, this natural organic brotherhood adopts an organization based on a hierarchy which is given not by a teachable, historical law but by an immovable, transcendent mind. Ruskin's imagined national pastoral, even if it does not necessarily deny urban space and man's efforts at development, demands that they be kept in balance with the natural world, framed in a benevolent patriarchy.

Later in the book, Ruskin returns to this idea of the moral of landscape and extends it to apply to imperial politics. Specifically, he advises the metropole not to export technology, urbanism, and consumerism, but instead to adopt a system of values derived from an agrarian, conservative moral law. Doing so would allow the empire to include, maintain, and adapt the particularities of other cultures, unique qualities acquired during other organic historical processes. Ruskin also addresses one of the main legitimizing arguments of British imperialism, which defined civilization through commerce and the expansion of a capitalist market. In his interpretation, modern imperial civilization should not act as a Procrustean bed, imposing the same metropolitan formula everywhere, but as a flexible membrane able to cover different spaces under a patriarchal hierarchy, harmonizing them through a constant effort to maintain the equilibrium between nature and culture. In this regard it was necessary for the empire not to lose sight of the fact that diversity of nature must produce diversity in culture and thus it ought to accept that "savage" people could have different needs than those of the Western world. Theoretically, the Ruskinian pastoral could be attained, as with good art criticism or a

¹⁰² *Works*, V, 188.

good work of art, through the “sympathy for the instincts of human nature guided by love of all things that God has created to be beautiful and good.”¹⁰³

1.03. Strategies of persuasion: associations, selective omissions, and contrasts

Before launching into political considerations, Ruskin takes his time to establish the power that nature and landscape have in creating and sustaining an emotional message. Following his earlier pairing of painting and literature, he makes extensive use of literary case studies. A number of chapters in Volume III are built on literary examples only, as is the case in the chapters on the pathetic fallacy and the history of landscape in art. The pathetic fallacy (the personification of nature) is one of the most popular of the original Ruskinian concepts, one which actually proved to be a valid tool in literary criticism and, later, in film studies. To explain, Ruskin shows that this rhetorical device allows the

¹⁰³ ‘Well; but railroads and telegraphs are so useful for communicating knowledge to savage nations.’ Yes, if you have any to give them. If you know nothing but railroads, and can communicate nothing but aqueous vapor and gunpowder, - what then?

Well; when you have moved your savage, and dressed your savage, fed him with white bread and showed him how to set a limb, - what next? ...Suppose every obstacle overcome; give your savage every advantage of civilization to the full; suppose that you have put the Red Indian in tight shoes; taught the Chinese how to make Wedgwood’s ware, and to paint it with colours that will rub off; and persuaded all Hindu women that it is more pious to torture their husbands into graves than to burn themselves at the burial, - what next? Gradually, thinking on from point to point, we shall come to perceive that all true happiness and nobleness are near us, and yet neglected by us; and that till we have learned how to be happy and noble we have not much to tell to Red Indians. The delights of horse-racing and hunting, of assemblies the night instead of the day, of costly and wearisome music, of costly and wearisome dress, of chagrined contention for place and power, or wealth, or the eyes of the multitude; and all the endless occupations without purpose, and idleness without rest, of our vulgar world, are not, it seems to me, enjoyments we need be ambitious to communicate. And all real and wholesome enjoyments possible to man have been just as possible to him, since first he was made of the earth, as they are now; and they are possible to him chiefly in peace. To watch the corn grow, and the blossoms set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to love, to hope, to pray, - these are the things that make men happy; they have always the power of doing these, they never will have power to do more. The world’s prosperity or adversity depends upon our knowing and teaching these few things; but upon iron, or glass, or electricity, or steam, in no wise.

And I am Utopian and enthusiastic enough to believe, that the time will come when the world will discover this. *Works*, V, 382-383.

author to enhance the emotional charge of his or her work or to emphasize its message; by so doing, he demonstrates the innate capacity of nature to affect or create emotions. However, Ruskin actually believes that the method is little more than manipulation, as nature is not really synchronized to human emotions but carries its own message, being in fact a community of creatures living in their own autonomous world, with their own ways of communication.

Ruskin argues that nature has its own narrative which does not necessarily encompass society. However, nature is far from being participative in human drama and definitely not just a resource to be tapped. It is a continuous applied lesson in survival and adaptation. The modern world risks losing its moral compass and collapsing because it is cutting itself off from its environment through technology and urbanism and forgets the basic lessons of life. Furthermore, Ruskin shows that landscape art is mainly an urban and European phenomenon, brought into being by the frustration of a culture cut off from the primordial work of art that nature represents.

Ruskin also develops the theory of an “instinct of landscape,” arguing that people are born with an instinctive connection to nature that culture gradually severs. In order to clarify his argument, Ruskin again makes use of his author’s voice, intervening like a character in the book to offer his own childhood experience as a case study.

Ruskin first presents himself in the preface as a mature and determined scholar who, after ten years of field work and scientific studies, is finally ready to present his findings. Later on, he introduces himself again, writing near a window in Switzerland, with a view of Lake Geneva and the castle of Chillon, following in the great Romantic poets’ footsteps and comparing Lord Byron’s rendition of the landscape with his own topographical description. Following this flash-back method, he now goes further back in time to present himself to the reader as a solitary, privileged, metropolitan child, who longed to escape into a miraculous northern landscape. He explains that his great affinity for nature was caused by his “early life of more travelling than is usually indulged to a child.”

In such journeyings, whenever they brought me near hills, and in all mountain ground and scenery, I had a pleasure, as early as I can remember, and continuing till I was eighteen or twenty, infinitely greater than any

which has been since possible to me in anything; comparable for intensity only to a joy of a lover in being near a noble and kind mistress, but no more explicable or definable than that feeling of love itself.”¹⁰⁴

This introduction is followed by detailed self-analysis that exposes Ruskin’s strategies of persuasion which he employs in all the volumes of *Modern Painters* and also in *The Stones of Venice*; they mainly involve the accumulation and superimposition of cultural associations with selective omissions and simplification of facts in order to focus and orient the audience’s attention. The confession also illustrates Ruskin’s preference for the compare-and-contrast method and his lack of scruples in bending the truth for didactic reasons. For example, he does not hesitate to fictionalize his own past and thereby fabricate an ideal case to better fit his argument. Furthermore, in order to enhance the impression of alienation during his lonely, urban childhood, he presents himself as a child accustomed for his first “two or three years, to no other prospect than that of the brick walls over the way,” adding that he “had no brothers nor sisters, nor companions; and though I could always make myself happy in a quiet way, the beauty of the mountains had an additional charm of change and adventure which a country-bred child would not have felt.”¹⁰⁵ In reality, while he was indeed an only child, his parents adopted Mary Richardson in 1828, one of Ruskin’s Scottish cousins. Ruskin was fond of Mary and interestingly enough, it was through her drawing lessons that he first discovered his own interest in art. However, by removing any reference to Mary or to any other cousins from his written recollections, Ruskin tries to describe the degree zero of the “modern European child,” a subject not distracted by same-age companionship and thus able to experience the full impact of the “landscape instinct,” to absorb all the cultural associations available from authors and other figures of authority, from ruins and traditions. He tries to show that his love of landscape for him

was never independent of associated thought. Almost as soon as I could see or hear, I had got reading enough to give me associations with all kind of scenery; and mountains, in particular, were always partly confused with those of my favorite book, Scott’s *Monastery*... I also generally knew, or was told by my father and mother, such simple facts of history as were necessary to

¹⁰⁴ *Works*, V, 365.

¹⁰⁵ *Works*, V, 365.

give more definite and justifiable associations to other scenes which chiefly interested me, such as the ruins of Lochleven and Kenilworth; and thus my pleasure in mountains or ruins was never, even in earliest childhood, free from a certain awe and melancholy, and general sense of the meaning of death, though, in its principal influence, entirely exhilarating and gladdening. Secondly, it was partly dependent on contrast with a very simple and unamused mode of general life; I was born in London, and accustomed for two or three years, to no other prospect than that of the brick walls over the way; had no brothers nor sisters, nor companions; and though I could always make myself happy in a quiet way, the beauty of the mountains had an additional charm of change and adventure which a country-bred child would not have felt.

[...]

Lastly: although there was no definite religious sentiment mingled with it, there was a continual perception of Sanctity in the whole of nature, from the slightest thing to the vastest; - an instinctive awe, mixed with delight; and indefinable thrill, such as we sometimes imagine to indicate the presence of a disembodied spirit. I could only feel this perfectly when I was alone;...These feelings remain in their full intensity till I was eighteen or twenty, and the "cares of this world" gained upon me, faded gradually away, in the manner described by Wordsworth in his *Intimations of Immortality*.

I cannot, of course, tell how far I am justified in supposing that these sensations may be reasoned upon as common to children in general...But, as far as such feelings exist, I apprehend they are more or less similar in their nature and influence; only producing different characters according to the elements with which they are mingled...but I believe the feelings I have endeavoured to describe are the pure landscape-instinct; and the likelihoods of good and evil resulting from them may be reasoned upon as generally indicating the usefulness or danger of the modern love and study of landscape. And, first, observe that the charm of romantic association can be felt only by the modern European child. It rises eminently out of the contrast of the beautiful past with the frightful and monotonous present; and it depends for its force on the existence of ruins and traditions, on the remains of architecture, the traces of battlefields, and the precursorship of eventful history. The instinct to which it appeals can hardly be felt in America, and every day that beautifies our present architecture and dress, or overthrows a stone of medieval monument, contributes to weaken it in Europe. On its influence on the mind of Turner and Prout, and the permanent results, which, through them, it is likely to effect, I shall have to speak presently.¹⁰⁶

Here, Ruskin combines both empiricism and historicism in this epistemology of landscape. He also speaks about his own supposed multi-faceted identity - a privileged

¹⁰⁶ *Works*, V, 365-367.

Londoner who is attracted to a majestic northern periphery but at the same time belongs to a larger ancient European space. Ruskin contrasts this European space to a young American identity that lacks in that ancient tradition that in Europe is symbolized by ruins, traditions, remains, traces of history. By citing Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality" Ruskin foreshadows the problem of what he later calls the inevitable evil of education - a modern formative experience meant to obscure individuals' natural instincts and corresponding legitimate pleasure in landscape. Therefore, Ruskin claims that the root of the problem with his society is the focus of education and knowledge in general on writing and word-based communication, as was discussed earlier. Ruskin later tries to argue that the highest form of human activity is to be found in the visual arts. Through the eyes, art engages both the brain and the hands and filters the objective world through emotions, thus combining all the levels of expression - observational, physical, intellectual, and emotional.¹⁰⁷

In order to draw attention to the direct effects of modern education, Ruskin presents what he considered to be the duo of the greatest artists of his time, Walter Scott and William Turner. This duo, he believes, reflects the tradition and works of Dante Alighieri and Giotto di Bondone. First, Ruskin introduces Scott as a sort of noble savage - a child of the North whose formal education had been neglected and who is therefore deeply immersed in national values. Second, Ruskin contrasts Scott with Turner, a London painter whipped into shape by the Royal Academy, and made to become an erudite cosmopolitan in danger of losing his national identity. Ruskin writes:

¹⁰⁷ "Observe: the whole force of education, until very lately, has been directed in every possible way to the destruction of the love of nature. The only knowledge which has been considered essential among us is that of words, and, next after it, of the abstract sciences; while every liking shown by children for simple natural history has been either violently checked, (if it took an inconvenient form for the housemaids,) or else scrupulously limited to hours of play; so that it has been really impossible for any child earnestly to study the works of God but against its conscience; and the love of nature has become inherently the characteristic of truants and idlers. While also the art of drawing, which is of more importance to the human race than that of writing (because people can hardly draw anything without being of some use both to themselves and others, and can hardly write anything without wasting their own time and that of others), - this art of drawing, I say, which on plain and stern system should be taught to every child, just like writing is, - has been so neglected and abused, that there is not one man in a thousand, even of its professed teachers, who knows its first principles; and thus it needs much ill-fortune or obstinacy - much neglect on the part of its teachers, or rebellion on his own - before a boy can get leave to use his eyes and his fingers; so that those who can use them are for the most part neglected or rebellious lads - runaways and bad scholars - passionate, erratic, self-willed, and restive against all forms of education; while your well behaved and amiable scholars are disciplined into blindness and palsy of half of their faculties." *Works*, V, 377.

Scott, having had the blessing of a totally neglected education, was able early to follow most of his noble instincts; but Turner, having suffered under the instruction of the Royal Academy, had to pass nearly thirty years of his life in recovering from its consequences...The one thing which the Academy ought to have taught him (namely the simple and safe use of oil colour), it never taught him; but it carefully repressed his perception of truth, his capacities of invention, and his tendencies of choice. For him it was impossible to do right but in a spirit of defiance." [...]“Scott was at once directed to the history of his native land, and to the Gothic fields of imagination” [but in Turner’s case] “all the history and poetry presented to him at the age when the mind receives its dearest associations, were those of the gods and nations of long ago; and his models of sentiment and style were the worst and the last wrecks of the Renaissance affectation.

Therefore (though utterly free from affectation), his early works are full of an enforced artificialness, and of things ill-done and ill-conceived, because foreign to his own instincts.¹⁰⁸

As can be observed in this excerpt, Ruskin once again constructs idealized cases for the sake of proving his argument. Walter Scott was actually a cultivated lawyer educated at the Edinburgh University, which shows that in his presentation, Ruskin uses his examples symbolically in order to contrast a supposedly natural north to a cultured south. However, Ruskin also makes some concessions as he admits that a modern education does have certain merits. For example, he shows that an institutionalized education is still preferable to a neglected one as the intellectual discipline required can turn out to be character-forming. Another good that can come from the inevitable evil of modern education is the ability to comprehend different worlds and geographies and to extract universal values and characteristics from diversity.

Therefore, according to Ruskin, even though he was as great a genius as Turner because of his background, Scott remains a regional-nationalist who can not fully comprehend history outside his narrow domain. On the other hand, Turner, as a European-nationalist, is capable of tackling more grandiose subjects. Furthermore, Turner can cross symbolic and physical frontiers effortlessly. According to Ruskin, an artist has to travel outside his familiar places to begin the process of self-assessment and

¹⁰⁸ *Works*, V, 388-390.

to construct an identity, like a great number of characters from contemporary Victorian novels.¹⁰⁹

Ruskin believes that Turner finds his artistic voice by means of his strong English instincts that manage to break through the preconceived notions and interpretations inculcated by his formal instruction; this is similar to the case of Joshua Reynolds, who, by listening to his instincts, becomes able to do valuable work in painting. Therefore, Turner ends up eschewing bookish landscapes in favor of real ones, choosing as a subject the natural locus of British identity instead of imagined locations of classical antiquity.

In the panoply of geographical places of national values that, in his view, awakened Turner's Englishness, Ruskin includes Yorkshire, Whitby in Northern Yorkshire, Holy Isle in Northumberland and, surprisingly, the Alps.¹¹⁰ Although Turner had worked with a vast range of geographical British and European subjects, for *Modern Painters*, Ruskin selects almost exclusively Northern English and Swiss examples. Therefore, Ruskin omits everything that depicts the South, be it British or European. Also, by associating the Alps with the British north, Ruskin prepares the terrain for the next volume which will be subtitled *Of Mountain Beauty* and will focus on the Swiss Alps as a European alter-ego for Britain.

¹⁰⁹ See Maria H. Frowley, *A Wide Range. Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England*, London and Toronto, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994, pp. 15-17.

¹¹⁰ "And it is one of the most interesting thing connected with the study of his art, to watch the way in which his own strength of English instincts breaks gradually through fetter and formalism; how from Egerian wells he steals away to Yorkshire streamlets; how from Homeric rocks, with laurels at the top and caves at the bottom, he climbs, at last, to Alpine precipices fringed with pine, and fortified with the slopes of their own ruins; and how from the Temples of Jupiter and Gardens of the Hesperides, a spirit in his feet guides him, at last, to the lonely arches of Whitby, and the bleak sands of Holy Isle. As, however, is the case with almost all inevitable evil, in its effect on great minds, a certain good rose even out of this warped education; namely, his power of more completely expressing all the tendencies of his epoch, and sympathizing with many feelings and many things which must otherwise have been entirely profitless to him. Scott's mind was just as large and full of sympathy as Turner's; but, having been permitted always to take his own choice among sources of enjoyment, Scott was entirely incapable of entering into the spirit of any classical scene. He was strictly a Goth and a Scot." *Works*, V, 390-391.

1.04. War as an apparent evil and German philosophy as an apparent good

One of Ruskin's theories is that some good can come from bad. Incidentally, this is one of the main arguments found in the field of theodicy, a branch of theology that seeks to understand how evil can be allowed to exist in a world created by a good god. In Ruskin's response to this question, evil has a formative role. To explain, it forces individuals and societies to make choices, thereby driving growth and adaptation. Also, it can be consciously used to attain personal or collective improvements. Ruskin's interpretation of Turner demonstrates this theodicy – according to Ruskin, Turner uses the “inevitable evil” of his “warped education” by filtering it through his “English instincts,” which all ends up leading him back to the “good” values. After showing this about Turner, Ruskin extends this argument to the societal level. Specifically, he tries to explain the role of war in the development of the nation and in international relations in general. For example, he showcases the Crimean War and argues that “the war itself, with all its bitterness, is, in the present state of the European nations, productive of more good than evil.” Furthermore, Ruskin expresses his confidence in the justice of the Crimean War,¹¹¹ as signifier of the full strength and vitality of the empire.

Based on this logic of order from chaos, Ruskin writes an ode to war at the end of the chapter where he blends personal feelings and specific facts with universal values and generalizations. This might come as a surprise given Ruskin's usual Christian socialist beliefs on ethics and social justice as well as arts. However, his obsession with the future “decline and fall” of the empire makes Ruskin look for new methods to avoid what appeared to be an unavoidable outcome.

One such method is the radical reform of British society. However, for this to be possible, the British need to establish international supremacy by addressing certain major threats from the half-civilized empires. In *The Stones of Venice*, Ruskin finalizes his work by arguing that the decline of Venetian civilization (that Ruskin identifies with Britain) was marked by peaceful prosperity, hedonism, and a profusion of the arts. This

¹¹¹ *Works*, V, 410.

brings to mind a *vanitas* painting where the aggregation of beautiful flowers foreshadows death.

At the end of Volume III, inspired by contemporary conflicts, Ruskin offers another solution to avoid this period of decline: interventionism and warmaking in the name of civilization. In this instance, the good that comes from the evil of war is maybe the spread of democracy and social justice, leading ultimately and ideally, to global peace. This method of interpreting a gritty reality in order to make it more acceptable is a perennial one, as Aldous Huxley argued in his seminal essay on linguistic techniques of appeasement and manipulation during military conflicts. He showed that

war is enormously discreditable to those who order it to be waged and even to those who merely tolerate its existence. Furthermore, to developed sensibilities the facts of war are revolting and horrifying. [...] Finding the reality of war too unpleasant to contemplate, we create a verbal alternative to that reality, parallel with it, but in quality quite different from it. That which we contemplate thenceforth is not that to which we react emotionally and upon which we pass our moral judgments, is not war as it is in fact, but the fiction of war as it exists in our pleasantly falsifying verbiage.¹¹²

In Ruskin's case, this reflex of justification that Huxley discusses can be seen to hide a guilt-ridden conscience. In fact, in his closing analysis of the Crimean war, Ruskin appears to be obsessed with the large number of British deaths. In the case of Crimea, casualties were significantly better documented in comparison to previous wars thanks to innovations such as the telegraph and photography. Therefore, it can be argued that Ruskin's entire effort of justification is built around this great loss of life.

In the last pages of Volume III, Ruskin becomes an active mediator for the war. He fictionalizes it by depicting it as a tool for the spread of civilization and for keeping his nation's creativity at its highest level. In his words: countries "have always reached their highest virtue, and wrought their most accomplished works, in time of straitening

¹¹² Aldous Huxley, *The Olive Tree*, New York, Harper, 1937, pp 85-86, cited in Haig A. Bosmajian, *The Language of Oppression*, Washington, D.C., Public Affair Press, 1974, pp.121-122.

and battle; as, on the other hand, no nation ever yet enjoyed a protracted and triumphant peace without receiving in its own bosom ineradicable seeds of future decline.”¹¹³

Another example of the positive effects of war for Ruskin lies with the reformation of the British Army. The Crimean War exposed deep flaws in the British army which was still governed through outdated and classist traditions. In other words, Ruskin points out that the war can be understood as a learning experience for the nation. He claims that: the nation could now learn “how to choose [its] governors more wisely, and [its] ways more warily. For that which brings swift punishment in the war, must have brought slow ruin in peace; and those who have now laid down their lives for England, have doubly saved her; they have humbled at once her enemies and herself.”¹¹⁴ Therefore, had it not been for the Crimean War, the British, intoxicated by the glory of their past, might have continued in perpetuating a lethally outdated attitude that could have hastened their fall.

In Volume III, Ruskin also addresses the controversial causes of the Crimean War which, at the time, were at the center of an ongoing debate. In Crimea, Britain and France declared war against Russia in order to aid the Ottoman Empire. The operation had started initially from a Franco-Russian conflict on authority over the holy places in the Middle East and the protectorate of the Christian populations living in Ottoman territories. After prolonged negotiations, Turkey sided with France and the Roman Catholic Church although, until then, Russia was a traditional partner. Ruskin obliterates all these objective facts in order to construe a more acceptable justification, one that could be included in the ideology of benevolent imperialism. Instead of aiding and defending Catholic and Muslim powers in a military intervention, Protestant Britain was teaming up with another progressive empire (France) in order to force a debate on democracy (“the rights of the governed and the responsibilities of the governing bodies”)¹¹⁵ in the East.

Ruskin adapts his theory about good instincts to politics in order to find the greater good in an inevitable evil. Like Reynolds, whose instincts made him paint well even if his theory was flawed, “the rulers”’ instincts prevailed over the critics of war

¹¹³ *Works*, V, 410-411.

¹¹⁴ *Works*, V, 415.

¹¹⁵ *Works*, V, 414.

even if they did not “clearly understand the nature of the conflict.”¹¹⁶ Ruskin states that social and political life, like science and art, progress through experimentation and that Britain and France were the most advanced nations in this respect, being ready at that moment to determine the political progress of the world even if they had to do it by force, as “true liberty, like true religion is always aggressive or persecuted:”¹¹⁷

...we have not been cast into this war by mere political misapprehensions, or popular ignorances. It is quite possible that neither we nor our rulers may clearly understand the nature of the conflict; and that we may be dealing blows in the dark, confusedly, and as a soldier suddenly awakened from slumber by an unknown adversary. But I believe the struggle was inevitable, and that the sooner it came, the more easily it was to be met, and the most nobly concluded. France and England are both of them, from shore to shore, in a state of intense progression, change, and experimental life. They are each of them beginning to examine, more distinctly than ever nations did yet in the history of the world, the dangerous question of respecting the rights of governed, and the responsibilities of the governing bodies; not, as heretofore, foaming over them in red frenzy, with intervals of fetter and straw crown, but in health, quietness, and daylight, with the help of a good Queen and a great Emperor; and to determine them in a way which, by just so much as it is more effective and rational, is likely to produce more permanent results than ever before on the policy of neighbouring States, and to force, gradually, the discussion of similar questions into their places of silence. [...] if they fail not of this, - if we, in our love of our queens and kings, remember how France gave to the cause of early civilization, first the greatest, then the holiest, of monarchs (Charlemagne, St. Louis); and France, in her love of liberty, remembers how we first raised our standard of Commonwealth, trusted to the grasp of one good and strong hand, witnessed for by victory; and so join in perpetual compact of our different strengths, to contend for justice, mercy,

¹¹⁶ *Works*, V, 414.

¹¹⁷ “- for true liberty, like true religion, is always aggressive or persecuted; but the attack is generally made upon it by the nation which is to be crushed, - by Persians on Athenians, Tuscan on Roman, Austrian on Swiss; or, as now, by Russia upon us and our allies; her attack appointed, it seems to me, for confirmation of all our greatness, trial of our strength, purging and punishment of our futilities, and establishment for ever, in our hands, of the leadership in the political progress of the world.[...] Whether this its providential purpose be accomplished, must depend on its enabling France and England to love one another, and teaching these, the two noblest foes that ever stood breast to breast among the nations, first to decipher the law of international charities; first to discern that races, like individuals, can only reach their true strength, dignity, or joy, in seeking each the welfare, and exulting each in the glory, of the other. It is strange how far we still seem from fully perceiving this.[...] If France and England fail of this, if again petty jealousies or selfish interests prevail to unknit their hands from the armoured grasp, then indeed, their faithful children will have fallen in vain...” *Works*, V, 414-416.

and truth throughout the world, - who dares say that one soldier has died in vain?¹¹⁸

In his typical way, Ruskin omits some of the other inconvenient allies who, except for a vague reference as to their existence, are not mentioned in this volume. Ruskin actually returns to this topic in the coda of Volume IV, where, in a short and forced argument, he tries again to justify the war on moral grounds. Specifically, he tries to find a particular historical event that he can use to prove that a Muslim power can be more civilized than a Christian one. In Volume IV, he also tries to show that Russia violated civilized rules of engagement in Crimea and therefore has no honor. Then, Ruskin anachronistically compares this example with an episode from the Crusades, when, supposedly, Saladin treated his enemy knights with more generosity and grace than Emperor Nicholas did with his opponents in Crimea.

Still, in the epilogue to Volume III, Ruskin remains at a loss when faced with the task of explaining the Crimean alliance from a religious and moral point of view. For this reason he focuses only on France, thereby transforming this traditional “noble foe” into a great new ally. He emphasizes all the historical similarities between Britain and France, conveniently omitting the events of the previous decade when threats of a French invasion troubled Britain’s domestic affairs. Instead, Ruskin chooses to emphasize common British and French traits such as Christian traditions, the fight for liberty even at the price of revolution and republican interludes, and, especially, efforts to conduct social and political experiments in order to arrive at their greatest achievement - open, effective and rational discussion on the “dangerous question of respecting the rights of the governed, and the responsibilities of the governing bodies.”¹¹⁹

Ruskin alludes to an idea of a European Christian civilization without actually naming it. For instance, he shows that France was the first foreign state to contribute to its cause via Charlemagne’s holy empire and the crusades of Louis IX. However, it is interesting to note that Ruskin abstains from elaborating on these examples, so as not to

¹¹⁸ *Works*, V, 414-416.

¹¹⁹ *Works*, V, 414.

evoke the Ottoman Empire, this modern-day ally of Britain and France, as an invader and enemy.

Carlyle, one of Ruskin's mentors, in his popular book *On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841), paints a more inclusive picture of Europe by adding Muhammad's name to those of Odin, Luther, and Napoleon but the Evangelical Ruskin cannot bring himself to make even a theoretical argument for a heterogeneous European alliance. Consequently, he mentions fleetingly the problematic partners, Sardinia and Turkey.

After transforming France into the new favorite cousin and a mirror image of Britain's national self, Ruskin finds himself in need of a new imagological construct onto which he can project the unwanted traits of his nation. In order to achieve this effect, he adds an appendix to the main text in which, under the title *On German Philosophy*, he tries to link together and summarize in a compact piece all his fragmentary objections to German art and literature to date. This actually indicates a radicalization of an anti-German attitude, a feature present in the second half of the volume. It is interesting to note that Ruskin demonstrates leniency and appreciation in the case of Germany in the first half. The change in tone is most likely brought on by the Crimean War and the associated necessity to rethink the European balance of power.

Although *Modern Painters* III is published at the beginning of 1856, the main body of the book was probably written before the war, which could explain the more permissive attitude toward a general European influence. A note in the chapter on *The Pathetic Fallacy* which references Alfred Tennyson's poem, *Maud*, can give us the year 1855 as *terminus ante quem* for the main text. It can also explain why, in the first part of the volume Ruskin does not fear a danger from Europe, which he perceives in a broader sense, as a more organic, anti-industrial unit:

Perhaps one of the most remarkable points of difference between the English and Continental nations is the degree of finish given to their ordinary work. It is enough to cross from Dover to Calais to feel this difference; and to travel farther only increases the sense of it. English windows for the most part fit their sashes, and their woodwork is neatly planed and smoothed: French windows are larger, heavier, and framed with wood that looks as if it had been cut to its shape with a hatchet; they have curious and cumbrous fastenings,

and can only be forced asunder or together by some ingenuity and effort, and even then not properly. So with everything else – French, Italian, German, and, as far as I know, Continental. Foreign drawers do not slide as well as ours; foreign knives do not cut as well; foreign wheels do not turn so well; and we commonly plume ourselves much upon this, believing that generally the English people do their work better and more thoroughly, or as they say, ‘turn it out of their hands in better style,’ than foreigners.¹²⁰

In the first part of Volume III, Ruskin speaks about the charm of foreign things, French, Italian and German alike. According to him, even when they are functionally inferior to British ones, their richer textures brought out by small imperfections are a sign of life, as they mirror the infinite diversity of nature where all elements are individualized by virtue of their very flaws. However, the positive references to German examples become increasingly scarce as the book progresses in favor of anti-German examples from the first part to the second. Volume III ends in an explanatory appendix where Ruskin shows that German philosophy exemplifies the dangers of losing the balance between nature and culture, academia and society, theory and praxis, reason and religion.

The appendix on German art and philosophy can be seen as a symbolic act of rejecting an abstract “foreign and redundant element” from the national body and instead essentializing it as a potential enemy despite any similarities that might exist between Britain and the German Confederation. These similarities were actually many; apart from the common root of the two languages and the German origins of the British royal dynasty, there were also similar cultural themes and interests, from Romantic poetry to the landscape genre and from the tension between Protestantism and Catholicism to the revivalist revision of religious iconography. Moreover, great appreciation was bestowed in Britain upon the Nazarene painters, with *Art Journal* declaring in 1839 that the Germans were “assuredly the greatest artists of Europe.”¹²¹ Even Ruskin’s first volume of *Modern Painters* was initially turned down for publication by John Murray who believed

¹²⁰ *Works*, V, 151-152.

¹²¹ Lionel Gossman, “Unwilling Moderns: The Nazarene Painters of the Nineteenth Century,” in *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide. A Journal of Nineteenth Century Visual Culture*, v.2 , issue 3, 2003, at <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/autumn03/273-unwilling-moderns-the-nazarene-painters-of-the-nineteenth-century>., accessed 21 February 2013.

that the public cared little for Turner, urging instead the author to write “on the German School, which the public were calling for works on.”¹²²

In the context of the Crimean War, when xenophobic attitudes encourage a problematic identification of Germany with Russia as the essentialized foreign enemy, Ruskin also constructs a generalized “idealist German” mind opposed to the “naturalist English” one. Interestingly enough, Ruskin does this by reversing his theodicy method, showing that, unlike education and wars, which are apparent evils but ultimately generators of good, German culture is an apparent good but a generator of evil in the end.¹²³ In other words, Ruskin blames what he considers to be the negative traits of British culture on a stereotyped group of whom he has no extensive knowledge. The only German author that Ruskin references in his argument is Chevalier Bunsen; Ruskin cites repeatedly from Bunsen’s *Hyppolitus and His Age*. Therefore, it can be said Ruskin is perhaps somewhat self-conscious about his tendency to overgeneralize and tries to exonerate himself by again using his “good out of evil” argument and claiming that sometimes we must judge by the singular representative even if

it may sometimes unluckily happen that, in such short trial, we strike upon an accidentally failing part of the thing to be tried, and then we may be unjust; but there is, nevertheless, in multitudes of cases, no other way of judging or acting; and the necessity of occasionally being unjust is a law of life, - like that of sometimes stumbling, or being sick. It will not do to walk at snail’s pace of our lives for fear of stumbling, nor to spend years in the investigation of everything, which, by specimen, we must condemn.¹²⁴

¹²² John James Ruskin in a letter to W.H. Harrison from 1847, cited in Ray Haslam, “Ruskin and Modern German Art”, note in *The Electronic Edition of Modern Painters I*, at <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ruskin/empi/notes/lrusger01.htm>, accessed 21 February 2013.

¹²³ “The reader must have noticed that I never speak of German art, or German philosophy, but in depreciation. This, however, is not because I cannot feel, or would not acknowledge, the value and power, within certain limits, of both; but because I also feel that the immediate tendency of the English mind is to rate them too highly; and, therefore, it becomes a necessary task, at present, to mark what evil and weakness there are in them, rather than what good. I also am brought continually into collision with certain extravagances of the German mind, by my own steady pursuit of Naturalism as opposed to Idealism; and therefore, I become unfortunately cognizant of the evil, rather than of the good; which evil, so far as I feel it, I am bound to declare. And it is not to the point to protest, as the Chevalier Bunsen and other German writers have done, against the expressions of opinions respecting their philosophy by persons who have not profoundly or carefully studied it; for the very resolution to study any system of metaphysics profoundly, must be based, in any prudent man’s mind, on some preconceived opinion of its worthiness to be studied; which opinion of German metaphysics the naturalistic English cannot be let to form. This is not to be murmured against, - it is in the simple necessity of things.” *Works*, V, 424.

¹²⁴ *Works*, V, 425.

Although he has no other examples to cite, Ruskin goes on to say that German philosophy is completely useless because it is much too theoretical. More specifically, Ruskin claims that German philosophy is overly focused on abstract systems and cut off from praxis. Furthermore, Ruskin sees German philosophy as a typical result of modern academia, bringing to mind Turner's paintings from the period when the influence of the Royal Academy made him to turn out works "utterly heartless and emotionless, dead to the very root of thought, and incapable of producing wholesome or useful effect on any human mind, except only as exhibitions of technical skill and graceful arrangement."¹²⁵ In this context, Ruskin also draws up a shortlist of what he considers to be good philosophy, "not for show, but for *use*."¹²⁶ This list includes, Plato, Francis Bacon, William Wordsworth, Thomas Carlyle, Arthur Helps, and the Bible. Ironically, Carlyle, one of Ruskin's mentors, was also a professed Germanophile, a popularizer and translator of German philosophy and literature.

What is more, Ruskin's own dismissal of German art is not as complete as he leads readers to believe: in the book he writes immediately after *Modern Painters* III and IV, *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), he classifies Friedrich Overbeck, leader of the Nazarenes, as one of the best examples to be followed by students of fine art. It is obvious that the appendix on German art and philosophy actually represents the kind of work he criticizes so harshly, being an overgeneralized, purely theoretical construct, and in this case a typical "culture wars" strategy, consisting of a displacement of political judgments and attitudes unto cultural facts and products. In the same way that he expresses his critique of the aristocracy by attacking, sometimes to the point of insult, seventeenth-century painters like Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa, Ruskin now uses an essentialized German culture to critique the British middle class which he thought was in danger of losing its original piety and patriotism.

It is also often declared necessary to study the German controversialists, because the grounds of religion 'must be inquired into.' I am sorry to hear they have not been inquired into yet; but if it be so, there are two ways of pursuing that inquiry: one for the scholarly men, who have leisure on their

¹²⁵ *Works*, V, 391.

¹²⁶ *Works*, V, 425.

hands, by reading all that they have time to read, for and against, and arming themselves at all points for controversy with all persons; the other, - a shorter and simpler way, - for busy and practical men, who want merely to find out how to live and die. Now for the learned and leisurely men I am not writing; they know what and how to read better than I can tell them. For simple and busy men, concerned much with art, which is eminently a practical matter, and fatigues the eyes, so as to render much reading inexpedient, I am writing; and such men, I do, to the utmost of my power, dissuade from meddling with German books.¹²⁷

By attacking German philosophy, Ruskin also criticizes British academia for its permeability to foreign influence and argument for its promotion of a detached, purely rational methodology. More specifically Ruskin claims that “the scholarly men with leisure on their hands” prefer to engage in theoretical debates and controversy instead of trying to provide a practical guide for putting moral values to work. He previously argues in the chapter on “Modern Landscape” that intellectuals are largely divided into two categories, the Thinkers and the Seers, the latter being “the greatest race of the two,” able to explain and provide answers to existential question.¹²⁸ While a true Thinker, one who had “practical purpose,” like Plato or Carlyle, could become “in some sort a seer” and be of “infinite use in his generation,” the “affected Thinkers ...metaphysicians and philosophers,” who weave “cobwebs among the finest wheels of the world’s business,” should be brushed away “like spiders, and the meshed weed that has got into the Cambridgeshire canals, and other such impediments to barges and business.”¹²⁹

Evidently, Ruskin considers himself, if not a seer, at least a true Thinker, and he uses his book on the representation of landscape as a medium to convey some answers to the simple, busy, practical men of the middle class. Those answers are given in response to the question “how to avoid the future decline and fall?” Ruskin’s solution is to follow the “naturalistic English instincts,” referring to the construction of an inclusive British nationalism, one that embraces the Northern periphery as a symbolic moral center and has the duty to promote civilization, even through war and intervention, while trying to

¹²⁷ *Works*, V, 425-426.

¹²⁸ *Works*, V, 333.

¹²⁹ *Works*, V, 333.

regain the lost unity of knowledge, as “the pursuit of science should constantly be stayed by the love of beauty, and accuracy of knowledge by tenderness of emotion.”¹³⁰

¹³⁰ *Works*, V, 386.

Chapter 2

Modern Painters Volume IV

Volume IV of *Modern Painters* follows the same template as Volume III: a main body of text flanked by a preface and several appendixes. The text itself is divided according to three themes. The first one is concerned with art theory and tends to gravitate towards the concept of the picturesque. The second one treats landscape in its physical form, mostly mountain landscape. The third part offers a convoluted symbolic reading of the cultural and political crisis of Ruskin's time dominated by the Crimean War.

We saw that in Volume III, Ruskin challenges Joshua Reynolds's definitions of poetry and high art and establishes the fact that writing and drawing are two facets of the same thing, namely communication, as a premise for his own work. Furthermore, for Ruskin, literature and painting are not opposites, but instead are complementary in the field of art as they share certain subjects and methods of work. However, these subjects and methods do not always have the same prominence in both domains at the same time. In fact, Ruskin shows that the prominence of certain subjects is usually determined by historical factors. Furthermore, he claims that this is especially the case for the landscape genre, which Ruskin considers to be more highly evolved in literature, at least until urban ways of life came to be predominant in Europe.

In Ruskin's theory, at this point of social development (global capitalism), organic links between society and the natural environment rupture. Ruskin claims that these links could only be mended through increased contemplation and representation of nature in the practice of visual landscape. Furthermore, Ruskin lays the blame for the rupture on

what he calls “the mechanical impulse of our age,”¹³¹ namely on the standardizing urban growth brought on by capitalist economy and modern education. Ruskin thinks that these last two faulty systems block the existence of organic, diverse communities and thereby can bring on a crisis of civilization of which the Crimean War is only a warning. As antidote, Volume IV charts the path to transformation and renewal; finding a new societal energy via a primal Christian faith that would have the power to unite in spirit while also allowing for diversity within society. Ruskin develops this idea in contrast to rational modernity which would unify all European communities in form while alienating them from their native roots.

Paul Sawyer discusses Ruskin’s interest for what he calls the “three-part model of human development”¹³² that is present in Romantic poetry. In Sawyer’s words, this model refers to “the movement from paradisaic innocence to a period of catastrophic doubt and estrangement, concluding in a qualified reaffirmation of the marriage of mind and nature that is also a partial return to the first stage.”¹³³ Sawyer proposes that Ruskin in fact also perceives his own life as a series of emotional crises following this tripartite pattern. For instance, as shown in the previous chapter on Volume III, Ruskin presents the Romantic transformative cycle as a constant feature of human behavior, illustrating it with an ad-hoc description of his own evolution from childhood, through youth, to maturity and suggesting it as a blue-print for the average (middle class) European child. Ruskin’s second example is that of Turner, who begins life as a naturally inspired individual subsequently corrupted by a cosmopolitan, academic instruction (Royal Academy) but who ultimately manages to find his way back to the authentic values of the land by focusing his work on landscape and listening to his instincts.

In Volume IV, Ruskin attempts to transpose this three-part Romantic cycle of evolution from the individual to the collective level in order to use it as a solution to imperial decline. To do so, he replaces the historiographical trope of decline and fall with the Romantic triad of growth, crisis, and rebirth.

¹³¹ *Works*, IV, 380.

¹³² Paul L. Sawyer, *Ruskin’s Poetic Argument. The Design of His Major Works*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 3.

¹³³ *Ibidem*.

Ruskin sees that change is necessary in order to preserve the status quo of British supremacy on the continent and the social peace at home. With the advent of the Crimean War, the question of decline becomes more urgent for Ruskin because it offers an important opportunity; Ruskin interprets the war as a “crisis of civilization,” which, if understood properly, can be manipulated in such a way as to trigger transformation and renewal for the British Empire as per the triad of growth, crisis, and rebirth. According to Ruskin, one way to contain and appease the volatile situation is to acknowledge and use the landscape as an “instrument of gigantic moral power” while at the same time elevating “the sketch or conventional composition into the studied sermon and inspired poem.”¹³⁴

2.01. Switzerland: experiments in associationism and perception

In Volume IV, Ruskin goes one step further in the development of his landscape theory by constructing an ideal model for Britain in the image of an alpine Switzerland that was to complete, if not replace, Italy as a symbol of aesthetic European values. Although he is personally an admirer of the Italian artistic heritage and landscape, Ruskin nevertheless is known for his critique of late Renaissance and Baroque painting as an indirect way to condemn the values of the British aristocracy. He usually presented Italy as a beautiful ruin, a land that lost the balance between nature and culture due to an exacerbated aesthetic elitism. In contrast to the Italy association, Ruskin now sets the Swiss Alps as a symbol of hope and renewal for Britain – to be acquired through a return to nature and to the ideal of communion and cooperation.

¹³⁴ Letter to Osborne Gordon cited in Paul L. Sawyer, *Ruskin's Poetic Argument. The Design of His Major Works*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 3.

Switzerland also plays a major part in Ruskin's personal narrative. For him, Switzerland evokes memories of the enchanted holidays of his childhood and is associated with healing and recovery following his periods of illness or personal crisis. For example, during a trip in Vevey, in 1848, the year of his marriage, he writes in his diary:

I walked up this afternoon to Blonay, very happy, and yet full of some sad thoughts; how perhaps I should not be again among these lovely scenes; as I was now and had ever been, a youth with his parents – it seemed that the sunset of to-day sunk upon me like the departure of youth. First, I had a hot march among the vines, and between their dead stone walls; once or twice I flagged a little, and began to think it tiresome; then I put my mind into the scene, instead of suffering the body only to make a report of it; and looked at it with the possession-taking grasp of the imagination – the true one; it gilded all the dead walls, and I felt a charm in every vine tendril that hung over them. It required an effort to maintain the feeling: it was poetry while it lasted, and I felt it was only while under it that one could draw, or invent, or give glory to, any part of such a landscape. I repeated 'I am in Switzerland' over and over again, till the name brought back the true group of associations, and I felt I had a soul, like my boy's soul, once again. I have not insisted enough on this source of all great contemplative art. The whole scene without it was but sticks and stones and steep dusty road.¹³⁵

The above passage brings to mind Ruskin's theory from Volume III about the crucial role of associations in the perception and interpretation of the world. Using Turner, Scott, and himself as examples, Ruskin emphasizes in Volume III the existence of a whole array of associations, spontaneous or induced, insidious or direct, cultural or empirical, woven together into a rich background fabric in everyone's personal consciousness. Coming back to the Vevey diary, the cited entry records Ruskin's personal experiments in controlling and directing the stream of consciousness through use of a mantric method that calls for selecting and repeating certain associative elements in order to achieve a desired state of mind. The Vevey diary also shows that Ruskin believes that far from being innocuous, the dense web of associations is instead built from an eclectic mix of what he calls "true" and "false" elements and as such is prone to manipulation. His diary

¹³⁵ *Works*, V, xviii-xx.

entry describes in fact an example of classical conditioning, where the process of paired association is not random, but self-induced and controlled through a sustained effort.

By pairing the neutral Swiss landscape with his idealized childhood memories, Ruskin not only reaches a euphoric poetical state, but also visually transfigures the ordinary into the extraordinary, albeit for a short time. By extrapolating his personal experience at a national level, Ruskin uses Switzerland in *Modern Painters* as an objective correlative for future British renewal. Ruskin thinks this renewal is necessary in order to avoid the insidious fall that will be brought on by the “mechanical impulse of the age”¹³⁶ and the crisis of civilization. His 1848 diary shows him later repeating this kind of experience as if to put the method to test:

I tried the same experiment again on a group of old cottage and tower near Blonay, in coming down; the tower, as I found afterwards, dated 1609 on a stone forming the top of one of its quaint windows, as opposite but, seen in a distance, remarkable only for its open window, letting a bit of the far-off blue mountains of Meillerie clear through it, and its conical roof mingling with their peaks. All this I longed to draw, but said to myself that ‘the bit of fence and field underneath will not do.’ A minute after I corrected myself, and by throwing mind full into the fence and field, as if I had nothing else but them to deal with, I found light and power, and loveliness, a Rogers vignette character put into them directly. I felt that the human soul was all – the subject nothing.¹³⁷

Ruskin realizes that by isolating a group of elements from a larger natural scene, the influx of associations is more efficiently directed and controlled, thus guaranteeing instant transfiguration of the subject, no matter how humble, into an aesthetic image. In this case, by concentrating on a fragment of the surrounding landscape and by projecting onto it what he calls the “true associations,”(selected positive memories), the beholder transforms it into a work of art that acts as an emotional decoder, reflecting back on him “light, power, and loveliness.” In other words, through the viewer’s perception, the isolated fragment becomes a living vignette with a magical force of renewal and restoration.

¹³⁶ *Works*, IV, 380.

¹³⁷ *Works*, V, xviii-xx.

Furthermore, as can be seen in this last passage, Samuel Rogers' *Italy*, with its engraved illustrations, is a major reference in Ruskin's life. In fact, Rogers' work marks Ruskin's first encounter with Turner's work (at the age of thirteen) and also sparks young Ruskin's interest in art. By transforming "the bit of fence and field" at Blonay specifically into a Rogers vignette through his intense focalization, Ruskin is in fact trying to re-experience the emotions associated with his childhood encounter with art and mountain landscape. Therefore, these paired associations of biography and culture in his own case make Ruskin theorize that the emotional effect of natural landscape on the observer depends in no small measure on the latter's active participation. If the observer is indeed willing, he can establish a temporary intercommunication with his object of contemplation. In June of 1849, Ruskin reprised and consolidated this theory, this time at Sallenches. As we can see from his diary entries, he tries to gauge the strength of correlation between the degree of attention and concentration exhibited by the observer and the power exerted by landscape over the observer. Here is Ruskin's closed-circuit exchange of energy between landscape and beholder:

I felt in this walk up the hill being somewhat tired, very forcibly again how much the power of nature depended upon the quantity of mind which one could give to her. I had an exquisite winding path – a road – with bits of rocky bank, and flowery pasture, and cottages and chapels. I had the whole valley of Arve, from the Grotte de Balme to St. Gervais. I had the Doron and its range behind me, the mighty cliffs of the Varens beside me, the Nant d'Arpenaz like a pillar of cloud at their feet; Mont Blanc and all its aiguilles with the Verte and Argentiniere in front of me; marvelous blocks of granite and pines beside me, and yet with all this I enjoyed it no more than a walk on Denmark Hill. Setting myself to find out the reasons of this, I discovered that when I confined myself to one thing – as to the grass, or stones, or the Doron, or the Nant d'Arpenaz, or the Mont Blanc – I began to enjoy directly; because then I had mind enough to put into thing, and my enjoyment arose from the quantity of mental and imaginative energy which I could give it; but when I looked at it all together, I had not, in my state of weariness, mind enough to give to all, and none were therefore of any value. I thought this a most instructive lesson; both showing how the majesty of nature depends of human spirit, and how each spirit can only embrace at a time so much of what has been appointed for its food, and may therefore rest contented with little, knowing that if it throw its full energy into that little, it will be more than enough; and that an over-

supply of food would only be an over-tax on its energies. This crushing of the mind by overweight is finely given by Forbes.¹³⁸

Ruskin discusses this theory in Volume III when he shows that although nature is powerful (intrinsically beautiful and harmonious), it lacks the ability or the willingness to direct its power. Therefore, it falls to the individual to make an effort to read and interpret the landscape in order to gain a legitimate pleasure but also to learn important lessons. This is also Ruskin's argument when he states that schoolchildren should be taught drawing before writing as drawing enables them to escape preconceived cultural associations that usually come through language, and to develop, through direct personal observation, a sane perception of the world and independent thinking.

The Sallenches observation showcases Ruskin's belief that in order to be efficient in its transformative role, the exchange of energy established between nature and observer should not be scattered over too many details, but instead focused on a single natural element. This is because Ruskin believes that the overcrowding of motifs leads to an accumulation of stimuli large enough to impede accurate symbolic readings and contemplation of natural or represented landscape.

Ruskin's diary entries explain his strategies in choosing some of the illustrations for *Modern Painters* III, IV, and V as well as his method for analyzing Turner's paintings. Based on the associationist psychology that Ruskin dabbles in (as can be understood from his Swiss diaries), these strategies can be reduced to a combination of four steps: selection, elimination, focus and association. For example, in his writings, Ruskin usually creates a busy panorama filled with many details. However, his illustrations contain compressed and mostly repetitive imagery that emphasizes only what Ruskin considers to be the most important elements; everything that could detract from the image's symbolic meaning is attenuated or removed. In the same way, while describing and interpreting Turner's works, Ruskin usually strives to identify the one detail, be it figurative or technical, that can reveal what he considers to be the artist's message. However, it should

¹³⁸ James David Forbes (1809-1868), Scottish scientist, specialized in physics, glaciology and seismology. He wrote *Travels through the Alps of Savoy and Other Parts of the Pennine Chain, with Observations on the Phenomena of Glaciers* (1843). *Works*, V, xviii-xx.

be mentioned that Ruskin usually uses Turner as an alter ego, as if Turner (1775-1851) would mediate Victorian values and beliefs rather than his own Georgian ones.

It can be said that Ruskin's strategies, marked by the associationist trend in British psychology,¹³⁹ are precursors to early twentieth-century Soviet montage, itself in turn based on behavior-conditioning theories elaborated by I.P. Pavlov. The montage theory refers to the importance of close-ups in suggesting context and emotional responses, and also to the expressive power born from juxtaposing different images, which pushes the viewer to create "the emotional meaning, once the appropriate objects have been linked together."¹⁴⁰ As Louis Giannetti shows, V.I. Pudovkin and Lev Kuleshov elaborate the theory of constructive editing and the Kuleshov effect,¹⁴¹ under the influence of Pavlov's experiments with the association of ideas.

The similarities between Ruskin's vision and some other traditional filmic techniques of today are also acknowledged by George Landow, this time with regard to Ruskin's writing. In analyzing Ruskin's word-painting style, Landow discerns three forms of expression: description in an additive style, dramatization, and cinematic prose. In the case of the latter, Ruskin

first places himself and his reader firmly in position, after which he generates a complete landscape by moving his centre of perception, or 'camera eye,' in one of two ways. He may move us progressively deeper into the landscape in a manner that anticipates cinematic use of the zoom lens, or he may move us laterally across the scene while remaining at a fixed distance from the subject — a technique that similarly anticipates the cinematic technique called panning.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ William Dember, Marjorie Bagwell, "A History of Perception", in Gregory A. Kimble, Kurt Schlensinger (ed), *Topics in the History of Psychology*, New York, Psychology Press, 2014, p.262.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 136.

¹⁴¹ The viewer is presented with a succession of different scenes or with a juxtaposition of images and is left to reconstruct by himself a unified action or a coherent interpretation. See Louis Giannetti, *Understanding Movies*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1993, p.135.

¹⁴² George P. Landow, *Ruskin*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 31.

2.02. Frontispieces for a composite art

In *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder*, Elizabeth Helsinger considers Volume V of *Modern Painters* as an example of a double work or composite work of art, a form of expression where writing and images combine to create a synergistic effect. Drawing on the works of W.J. Thomas Mitchell and Mary Wynn Ainsworth,¹⁴³ Helsinger uses these two terms (double work and composite art) interchangeably “to indicate a pairing of text and picture in which the two elements are more or less equal but interdependent, are designed to be considered together, and are complementary rather than parallel in style and content.”¹⁴⁴ She states that Ruskin’s last three volumes of *Modern Painters* are part of a nineteenth-century British tradition of which William Blake and Dante Gabriel Rossetti are the most popular representatives. As Helsinger shows, Ruskin’s main object of study, Turner, is himself partial to the idea of composite art, sometimes writing accompanying poems for his visual work that is in turn often charged with literary allusions and narratives and holds titles that “were themselves compressed verbal complements and clues to his paintings.”¹⁴⁵

According to Helsinger, to qualify as composite art, an illustration must be more than companion piece to the text or a simple visual expression of a verbal description. Instead, the illustration should complement the writing and create, in Helsinger’s words, a “deliberate interplay of forms.”¹⁴⁶

In her analysis of *Modern Painters*’ illustrations, Helsinger posits that before Volume V, Ruskin only occasionally engages in double art and perhaps he does so accidentally. On the other hand, in Volume V, Ruskin’s use of double art becomes “elaborate and self-

¹⁴³ W. J. Thomas Mitchell, *Blake's Composite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978, and Mary Wynn Ainsworth, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Double Work of Art* New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1976.

¹⁴⁴ Elizabeth Helsinger, *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1990, note 12, p. 289.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 289.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 293.

conscious.”¹⁴⁷ More specifically, Helsinger explains that prior to Volume V, Ruskin uses three types of illustrations: picturesque, schematized, and thematic, and these are all subordinate to the text. Only in Volume V does Ruskin begin to deliberately introduce what Helsinger calls emblematic drawings, whose purpose is to add to the text a verbal message through a combination of iconography and title.¹⁴⁸ In this chapter I will argue that, considering the symbolic European geography favored by Ruskin, it is possible to classify a larger number of illustrations from *Modern Painters* as double art, beginning with the frontispieces.

Ruskin’s first published frontispieces are in the last three volumes of *Modern Painters*. Until then, even if his books even were copiously illustrated, like *The Stones* or *The Seven Lamps*, they did not include frontispieces. The frontispieces for Volumes III, IV and V are all of them engraved. They represent an original landscape by Ruskin (Volume III), a reproduction after Turner (Volume IV) and another reproduction after Fra Angelico (Volume V). Ruskin’s own drawing, engraved by J.C. Armitage, is entitled *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)* (Fig.3) and it opens Volume III. The reproduction after Turner, *Pass at Faiedo. St. Gotthard* (cca.1843),¹⁴⁹ is retitled by Ruskin *The Gates of the Hills* (Fig. 11), and opens Volume IV. The Fra Angelico frontispiece opens Volume V and is retitled by Ruskin *Ancilla Domini*. This last piece represents the marian figure from the Fra Angelico’s Reliquary *Annunciation and Adoration of the Magi* (1434) that Ruskin saw in the sacristy of Santa Maria Novella.¹⁵⁰

As Helsinger observes, Ruskin never discusses his original engraving *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)* (Volume III frontispiece) in the text. This leads her to exclude the image from her analysis of *Modern Painters* as composite art. However, in the preface to Volume IV, Ruskin claims that the message of the image is relevant for both Volumes III and IV,¹⁵¹ but he does not explain any further. Volumes III and IV are actually published within two months of one another and therefore there is a strong sense of continuity between the two.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p.289.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, pp.291-293.

¹⁴⁹ Today at the Morgan Library and Museum, <http://www.themorgan.org/collection/drawings-and-prints/247364>, accessed 14 March 2014.

¹⁵⁰ Today at the Museo di San Marco, Florence, see Stephan Beissel, *Fra Angelico*, New York, Parkstone International, 2012, pp.59-60.

¹⁵¹ *Works*, VI, 4.

This is reinforced by the fact that the plates from the two volumes are numbered as if they formed a continuous sequence. Therefore, the plates from Volume IV are listed in sequences to the last plates from Volume III. Ruskin also uses the same method in Volume V, when he picks up the numbering of the illustrations from where he left off in Volume IV.

It is interesting to note that in the abovementioned preface, Ruskin places *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)* (Fig.3) in the same category as plates 14 (*St. George of the Seaweed*, Fig.2) and 15 (*Lombard Apennine*, Fig.1) since, according to him, all three of them are meant to illustrate “the chapters on the Firmament in the fifth volume.” Ruskin says that he is also trying to avoid overcrowding Volume V with illustrations. Overall, he states that the frontispiece “seemed, in its three divisions,¹⁵² properly introductory to our whole subject.”¹⁵³

These three plates are linked not only by the fact that they were all initially meant to be placed in Volume V, but also through their geographic connotations - all of them represent locations in Northern Italy and as such, they make a link between *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice*. Moreover, when Ruskin enumerates the plate, he implies a juxtaposition bringing to mind again the creative editing. Thus, he suggests a succession from Plate 14, *Lombard Apennine*, to Plate 15, *St. George of the Seaweed*, and toward the frontispiece, *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)*. He then describes himself standing on the hills near Como, looking toward Lugano (which crosses the border in Switzerland). In the preface to Volume IV Ruskin actually describes (by combining the mental juxtaposition of images and textual description) a physical journey from Venice to Switzerland through Lombardy and Como.¹⁵⁴ This journey marks a symbolic departure from the Italic peninsula which was considered until then, as Paul L. Sawyer argues, a holder of traditional British aesthetic values.¹⁵⁵

Ruskin describes *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)* (Fig.3) as “a simple sketch from nature, taken at sunset from the hills near Como, some two miles up the eastern side

¹⁵² Namely water, earth and sky.

¹⁵³ *Works*, VI, 4.

¹⁵⁴ *Works*, VI, 4.

¹⁵⁵ Paul L. Sawyer, *Ruskin's Poetic Argument. The Design of His Major Works*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 168.

of the lake and about a thousand feet above it, looking towards Lugano.”¹⁵⁶ Lugano is another major lake that straddles the Italian-Swiss border. By describing the direction of his gaze, Ruskin manages to put forth a kinetic suggestion and to establish a subliminal geographical association that introduces the theme of the Volumes III and IV: the quest for renewal through a passage from culture to nature - from Italy to Switzerland, from plains to mountains, and from South to North, ultimately signifying the reform and salvation arising in the midst of the crisis of civilization.

As has already been discussed, Volumes III, IV, and V are bound together by the engraved images. The plates are numbered successively throughout the last three volumes, unlike the interspersed woodcuts which are numbered separately for each book. The latter have a purely denotative role and Helsinger categorizes them as schematic and thematic. On the other hand, the plates occupy a whole separate page outside the text and very often go beyond their demonstrative function. More specifically, they propose complementary visual metaphors and firmly place Ruskin’s work into the realm of composite art. The titles for these plates are significant, and as such constitute the main markers that help distinguish between the emblematic images and the denotative ones. The titles of the plates do not describe in a detached way the location or the figure depicted; instead, they are syntagms that comment, make generalizations, and turn apparently innocent depictions or simple reproductions into metaphorical statements.

2.03 Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)

Through the creative use of titles, Ruskin makes both the Volume III and Volume IV frontispieces emblematic.¹⁵⁷ In the case of *Lake, Land and Cloud (near*

¹⁵⁶ *Works*, VI, 4.

¹⁵⁷ The same is true for Volume V and *Ancilla Domini*.

Como), the first part of the title references general geographical features, mentioning the basic elements of a landscape and as such can be illustrative for the general subject of the book. The second part of the title establishes a link to Volume IV by placing the image on the European map and in a discursive geographical context. *Near Como* is the element that identifies the place and at the same times maintains a sense of vagueness about it, attaching to this aerial view a suggestion of movement in a transitory Northern Italian space. By mentioning his original Italian landscapes (from Volume III) together only in the fourth volume and by showing that they were actually relegated there from a fifth volume, not yet written, Ruskin makes use of another of his interactive approaches. He now demands active participation from his reader who has to go back and forth between volumes, to mentally revise the anterior book and to imagine and anticipate the one to come.

It is only in the preface to Volume IV that Ruskin draws attention to the composition of the Volume III frontispiece, showing that, because it is organized according to the three divisions named in the first part of the title (lake, land, and cloud), it seems to be “properly introductory to our whole subject.”¹⁵⁸ Ruskin implies the thematic difference between the first two (Volume I and II) and the last three volumes of *Modern Painters*. In other words, the subject no longer argues the superiority of modern painters over the ancients. Instead, it signals the transformation and renewal of modern civilization as symbolized by the natural water cycle. Ruskin is fascinated by the fact that some of the processes occurring during the hydrologic cycle, like precipitation and condensation, are visible and relatively easily quantifiable, while others, like evaporation, sublimation, or infiltration, are difficult to perceive with the naked eye, and become obvious only in the long run. In Volume IV, subtitled *Of Mountain Beauty*, Ruskin insists on the theme of the water cycle and its specific aspects in the Alps. He reprises this theme in Volume V, where a whole chapter (titled *Of Cloud Beauty*) is dedicated to clouds and meteorology.

The Como – toward - Lugano landscape can be seen as a geographical representation of the hydrologic cycle, influenced in its composition by the illustrated meteorology books on the formation of clouds. The theme of the water cycle in nature is

¹⁵⁸ *Works*, VI, 4.

a Romantic staple, as is the motif of the cloud, a recurrent symbol for dynamic, ineffable and continuous transformation and also for the sublimation of the human condition through artistic creation. For example, both Goethe and Shelley wrote poems on the subject of clouds, a subject that also touched the poetry of Coleridge and Wordsworth, two major influences on Ruskin. Cloud iconography was also a traditional interest in British fine arts; in the eighteenth century, Alexander Cozens wrote a treaty on the representation of clouds based on a combination of empirical observation and his own blotting technique. Scientifically speaking, the “invention of clouds”¹⁵⁹ - their naming and classification - was done by a British personality, Luke Howard, pharmacist and amateur meteorologist, whose 1803 *Essay on the Modifications of Clouds* had a great impact on Constable and Turner, and consequently on Ruskin. In Volumes III and IV, Ruskin stresses that the scientific explanation of cloud formation should not erase but rather sustain and complete any ancient symbolic interpretations that consider the sky as an interval between man and God.

Lake, Land and Cloud (Near Como) is a vignette built on a vertical plane and partitioned into three horizontal registers that almost blend together through a ripple of gradating transparent effects. The lower register depicts a stagnant water surface and the upper one shows a cloudy sky. The two frame a mountain landscape that unravels into the horizon via a succession of wooded slopes. Furthermore, the middle part of the upper register is occupied by the faint silhouette of a foggy mountain (Alps) that looks like it merges into the sky above. Ruskin’s composition stands out because he places in the lower part of the vignette a large space that seems calm and almost immaterial while he places a denser space in the upper part. More specifically, the lower register of the Como landscape is simplified iconographically, with no detailed foreground or pronounced textures and shades that could diversify its surface and bring it closer to the spectator. In this way, Ruskin goes against the customary formula that seeks visually to enforce the law of gravity by anchoring the lower part of the composition in a strong foreground, or in a low horizontal plane contrasted against a lighter register representing the sky (Fig.4).

¹⁵⁹ See Richard Hamblyn, *The Invention of Clouds. How an Amateur Meteorologist Forged the Language of Skies*, London, Picador MacMillan, 2002.

At the time, illustrated scientific books on the subject of clouds usually followed the traditional iconographic approach just mentioned, as their illustrations drew heavily on the conventions of the landscape art of the time. Furthermore, the specific subject of the formation or classification of clouds was often visually developed in an artistic mode, with a composition completed with architecture (Fig.5), foliage (Fig.6) and even characters in movement or contemplation (Fig.7) including the Rückenfigur trope that depicts an observer viewed from the back contemplating the landscape in front of him (Fig. 8).

Books on clouds were popular and regularly reprinted during the nineteenth century¹⁶⁰ and, unlike other natural science or meteorology books which offered data visualization exclusively through infographics, they seem to have this vision of illustrating their subject with canonical representations of human environments. This vision is present in the most important titles of this kind, including Luke Howard's *Essay on the Modifications of Clouds* (published with different illustrations, first in "Philosophical Magazine" in 1803, and then in a separate brochure), Thomas Forster's *Researches About Atmospheric Phenomena* (1815), and Charles Tomlinson's *The Rain Cloud, or An Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World* (1846).

Apart from the reversal of the compositional weight, *Lake, Land and Cloud* delivers a typical Ruskinian feature - common to almost all the original landscapes from *Modern Painters* - which is the marked absence of any human elements. There is also a secondary aspect - the reduction of architectural motifs to a minimum. In the case of the frontispiece, the two watch towers depicted in the upper right side of the landscape and the bridge at the foot of the slope on the right are drawn so small that they seem to blend organically into the surrounding environment. In fact, throughout *Modern Painters*, Ruskin favors those architectural elements that can be seen as stylistically generic and avoids anything specific or unique. Therefore, instead of making a realistic description of a regional cultural landscape, Ruskin's depictions construct a natural mythopoeia in a

¹⁶⁰ See D.E. Pedgley, "Luke Howard and His Clouds," in *Weather*, Vol.58, accessed 14 February 2003, p.53.

quest for visualizing universal principles through landscape metaphors. That is to say that by focusing on carefully chosen elements in a landscape and by down-playing details, Ruskin is looking for the essence of a place and is trying to emphasize the general aspect of the image. The geographic identity of the landscape is usually addressed and detailed in the title and in writing. .

The frontispiece of Volume III, *Lake, Land and Cloud (near Como)* is actually linked to a subsection of Volume IV entitled “The Firmament”¹⁶¹ where Ruskin offers an analysis of the *Book of Genesis*, specifically of the separation of land and water.¹⁶² By developing this intermediate chapter, Ruskin tries to tie together aesthetics, physical geography, and geology, and to place them in a Christian creationist system of beliefs. Here Ruskin offers his connotative interpretation of *Genesis*; specifically, he claims that the separation of the waters in the Bible does not imply the instauration of a dome on the water surface, as it was thought before the advancement of science, but instead references the water cycle, the transformation in the state of matter under the effect of heat, from liquid to gas and back, from “waters which fall and flow” to “waters which rise and float.”¹⁶³

According to Paul Sawyer, in *Modern Painters* Ruskin actually affirms a personal creed that “life in itself is not static, like an image, but a released energy continuous with time, (...) its usual manifestation in nature is water, the element that nourishes.”¹⁶⁴ In order to stress the role of water in the frontispiece, Ruskin chooses to eliminate any distracting details in the foreground, which appears to be lighted from above in an almost theatrical way. At the same time, he uses a sfumato effect for the rest of the work to soften the contours of the figurative elements, blending them into circular compositional groupings that whirl around or ripple through space into the horizon. The result is the suggestion of a diffuse release of subtle energy. Above the Como hills, Ruskin depicts a

¹⁶¹ As mentioned before, Ruskin states in the preface that *Lake, Land and Cloud* was initially intended for the fifth volume and its chapter on the firmament. However, while the fifth volume has indeed a chapter devoted to clouds, its title is “Of Cloud Beauty” whereas a subsection called “The Firmament” can actually be found in the fourth volume. This subsection separates the first part of the book which considers aesthetic categories and the second part which is a treaty on geology and alpine physical geography.

¹⁶² *Works*, VI, 106-114.

¹⁶³ *Works*, VI, 108.

¹⁶⁴ Paul L. Sawyer, *Ruskin's Poetic Argument. The Design of His Major Works*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 31.

dense cloud formation that mimics the natural relief below. Ruskin shows in the preface that he is aware of the fact that traditional formulas were not respected in the composition of this illustration and that

the sky is a little too heavy for the advantage of the landscape below; but I am not answerable for the sky. It was *there*. Persons unacquainted with hill scenery are apt to forget that the sky of the mountains is often close to the spectator. A black thundercloud may literally be dashing itself in his face, while the blue hills seen through its rents may be thirty miles away.¹⁶⁵

Ruskin suggests here that customary rules of landscape representation do not actually follow accurate empirical observations but instead bend the truth by repeating pre-established conventions. For this reason, according to him, artists who follow these formulas in a strict manner usually end up missing the moral aspect of landscape as they cannot establish an energetic exchange with the natural motif. Furthermore, by insisting on the fact that the view is seen from atop of a mountain by a spectator enshrouded in clouds, Ruskin emphasizes not only the aesthetic quality but also the special epistemological role of mountainous formations, which he believes can bring the observer closer to the sky, offering him at the same time a unified, all-encompassing vision of the world below. Although it opens Volume III of *Modern Painters, Lake, Mountain, Cloud (near Como)* is thematically more pertinent for Volume IV, a fact that Ruskin acknowledges implicitly by commenting on the illustration in the preface to Volume IV. Volume IV, subtitled *Of Mountain Beauty*, treats the alpine scenery as a complex geographic phenomenon with a specific hydrologic cycle, a physical link between earth and heaven and also a heuristic tool which can help reveal a symbolic message if approached holistically by combining natural sciences, theology and aesthetics.

¹⁶⁵ *Works*, VI, 4.

2.04. The Gates of the Hills

In *Lake, Mountain, Cloud (near Como)* Ruskin describes an aerial view of the voyage from Northern Italy toward Switzerland. In *The Gates of the Hills* (Fig.11), the actual frontispiece of Volume IV, Ruskin transports the reader over the border and deep into the Swiss mountains through an almost claustrophobic rendition of an alpine gorge. This image reprises in fact a detail from one of Turner's 1843 watercolors, *The Pass of Faido* (Fig.12).¹⁶⁶ Ruskin makes it his own by changing Turner's literal and objective title with a metaphorical one, *The Gates of the Hills*, (which he never explains in the book), thus fictionalizing the image and suggesting that it has a deeper meaning.

Elizabeth Helsinger observes that Ruskin's titles tend to be instrumental in turning an image into an emblem by proposing poetic comments that draw attention to certain illustrations which are not denotative even if the text seems to suggest that they are. These titles retain a cryptic quality that demands a real effort of correlation and interpretation from the reader. This observation can also be extended to the present frontispiece (*The Gates of the Hills*) that bears a title that is not mentioned at all in the text but some decades later will be revealed to have a very personal signification.

In *Praeterita*, his 1886 autobiography, Ruskin mentions his awe at seeing for the first time the chain of the Alps as a teenager during an 1833 continental trip with his parents and adopted sister: "Gates of the Hills' opening for me to a new life – to cease no more, except at the Gates of the Hills whence one returns not."¹⁶⁷ John Rosenberg believes that the syntagm speaks about the beginning of Ruskin's life as a writer and is linked to Ruskin's obsession with the biblical symbolism of the gates as a revelatory passage and aspiration to transcendence.¹⁶⁸ In a more secular interpretation, the title of

¹⁶⁶ Presently in the Morgan Library, listed under the title *The Pass at Faido. St. Gothard*. <http://www.themorgan.org/collections/collections.asp?id=58>, accessed 14 March 2014.

¹⁶⁷ *Works*, XXXIV, 113.

¹⁶⁸ "Gate upon gate open in Ruskin's mind as he writes, leading back to the gates of Scripture that his mother first opened for him, the 'gates of heaven' that Jacob sees atop the ladder reaching from earth to

the frontispiece from Volume IV can be seen to signify a life-changing experience and a point of no return in an epistemological process that implies a difficult journey and a strenuous effort. In order to emphasize danger and hardship, Ruskin chooses a compositional formula that brings to mind another of Turner's renditions of the region which was published in *Liber Studiorum*, Turner's manual of landscape. Titled *Mt St. Gotthard Pass* (Fig. 13) this other St. Gotthard representation delivers a darker, ominous rendition of a lonely traveler going through a narrow pass

In constructing the frontispiece *Lake, Land and Cloud Near Como*, Ruskin applies the results of earlier experiments in perception described in his diaries from the 1840s, namely the elimination of details, focus on selected iconographical motifs, controlled associations built from a combination of technical choices (composition, sfumato) and title (which mix together generic and particular geographic connotations). Ruskin uses a similar approach with *The Gates of the Hills* where he applies it to the reproduction of one of Turner's watercolors and not to the direct representation of a natural landscape.

To clarify, Ruskin is not simply copying Turner, but instead he drastically changes the image's original iconographic content, composition, and title; he eliminates most of the original atmospheric details and zooms in on the alpine passage; he closes the composition, darkens the image and replaces the original title with a personal poetic reference. Ruskin states in the preface that the technical changes were somewhat imposed on him by the incongruity of media, as the image had to be adapted for engraving and shrunk to the dimensions of the book page. However, it is obvious that the great differences between the original and this pseudo-reproduction do not really stem from the shrinking of the watercolor, but from Ruskin's choices of the motif, the composition, and the atmosphere. In actuality, Ruskin appropriates Turner's landscape in order to infuse it with his own natural theology of social renewal through a return to the ideals of a primal Christianity that is symbolized by the Swiss Alps - an entrance into the cathedral of the earth.

angels, the gates of the Psalmist that lift up their heads to 'the King of glory,' the gate Isaiah sees that 'shall not be shut' day or night and that opens in Revelation, the gates of golden words that beckon Ruskin to enter through the ramparts of Siena (: 'Cor magis tibi Sena pandit' - 'More than her gates, Siena opens her heart to you.')

John Rosenberg, *Elegy for an Age. The Presence of the Past in the Victorian Literature*, London, Anthem Press, 2005, p. 118.

Turner's original work, *The Pass at Faido*, is developed in fact as a horizontal, open composition that suggests a deep spatiality. Ruskin crops the image around a gorge-like formation originally placed in the background to the right – he aggrandizes it and renames it *Gates of the Hills*. In Turner's original, the gorge still has an important role in constructing the illusion of spaciousness by furnishing the vanishing point of the perspective view. However, Turner seems more interested to emphasize the foreground where he depicts the vertiginous movement of alpine rapids through dynamic and transparent touches. Therefore, Turner's *Pass at Faido* is characterized mainly by a complex spatiality constructed through geometric perspective suggestions, the deployment of a tight string of successive planes, together with atmospheric effects.

However, in his own version of Turner's image, Ruskin again applies his visual strategy of selection, elimination, and focus, that results in a perspective that hurtles toward the vanishing point. He chooses to represent and emphasize only the narrow couloir from the Turner landscape, thus stressing not only physical danger, and the effort required to travel into the mountains and read the "Nature-scripture,"¹⁶⁹ but also implying a rite of passage that comes with the alpine excursions. In Ruskin's interpretation, the space appears more simplified, with fewer planes succeeding one another, and the composition is now almost closed, tightened by a circular and misty frame. Briefly, everything that could divert attention from the depiction of the gorge is reduced or eliminated in Ruskin's interpretation of Turner's picture.

Ruskin's visual approach is similar here to his cinematic prose. In George Landow's words, he "moves us progressively deeper into the landscape in a manner that anticipates cinematic use of the zoom lens."¹⁷⁰ Ruskin actually attempts to somehow transport his reader inside Turner's landscape, close to the right side of the frame, to the place where a minuscule, sketchy carriage is depicted in the original work. In doing this, he also changes the direction of the viewer's gaze, now from right to left, with the direct result that the ravine is brought closer to the spectator and its place is reversed to the left of the image. Thus, the open composition of the original becomes closed as the gorge is

¹⁶⁹ *Works*, V, 191.

¹⁷⁰ George P. Landow, *Ruskin*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 31.

placed in the opposite direction and the whole sweeping vista becomes a cramped passage. As a result of these important changes, Ruskin transforms Turner's work into his own projection of a geographical eye of a needle. In a letter Ruskin posts from Faïdo in 1869 to Charles Eliot Norton,¹⁷¹ Ruskin includes a small sketch of the pass where he marks with black hatches the right side of the composition, approximately where the carriage was sketched in Turner's work (Fig.14).

In the case of the title, Ruskin uses a reverse version of the method used for the first frontispiece, where he attempted to geographically place an otherwise generic landscape. This time he strips away any geographic identity as well as any reference to Turner's original, thus turning the image into a general metaphor. In doing so, he puts into practice his own theory from Volume I of *Modern Painters* when he states that:

there is nevertheless in generic Alpine scenery, a fountain of feeling yet unopened – a chord of harmony yet untouched by art. It will be struck by the first man who can separate what is national in Switzerland, from what is ideal. We do not want chalets and three-legged stools, cow-bells and buttermilk. We want the pure and holy hills treated as a link between heaven and earth.¹⁷²

This quote explains in part why Ruskin is reticent to use human figures and other genre conventions in his illustrations that are intended to be general statements or symbolic images. Specifically, Ruskin believes that anecdotal details would distract from the suggested meaning. Ruskin also wants to avoid any detached, voyeuristic quality in order to immerse the reader more fully into his representations. As he states in the preface to Volume III, Ruskin believes that the author is a guide and the reader a traveler, which brings to mind Virgil guiding Dante in his voyage to Paradise. In this particular case, Ruskin tries to guide his reader deeper inside a work of art and inside an idealized Switzerland by exploring a liminal territory, a passage into a symbolically sacred space, the mountain landscape. It is relevant to remember here that Ruskin thinks that “the mountains of the earth are its natural cathedrals, or natural altars, overlaid with gold, and

¹⁷¹ John Lewis Bradley, Ian Ousby (ed), *The Correspondence of John Ruskin and Charles Eliot Norton*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 153.

¹⁷² *Works*, III, 285.

bright with brodered work of flowers, and with their clouds resting on them as the smoke of a continual sacrifice.”¹⁷³

It is also relevant to note that throughout the last three volumes of *Modern Painters*, both Switzerland and Turner appear as fictionalized constructs, essentialized in such a way that benefits Ruskin’s argument. To explain, Ruskin sees Switzerland as a country with no culture that is defined solely through its sublime mountainous landscape. Additionally, he sees Turner as the ultimate genius who manages to find his way back to nature from the artificial realm of modern civilization. Ruskin’s open appropriation of Turner’s work is maybe better explained by the manifold relationships established between Turner and Ruskin who was at the same time critic, connoisseur, patron, collector - and later, also curator - of the Turnerian oeuvre. In this particular case, the polyvalent relationship appears further complicated by direct ownership, as *The Gates of the Hills* refers to a watercolour commissioned and bought by Ruskin from Turner in 1843, after he specifically chose it based on a sample study from 1842.¹⁷⁴

As David Blayney Brown shows, Ruskin is relentless in pursuing his vision of Turner. Brown argues that Ruskin has “no hesitation in dismembering sketchbooks, breaking up Turner’s own annotated selections of their contents, or dispensing highly subjective critical judgements,” as well as being “apt to misdate drawings in an effort to marshal them into his own sense of Turner’s stylistic development.”¹⁷⁵ During his life, Turner did not always accommodate Ruskin’s views and did not hesitate to jeopardize his patronage. For example, in 1843, Ruskin commissioned from Turner another view of St Gotthard region, expressly “for the sake of the pines.”¹⁷⁶ However, in the finished work, Turner “cut all the pines down, by way of jest, and left only the bared red ground under

¹⁷³ *Works*, VI, 457.

¹⁷⁴ *The Pass of St. Gotthard, Near Faido*, sample study, Tate Gallery, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-the-pass-of-st-gotthard-near-faido-sample-study-d36055>, 14 March 2014.

¹⁷⁵ David Blayney Brown, ‘Project Overview’, December 2012, in David Blayney Brown (ed.), *J.M.W. Turner: Sketchbooks, Drawings and Watercolours*, December 2012, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/jmw-turner/project-overview-r1109225>, accessed 14 March 2014.

¹⁷⁶ <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-storm-in-the-st-gotthard-pass-the-first-bridge-above-alt Dorf-sample-study-d36135>, 14 March 2014.

them.”¹⁷⁷ Although Ruskin ended up paying for the work, he exchanged it later with another collector.¹⁷⁸

2.05. Dreaming creative geography

As he writes, Ruskin is completely convinced that his methods and interpretations are right. He thinks that a great artist works instinctively as if possessed by a dream that takes over his will. In this manner, the artist can see universal ideas in specific things. Furthermore, he can express such ideas by blending associative images together with those directly observed. According to Ruskin, it takes an interdisciplinary specialist (such as himself) well versed in theology, art history, literature, natural sciences and the practice of visual arts, to fully expose and explain a great artist’s approach.

Ruskin believes that there are two kinds of artists: craftsmen who have the talent of visually depicting the outside world and visionaries who use (depictions of) reality to represent emotions and ideas. As a consequence, visionaries, unlike craftsmen, always construct multi layered images. As to landscape genre, this dichotomy resides in the practice of two main types of landscapes which Ruskin calls “simple” and “Turnerian topography.”

In order to illustrate his division of landscapes, Ruskin chooses again Turner’s watercolour, *The Pass of Faido*, as an example; he employs a method tested in Volume III where he differentiates poetry and prose by pairing Byron’s description of the lake of Geneva from *The Prisoner of Chillon* and his own objective observations of the place. Similarly, he now pairs Turner’s landscape (Fig. 9) with his own topography lifted from the same vantage point (Fig.10).

¹⁷⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁷⁸ *Ibidem.*

During his 1840s travels to Switzerland, Ruskin spent many months searching for the exact location of *The Pass of Faido*. When at last he finds it, he is perplexed by the dissimilarities between the real and the represented geographies. Ruskin claims in a letter from Faido from 1845 that "the mountains, compared with Turner's colossal conception, look pigmy & poor,"¹⁷⁹ while the gorge is wide and lacks the darkness and dangerous subtext from the painting. Ruskin also notices that the outline of the mountains appears more rounded and layered in the representation. In light of these observations, Ruskin concludes that Turner must have projected some of his ideas onto the landscape thereby changing it to reflect an emotional state.

As far as Turner's projections go, Ruskin believes that *The Pass of Faido* is actually all about the traveler in the small carriage at the bottom of the slopes who must have felt insignificant and overwhelmed by the sight of the mountains. Danger, fear, exhaustion, awe and bewilderment are sublimated into a majestic landscape that reminds Ruskin of his vision of the Alps as Biblical temples of the earth. In other words, he concludes that Turner's *The Pass of Faido* is ultimately not about landscape representation, but about the journey and the rites of passage that come with it. To reiterate, Ruskin posits that, while contemplating the motif, Turner is taken over by "the dream,"¹⁸⁰ which guides him as he reorganizes the composition so that it captures the emotional turmoil that such a passage entails. Furthermore, Ruskin notes that Turner's changes are not drastic enough as to render the view unrecognizable. Instead, like in a process of double exposure, Turner superimposed a close-up of the background over the main view, thus tightening the range of mountains together, which leads to the elimination of a great part of the sky and to the creation of the narrow gorge at the right. Moreover, Ruskin believes that Turner makes a second superimposition with one of his earlier work, *The Devil's Bridge*, which also represented a dangerous precipice in the St. Gotthard.¹⁸¹

Therefore, based on these observations, Ruskin claims that *The Pass of Faido* represents Turner's feelings about the geographical place, a mix of personal memories

¹⁷⁹ *Works*, V, xvi.

¹⁸⁰ *Works*, VI, 41.

¹⁸¹ Later in the book Ruskin will also mention the fact that all of Turner's mountainous representations from Switzerland are deeply marked by his early affections for the rounded, layered masses of the Yorkshire hills, which led him to create superimposed, composite landscapes that combine Swiss monumentality and British texture. See *Works*, VI, 302-305.

and layers of associations that helps him detect a mythical quality of the place. When looking at the vista, Turner simultaneously remembers and links together his early work on a related subject, his voyage through the passes of the Alps and the view from the bottom of the slopes. As a result, he manages to capture an image similar to a frame from a dissolve, a method of spatial or temporal transition through superimposition of different shots.

Therefore, Turner's rendition is a feat of creativity that resembles artificial landscape construction in film making.¹⁸² Artificial landscape combines immediate and residual images from different spaces and times into an imagined coherent locus compensating for its lack of verisimilitude with its charge of emotional authenticity. This constructed landscape now contains what Ruskin calls "imaginative truth"¹⁸³ revealed by "the dream"¹⁸⁴ and developed into Turnerian topography, as opposed to the simple truth and topography that are built on basic visual perception and representation. Moreover, Ruskin extends his considerations to science and states "that all mathematical, and arithmetical, and generally scientific truth, is, in comparison, truth of the husk and surface, hard and shallow; and only the imaginative truth is precious," and shows that sometimes you "cannot trust maps, nor charts, nor any manner of mensuration; the most important facts being always quite immeasurable, and that [...] Turnerian topography is the only one to be trusted."¹⁸⁵

This dichotomy that Ruskin presents between Turnerian (creative) topography and simple (documentary) topography is similar to the later opposition of realism and formalism in Soviet cinema and the montage theory, bringing also to mind Werner Herzog's concept of "ecstatic truth" which, in Herzog's definition, "is mysterious and elusive, and can be reached only through fabrication and imagination and stylization"¹⁸⁶ being opposed to "the superficial truth, the truth of the accountant."¹⁸⁷

These cinematic equivalences, however anachronistic, reflect a real connection. Basically, filmmakers look for answers to the same basic problem as Ruskin: how to

¹⁸² Aristides Gazetas, *An Introduction to World Cinema*, McFarlane, 2000, p.65.

¹⁸³ *Works*, VI, 27-37.

¹⁸⁴ *Works*, VI, 41.

¹⁸⁵ *Works*, VI, 21.

¹⁸⁶ Werner Herzog, *The Minnesota Declaration: Truth and fact in documentary cinema*, in Paul Cronin (ed.), *Herzog on Herzog*, New York, Faber and Faber, 2002, p.301.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibidem*.

advance a message or a narrative by effectively using a chain of images lifted directly from reality. Ruskin's last volumes of *Modern Painters* target a large audience, use techniques of manipulation combining words and images, and include a strong narrative, characteristics similar to those of cinematic productions. As for the analogies with Herzog's vision, they are born from some biographical and cultural similarities as well as from a common interest in searching for utopian landscapes. Moreover, Herzog, like Ruskin is interested in exploring the meanings of modern civilization and in showcasing the need for an adequate imagery of modern times.¹⁸⁸ The main differences between their creeds are most likely anchored in the political histories of their times, as Ruskin inhabits an empire at its zenith and looks for sublimity and harmony in the natural world while Herzog comes from a (post Holocaust) fallen empire; for Herzog "the Universe out there knows no smile" and primal life is "a vast, merciless hell of permanent and immediate danger"¹⁸⁹ marked by "overwhelming and collective murder."¹⁹⁰

2.06. Picturesque and social anesthesia

Volume IV marks also a moment in Ruskin's career when his concern for social justice begins to overtake his passion for art. This new prioritization starts to pervade almost all his theoretical considerations. The most eloquent example of this is Ruskin's analysis of the concept of picturesque at the beginning of the volume. Here Ruskin uses a contrast-and-compare strategy to pair two reproductions of what Ruskin considers to be pre and post-Raphaelite landscapes by Ghirlandaio and Claude Lorrain (Fig. 15).

¹⁸⁸ See Paul Cronin (ed), *Herzog on Herzog*, New York, Faber and Faber, 2002, chapters "Blasphemy and Mirages," "Adequate Imagery," Athletics and Aesthetics," passim.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 302.

¹⁹⁰ Les Blank, Maureen Gosling, *The Burden of Dreams*, Criterion, 2005.

Ruskin believes that the picturesque is a historical contingency which has at its core the concept of ruin. Ruskin argues that man-made objects that decay when exposed to weather develop asymmetrical forms, irregular outlines, layered surfaces, and diverse textures that make them seem natural. Therefore Ruskin claims that weathered objects instigate an automatic aesthetic appreciation. Furthermore, this effect is fueled by the theme itself, which combines a crumbling architecture and an ever self-regenerating landscape. This superimposition sparks a melancholic reflex and through a synergistic effect leads to instant aesthetic reverie. Ruskin argues that the picturesque plays with instinctive associative techniques and is therefore a sure and facile way for the artist to impress the viewer and to achieve recognition. However, by employing this technique, Ruskin believes that the artist also manages to elude any constructive message or teaching. Briefly, Ruskin sees it as a simplistic artistic strategy instituted as a genre which, through constant repetition, creates a conditioned reflex, and also aestheticizes human drama and tragedy and thereby makes them easy to accept. Thus, instead of suggesting a message that urges the viewer to engage in improving the world, aesthetics become an anesthetic in the face of pain and suffering, promoting inertia and submission to convention.¹⁹¹

Ruskin sees the genre of the picturesque as a historical product born in a post-Raphaelite era. To prove this, Ruskin uses the example of two representations of Pisa (Fig. 15) which he pairs in a single plate under the title *The Transition from Ghirlandajo to Claude* which he describes in detail.¹⁹² The first is a landscape by Ghirlandaio that represents the city as a thriving settlement proudly displaying the trademark leaning tower and baptistery. In the Ghirlandaio piece, the city is surrounded by fortifications and guarded by an overscaled Monte Pisano. Furthermore, a hunting party is represented in the foreground and Ruskin underlines the youth and vivacity of the characters and the solid structure of the bridge that they are getting ready to cross. In contrast, the second Pisa landscape by Claude Lorrain depicts an undersized mountain and a crumbling city. The tower is not represented, nor is any other distinctive building. The bridge in the foreground looks shabby and the passing characters look like weary travelers. Overall,

¹⁹¹ *Works*, VI, 9-26.

¹⁹² *Works*, VI, 9-10.

the composition sustains a general atmosphere of decline, loss, and ephemerality. It is in fact a memento mori type of statement, unlike the Ghirlandaio landscape, which has a memento vivere subtext.¹⁹³

It is relevant to note that Ruskin thinks that aesthetic pleasure is derived from ruin and decay type imagery. Furthermore, Ruskin shows that this pleasure is automatic. He thinks that it is in fact similar to the feelings that are provoked by music, like the use of minor scales to trigger an instinctive response of melancholia in the human brain. Therefore, Ruskin believes that the picturesque style is a shortcut for the artist who wants to evoke certain feelings with his work while bypassing considerations of general message and morality for the work in question. In other words, Ruskin sees the picturesque as just a cheap trick combining technical virtuositities and manipulative imageries.

Ruskin goes on to draw the psychological portrait of "the hunter of the picturesque,"¹⁹⁴ an aesthete, not really a "monster in human form (but) kind-hearted, innocent of evil"¹⁹⁵ and

not broad in thought; somewhat selfish, and incapable of acute sympathy with others; gifted at the same time with strong artistic instincts and capacities for the enjoyment of varied form, and light, and shade, in pursuit of which enjoyment his life is passed, as the lives of other men are for the most part, in the pursuit of what they also like, — be it honour, or money, or indolent pleasure.¹⁹⁶

It is possible that this detailed description depicts in fact Ruskin's self-portrait from the period before his new social awareness. In Volume IV, as in Volume III, Ruskin intervenes directly in the text periodically, usually by writing in a confessional mode or by including excerpts from his diaries to advance the argument. This is also the case with his analysis of the picturesque as he shows that in the contemporary practice of the genre, much of the required aesthetic effect is derived from pairing the landscape with images of ruined edifices, poor cottages or scenes from the everyday life of destitute peasants.

¹⁹³ *Works*, VI, 9-10.

¹⁹⁴ *Works*, VI, 20

¹⁹⁵ *Works*, VI, 21.

¹⁹⁶ *Works*, VI, 21.

Aesthetics can veil the sense of social injustice and even reverse it, as Ruskin demonstrated with his early experiments at Blonay when his imagination gilded a dusty road, transforming it into a charming vignette. Thus, Ruskin uses self analysis as an argument and it is thus that a diary entry from Amiens becomes an explanatory footnote in Volume IV:

I extract from my private diary a passage bearing somewhat on the matter in hand:—"Amiens, 11th May, 18—. I had a happy walk here this afternoon, down among the branching currents of the Somme; it divides into five or six,—shallow, green, and not over-wholesome; some quite narrow and foul, running beneath clusters of fearful houses, reeling masses of rotten timber; and a few mere stumps of pollard willow sticking out of the banks of soft mud, only retained in shape of bank by being shored up with timbers; and boats like paper boats, nearly as thin at least, for the costermongers to paddle about in among the weeds, the water soaking through the lath bottoms, and floating the dead leaves from the vegetable-baskets with which they were loaded. Miserable little back yards, opening to the water, with steep stone steps down to it, and little platforms for the ducks; and separate duck staircases, composed of a sloping board with cross bits of wood leading to the ducks' doors, and sometimes a flower-pot or two on them, or even a flower,—one group, of wallflowers and geraniums, curiously vivid, being seen against the darkness of a dyer's back yard, who had been dyeing black all day, and all was black in his yard but the flowers, and they fiery and pure; the water by no means so, but still working its way steadily over the weeds, until it narrowed into a current strong enough to turn two or three mill-wheels, one working against the side of an old flamboyant Gothic church, whose richly traceried buttresses sloped into the filthy stream;—all exquisitely picturesque, and no less miserable. We delight in seeing the figures in these boats pushing them about the bits of blue water, in Prout's drawings; but as I looked to-day at the unhealthy face and melancholy mien of the man in the boat pushing his load of peats along the ditch, and of the people, men as well as women, who sat spinning gloomily at the cottage doors, I could not help feeling how many suffering persons must pay for my picturesque subject and happy walk."¹⁹⁷

Ruskin's diary entry is an example of the evocative power of his word-painting literary technique when infused with guilt and compassion. It also marks the inception of a new dichotomy in his theory of landscape that opposes "low" "heartless picturesque"¹⁹⁸ to

¹⁹⁷ *Works*, VI, 20.

¹⁹⁸ *Works*, VI, 19.

“high” “Turnerian picturesque.”¹⁹⁹ Ruskin builds a new dualistic taxonomy based on the old antithesis of low and high art that is defined through technical and thematic choices by incorporating morality and awareness of social content. Therefore, according to the new version of the dualism, there is a low landscape art that is simple (simple topography) and heartless (heartless picturesque) and a high landscape art that is complex and sympathetic, or in a word, “Turnerian.” In the end, Turner’s name is turned into an adjective that defines a mix of aesthetic excellence with social awareness and a life affirming attitude.

Ruskin exemplifies this idea with another contrast of two examples of a genre: the motif of the windmill as treated by Clarkson Frederick Stanfield and by J.M.W. Turner (Fig.16). In Stanfield’s case the scene is bathed in an unnaturally steady light which imposes clear cut contours and evenly lit objects, thus creating the opportunity to explore in detail all those textural qualities typical of decaying surfaces. This kind of effect creates a sense of fragmentation and makes it impossible to have a harmonious composition that organically unites all the elements. Moreover, such detailed rendition of the degradation of matter due to the passage of time brings automatically to mind ideas of loss, dissolution, and decline, and thereby implies a fatalistic vision. Furthermore, the windmill is depicted as an unusual growth on a plane and not as a piece of functional architecture vital for the subsistence of a rural community. Through this approach, Stanfield shakes the belief in the role and value of work.

In opposition, Turner’s windmill, although old and stylistically insignificant, has a certain monumentality that is derived from the lighting and compositional organization that lend it the dignity of a symbol for subsistence through hard and honest work. Unlike Stanford’s example, Turner maintains the compositional unity with a *contre-jour* effect that minimizes detail. The landscape, backlit by a crepuscular light, and the mill, silhouetted against a wide sky, suggest an almost heroic quality of endurance. By association, the mill’s socially humble owner and operator gains symbolic status and validation and becomes a signifier of hope.

It is relevant to note that Ruskin again appropriates Turner’s work in order to sustain his argument by cropping the original composition and enhancing the contrasts

¹⁹⁹ *Works*, VI, 19.

derived from the twilight effect (Fig.17). As in the *Gates of the Hills*, a detail from the side of a larger, asymmetric vista now becomes central in the reproduction turning the image into a hieratic visual statement about the value of work. This statement has a lot to do with Ruskin's newfound quest for social justice and it showcases his belief in the redeeming role and inclusive character of the work ethic. Therefore, instead of decline and fall and fatalism, we have organic integration, survival, the hope of growth, renewal, and revitalization.

2.07. Stereotypes and Fear of Contagion

In Volume IV, Ruskin continues to mix art history and aesthetic theory with political topics. For example, he explores the European dimension of British identity and the cultural geography derived from the concept of European civilization and the ongoing war in Crimea. In Volume IV, Ruskin advances a critique of British modernity that echoes the one offered in Volume III. In the case of Volume III, Ruskin critiques British modernity by constructing an antinomy between standardized and perfectly finished English objects and charming and irregular European ones. In Volume IV, he develops a similar strategy by opposing British domestic architecture to a general idea of European architecture. In so doing, Ruskin uses mainly the example of France where he translates the same theory of irregularity of texture and form that he proposes in Volume III, to gardening, architecture, and urban planning. His goal in doing this is to show that in continental Europe the picturesque is not merely a representation, but can actually be a living thing engrained in everyday life, while in England everything tends to be regularized, controlled, and contained.²⁰⁰ Ruskin also stresses the class dimension of

²⁰⁰ *Works*, VI, 13-14.

aesthetics in British domestic architecture by pointing to the use of the term “genteel” in assessing desirability, as opposed to the continent where aesthetic terms are devoid of social associations.²⁰¹

In Volume IV Ruskin reprises his stand against impassiveness, which he sees as a characteristic trait of British identity, linking it to the same modern imperial zeitgeist of control and regularization. He affirms that the architecture of his time creates spaces devoid of emotion and individuality (from which history has been evacuated) by working with overly strict principles of standardization, renovation, and restoration. According to Ruskin, we can find “the entire denial of all human calamity and care, in the swept proprieties and neatness of English modernism.”²⁰² Therefore, for Ruskin, these spaces are a testimony to the emotionally repressed personality of their inhabitants, and they enforce the lack of compassion and a retreat away from the community:

Then that spirit of trimness. The smooth paving-stones; the scraped, hard, even, rutless roads; the neat gates and plates, and essence of border and order, and spikiness and spruceness. Abroad, a country-house has some confession of human weakness and human fates about it. There are the old grand gates still, which the mob pressed sore against at the Revolution, and the strained hinges have never gone so well since; and the broken greyhound on the pillar—still broken—better so; but the long avenue is gracefully pale with fresh green, and the courtyard bright with orange-trees; the garden is a little run to waste—since Mademoiselle was married nobody cares much about it; and one range of apartments is shut up—nobody goes into them since Madame died. But with us, let who will be married or die, we neglect nothing. All is polished and precise again next morning; and whether people are happy or miserable, poor or prosperous, still we sweep the stairs of a Saturday.²⁰³

In another feat of contrast-and-compare style word-painting, Ruskin shows that British modernity can even transform a country house into a statement of cold formalism and reticence while on the continent a similar house is like a collective portrait containing a symbolic narrative of familial and political history that communicates a wide range of

²⁰¹ *Works*, VI, 12.

²⁰² *Works*, VI, 15.

²⁰³ *Works*, VI, 14.

emotions. Once again, he uses France as an example to depict a collective identity through opposition to another profiled community.

However, it is relevant to note that Ruskin is not consistent throughout the book in this cultural construction; France is later regularly depicted as similar to Britain as a modernizer and promoter of standardized civilization. Also, Ruskin ends up expressing a newfound appreciation for the trimmed and practical British countryside towards the end of the book.²⁰⁴ The same is true for the German stereotype, which loses much of its coherence in Volume IV; in putting together his Swiss mythopoeia, Ruskin is eventually confronted with the fact that Switzerland has a majority of German-speaking inhabitants. Despite this, Ruskin continues to cling onto his negative German stereotype and he goes on to describe Germans as a highly “intellectual race”²⁰⁵ who shows its love for distortion and “joy in *ugliness*”²⁰⁶ in a visual art defined by a sharp drawing and lack of atmospheric effects. Furthermore, he shows that his dislike of German philosophy “has been unreasonably, though involuntarily complicated,”²⁰⁷ with his dislike of the German nomenclature of the Swiss mountains. In fact, Ruskin even changes the name of the glacier Zmutt into Red.²⁰⁸ Although Ruskin tries to favor French and Italian denominations, he finds it impossible to purge the Germanic component from his Swiss construct. Therefore, towards the end of the book, he shows that the abstract power of the sublime Alps generates a purity of religious feeling in their inhabitants that helps them transgress any sectarian differences and also mitigates against negative cultural traits in order to build a working inter-ethnic communion on basic Christian moral principles.

Since the Alps span several European states, their physical geography could be taken as a symbol for inclusion and integration. That is, the Alps could be seen as a link between states such as France, Switzerland, and Germany as well as south eastern European states. However, Ruskin chooses to see the Alps as a symbol of exclusion by presenting the mountain range as a boundary rather than a link between countries.

²⁰⁴ *Works*, VI, 389.

²⁰⁵ *Works*, VI, 333.

²⁰⁶ *Works*, VI, 129.

²⁰⁷ *Works*, VI, 246.

²⁰⁸ *Works*, VI, 288.

While Ruskin does not explain why the mountainous heights do not exert a uniform moral and unifying effect on all inhabitants of Alpine regions regardless of their nationality, he does suggest why he singles out Switzerland as such a perfect and ideal place. The reason is geo-political in nature, as Switzerland is a country that reunites communities that are ethnically and linguistically distinctive within stable and definitive borders in the heart of Europe. Ruskin thinks that these different communities are brought together based on a communion of values. As he showed in another book, *The Poetry of Architecture*, “in perfect republics, as in Switzerland, the power is...split among the multitude”²⁰⁹ which can help achieve a perfect integration of nature and culture, of moral and politics. Swiss society inhabits a special landscape that is sublime and functional - a natural work of art from which the state must derive its principles of organization. As such, Switzerland does not have to develop an emphatic artistic tradition, for art in a way is compensatory; art responds to the inadequacies of a society and its role is therefore to try to identify societal issues and correct them. Still, Ruskin believes that the balance that he sees in the Swiss state should not be taken for granted but constantly guarded against outside threats. Consequently, vigilance and defense become key themes in some of the images that Ruskin presents in *Modern Painters*. The most striking examples are some of his illustrations for the chapters on “Turnerian topography,” “Turnerian light,” and “Turnerian mystery,” where he addresses questions of optics and atmospheric effects by using images of fortifications and watch towers as visual aids.

According to Allan Conrad Christensen, fortifications, battlefields, and watchmen are implied leitmotifs in Victorian literature. They are brought about by real dramatic events, such as multiple waves of different epidemics that made the fear of contagion an undercurrent of the cultural life of the time.²¹⁰ Building on Elaine Scarry’s analysis on how “imagination works to maintain protective barriers for beleaguered humanity,”²¹¹ Christensen exposes the mid-Victorian obsession with contagion coming from the east, “against which the west must defend itself and also in opposition to which must define

²⁰⁹ *Works*, I, 103.

²¹⁰ See Allan Conrad Christensen, *Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Contagion: 'Our feverish contact,'* London and New York, Routledge, 2005, chap. “Swordsmen and Needlewomen.”

²¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 72; See also Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain. The Making and Unmaking of the World*, New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985.

itself,” showing that “the weapons employed must include ...not only sanitary measures and military forces ...but vigilant eyes.”²¹²

During the period when Volumes III and IV were written and published, a synchronic cholera epidemic was making its way through both the British Isles as well as the battle-field in Crimea, thus reinforcing a besieged citadel type of attitude which Ruskin adopted and then transferred to his idea of Switzerland. While this is not a new sort of imagery, having been highlighted by Jean Delumeau as being a traditional European staple of the past,²¹³ Ruskin gives it a new cultural connotation to suggest an intra-European demarcation. By building an interplay of associations derived from the geopolitics of the time, Ruskin conflates Britain with Switzerland and also Russia with the German territories, thus restaging the political game in the context of his landscape theory and at the same time expressing a state of anxiety toward the specter of an aggressive Mitteleuropa.

Analyzing the rise of Anglo-German antagonism, Paul Kennedy shows that in the middle of the nineteenth century, Germany was not a defined state, but only a “geographical expression”²¹⁴ consisting of thirty-nine states, with large German speaking populations in Austria and its territories, Switzerland, Poland, Alsace, and Lorraine. This dynamical but amorphous Germanic space “was a ‘power vacuum’ in the heart of Europe,” and therefore constituted a scene of repeated battles and military excursions.²¹⁵ This was in contrast with Britain’s strict “territorial definition and relative freedom from invasion which flown from (its) insular state.”²¹⁶ Britain’s well-defined borders and the physical safety provided by its insular character were completed by the specificity of the British Empire built exclusively overseas. The last trait has helped in projecting a progressive image for the British expansionistic policy, which at one time was seen as an exporter of European civilization. Subsequently, by comparison, the other continental empires, built through agglutination of adjacent European territories, are seen by the British as dubious and reactionary states. In this context, the German space, with its lack

²¹² Allan Conrad Christensen, *Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Contagion: 'Our feverish contact,'* London and New York, Routledge, 2005, p.73.

²¹³ See Jean Delumeau, *La peur en Occident. Une cité assiégée (XIVe-XVIIe siècles)*, Paris, Fayard, 1978.

²¹⁴ Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism. 1860-1914*, London, Boston, Sydney, George Allen & Unwin, 1980, p.4.

²¹⁵ *Ibidem.*

²¹⁶ *Ibidem.*

of political and geographical coherence, historic internal rivalries, and its pan Germanic tendencies was prone to absorb and reflect the British fear of a fall into barbarism. This fear was further accentuated by the Crimean War. As a result, Ruskin's vision of the Alps excludes everything but the French-Swiss alpine regions that are associated with a fortified wall complete with battlements and watchtowers. This interpretation is reinforced textually, when Ruskin states that "the valleys only feed; the mountains feed, and guard, and strengthen us."²¹⁷ It is also made visually when Ruskin enlarges a woodcut figure (Fig.18) that depicts a mountain structure as a ruined fortified wall almost to the whole size of the page.

Ruskin reinforces his idea of the Alps as intra-European border against the contagion of semi-civilization by creating three original illustrations: *The Towers of Friburg* (Fig.19), *Things in General* (Fig.20) and *The Law of Evanescence* (Fig.21). Intended to illustrate different effects in the perception of landscape, these illustrations are elaborated based on the same set of methods seen in the analysis of the frontispieces: selection of a detail, elimination of iconographical context, symmetric composition and title comment. Somewhat unexpectedly, Ruskin uses an almost cinematic technique in one of his plates, *Things in General*, this time related to a split screen with a juxtaposition of some hieratic repetitive motifs organized across three horizontal registers. This illustration is preceded by *The Towers of Friburg* and followed *The Law of Evanescence*, which are actually close-ups that describe the themes of the upper and lower registers. The middle register of *Things in General*, contains only one central element, a silhouetted mountain, and therefore makes a symbolic link with the other compositional fields, exposing at the same time the explicit theme of the book, mountain beauty, and also the implicit one, the Alps as a fortified wall in Europe. Ruskin's strategy is completed with the treatment of the title, *Things in General*, which sounds like a vague pythian statement, with no distinct reference to any geographical location, or to any of the pictorial effects supposed to be represented in the illustration.

The split-screen composition considers a real-life motif, a tower of Friburg. By having two generic watchtowers depicted as flanking it, Ruskin transforms the tower into a "fortified tower in general." The mountain silhouette from the middle register is not

²¹⁷ *Works*, VI, 127.

geographically identified, but its formal structure mirrors the multilayered architectural texture of the tower above, which transforms the mountain by association into a “natural fortification in general.” The lower register offers a repetitive abstract, geometric rendition of a tower form, taking the generalization announced in the title to the last level.

The next plate, *The Law of Evanescence*, reprises formally the theme of the lower register from *Things in General* (the succession of abstract tower forms) by repeatedly pairing in a rhythmic, symmetrical, and hieratic composition a stylized watchtower and a simplified mountain peak. The plates are numbered successively, 24, 25, 26, which indicates that they were intended to be seen in this order even though there is almost a chapter distance between *Things in General* and *The Law of Evanescence*. This can be explained by Ruskin’s fear of redundancy which is a recurrent topic in Volume IV - Ruskin explains at one moment that “the faculties are paralyzed by the abundance, and cease, as we before noticed of the imagination, to be capable of excitement.”²¹⁸ Therefore, in order to sustain the attention of his reader, Ruskin makes a pause in the delivery of his visual reasoning which, nevertheless, looks very much like a proto experiment in montage, based on a combination of juxtapositions and close-ups.

2.08. Crimean War and Modern Grotesque

In Volume IV, Ruskin uses a surprising strategy to refer again to the Crimean War. He transforms a footnote on the expressive quality of caricature into a full blown appendix which has nothing to do with either landscape art or mountain geology. In it, he

²¹⁸ *Works*, VI, 168.

criticizes the reception by *Blackwood Magazine* of one of John Leech's caricatures from 1855, *General Février Turned Traitor* (Fig.22), which had been published in *Punch* at the death of the Russian emperor Nicholas I.

Developed under the pretext of explaining what Ruskin calls "expressional art," the appendix, titled "Modern Grottesque," is another apologia to the Crimean war and attacks an old foe of Ruskin's, *Blackwood's Magazine*. This periodical was critical of Turner's late work, and Ruskin's first volumes of *Modern Painters*, as well as the Leech caricature. By developing a note from one of the opening chapters into an appendix, Ruskin manages to frame his entire book by the political context of the time. Ruskin also makes a link with Volume III, as the problem of caricature does not have much to do with the topics discussed in Volume IV but actually completes one of the chapters from the previous volume, "The Ideal Grottesque."²¹⁹

Ruskin begins the appendix to Volume IV by talking about "the dignity of Expression"²²⁰ and sketches the characteristics of its three main schools. First, "the Great Expressional School (consists) of the sincerely thoughtful and affectionate painters"²²¹ and is represented by the Italian Quattrocento and the Victorian Pre Raphaelites. Second, there is "the Pseudo-Expressional School, wholly of modern development"²²² which is characterized by sentimentality and "contempt of color"²²³ and may be academism, although Ruskin does not give any name. Third, "the Grottesque Expressional School"²²⁴ combines power of observation, lack of interest in conventional beauty, wit and malice with a positive and life-affirming attitude. The third school is represented by the medieval sculpture of satirical grotesque as well as by the "rich and various popular caricature"²²⁵ of Ruskin's time. Ruskin goes on to show that this is a genre that is usually chosen by "men of strong intellect and fine sense"²²⁶ who master a "delicate and perfect drawing of

²¹⁹ *Works*, VI, 469.

²²⁰ *Works*, VI, 469.

²²¹ *Works*, VI, 469.

²²² *Works*, VI, 469.

²²³ *Works*, VI, 469.

²²⁴ *Works*, VI, 469.

²²⁵ *Works*, VI, 469.

²²⁶ *Works*, VI, 470.

strange and exaggerated forms quaintly combined.”²²⁷ For example, Ruskin notes that it was occasionally practiced even by great artists like Leonardo da Vinci. Furthermore, he adds that it is also a pure vocational art, being “innate and incommunicable”²²⁸ unlike conventional drawing which, like writing, can be taught to anyone.

Caricature has also a wide audience and can address taboo subjects that would be “inapproachable”²²⁹ for other arts. Furthermore, it combines an eccentric imagination with humanism and a “stern understanding of the nature of evil.”²³⁰ According to Ruskin, caricature’s “perfect manifestation”²³¹ is to be found in three places: the finest old German art, the work of George Cruikshank and the illustrations of the British popular journals which promote through caricature “a bitter, or pathetic spirit of grotesque, to which mankind at the present day owe more thorough moral teaching than to any branch of art whatsoever.”²³²

After establishing the prestige and moral authority of caricature, Ruskin uses John Leech’s example to make the case for a just war in Crimea that, in his words, is supported by Providence. He does not reproduce John Leech’s caricature, but he describes it together with the events that developed around it.²³³

It will be remembered by all that early in the winter of 1854-5, so fatal by its inclemency, and by our own improvidence, to our army in the Crimea, the late Emperor of Russia said, or was reported to have said, that "his best commanders, General January and General February, were not yet come." The word, if ever spoken, was at once base, cruel, and blasphemous; base, in precisely reversing the temper of all true soldiers, so nobly instanced by the son of Saladin, when he sent, at the very instant of the discomfiture of his own army, two horses to Cœur de Lion, whose horse had been killed under him in the mêlée; cruel, inasmuch as he ought not to have exulted in the thought of the death, by slow suffering, of brave men; blasphemous, inasmuch as it contained an appeal to Heaven of which he knew the hypocrisy. He himself died in February...²³⁴

²²⁷ *Works*, VI, 470.

²²⁸ *Works*, VI, 471.

²²⁹ *Works*, VI, 471.

²³⁰ *Works*, VI, 471.

²³¹ *Works*, VI, 471.

²³² *Works*, VI, 471.

²³³ The caricature shows death personified as a skeleton dressed in formal military uniform. Death is depicted bringing a wave of slush into the quarters of Nicholas I who is dying as he holds a paper announcing the defeat of the Russians in the battle of Eupatoria. (Fig.22).

²³⁴ *Works*, VI, p.471.

As the selection of the Leech caricature suggests, it is difficult for Ruskin to integrate the Anglo-Ottoman alliance into his book, which he writes for the very purpose of retrieving primal Christian principles for modern civilization. In Volume III, Ruskin simply refers to the Ottomans using the generic term “our allies.”²³⁵ However, in Volume IV, Ruskin discusses historical events such as the Crusades which he depicts as an honorable encounter, showing that Muslims had “the temper of true soldiers”²³⁶ and behaved nobly towards their contenders. This comes into contrast with the character of Nicholas I who was open to non-standard tactics that allowed him to bypass established rules of warfare. Nicholas I’s character is described as “base, cruel, and blasphemous,”²³⁷ a typical description of barbarity. This stance reflects in fact the tendency of Ruskin’s time to see war as the continuation of policy through other means,²³⁸ and as a legitimate political tool applied when diplomacy has failed, strictly codified and regulated through universal principles and methods,²³⁹ as illustrated in the seminal work (*On War*) by Claus von Clausewitz. Ideally, Clausewitz states, “wars of civilized peoples are less cruel and destructive than those of savages.”²⁴⁰

As John Keegan shows in his book *A History of Warfare*, during the nineteenth century there was an opposition between the notions of “true war,” a supposedly civilized practice based on strict rules of absolute subordination combined with uniformed instruction and theory, and “real war,”²⁴¹ an ancestral and supposedly barbarian culture of war that is non-standardized and therefore chaotically destructive. This is the explication for Ruskin’s anti-Russian stance, which in fact expresses a view of the Russians fashioned during the Napoleonic wars and documented by the same Clausewitz who had been an officer in the tsarist army at the time of the burning of Moscow by the Cossacks. Keegan shows that the term Cossack becomes a common denominator for barbarism

²³⁵ *Works*, V, 415.

²³⁶ *Works*, VI, 472.

²³⁷ *Works*, VI, 472.

²³⁸ “War is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse carried on with other means.” Cited in G.T. David, T.R.Mekelden, *Ideas as Weapons. Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare*, Washington DC, Potomac Books Inc, 2009, p.61.

²³⁹ See John Keegan, *A History of Human Warfare*, New York, Vintage Books. A Division of Random House, Inc., 1993, chap. “War in Human History.”

²⁴⁰ *Ibidem*. p.6.

²⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

during the Crimean war²⁴² as this group's self-serving guerilla-like tactics and insubordination clashed with modern concepts of warfare. According to Keegan, there was an image "that lay buried in the darkest recesses" of the collective memory with which the Cossacks were associated: the "steppe peoples, pitiless, pony-riding nomads whose horsetail standards cast the shadow of death wherever their hordes galloped."²⁴³ Keegan points to the fact that although war in the age of Clausewitz was nothing less than systematic butchery,²⁴⁴ it was still possible to view the Cossacks as barbarians for they represented the ultimate irregular armies, following patterns of behavior opposed to the "gentleman and officer" ethos of the military academies and of "the paid and disciplined forces of the bureaucratic state."²⁴⁵ Although it was a normal practice in Europe for regular armies to recruit irregulars to patrol, reconnoiter and skirmish, the Russian case was special; beginning with the Napoleonic wars, the Cossacks had been integrated into the regular tsarist army having also retained the freedom to practice their traditional warfare methods - loot, pillage, rape, extortion and vandalism - in opposition to the theoretical principles explained by Marshal de Saxe as the basis of the modern Western way of fighting: "l'ordre, la discipline et la manière de combattre,"²⁴⁶

Therefore, with the model of the hybrid Russian army in mind, Ruskin by extension characterizes Nicholas I as "base, cruel and blasphemous"²⁴⁷ for not relying exclusively on organized confrontation. Furthermore, Ruskin criticizes Nicholas I for bringing into equation a fighting force that is impossible to control, which could cause deaths outside of the norm of what was considered to be civilized modern warfare. Furthermore, Ruskin believes that the emperor acted as a master of weather and nature for which he had his just providential punishment. In fact, Ruskin finds that the tsar is not "a true soldier"²⁴⁸ unlike the son of Saladin who, during the Crusades, treated his opponents nobly.

Ruskin picks the Third Crusade as the best historical example to sustain the alliance with the Ottomans. He manages in a single phrase, to present the Third Crusade, a violent and destructive conflict that had brought about huge destruction and human losses, into

²⁴² *Ibidem*, p.9.

²⁴³ *Ibidem.*, p.8.

²⁴⁴ *Ibidem.*

²⁴⁵ *Ibidem.*, p.221.

²⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p.11.

²⁴⁷ *Works*, VI, 472.

²⁴⁸ *Works*, VI, 472.

an almost collaborative endeavor between noble true soldiers: “the temper of all true soldiers, so nobly instanced by the son of Saladin, when he sent, at the very instant of the discomfiture of his own army, two horses to Cœur de Lion, whose horse had been killed under him in the mêlée.”²⁴⁹

John Leech treated a great number of Crimean war subjects in his caricatures, many of them critical of the British military administration. In fact some of Leech’s work exposes downsides in the imperial Anglo-Franco-Turk alliance.²⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in his discussion, Ruskin selects pieces that suit his own argument. For example, he chooses *General Février Turned Traitor*, taking in consideration not only what he considers to be the patriotic message of the illustration, but also the negative reception it received from *Blackwood’s Magazine*. Incidentally, this is the same periodical that gave Ruskin the inspiration for *Modern Painters* some twenty years before when John Eagles had published in its pages his attacks on Turner’s late style (1836, 1842). Turner’s bad reception was followed by the magazine’s harsh critique of the first volumes of *Modern Painters* (1843, 1851) and of Ruskin himself who was derided as a self-appointed arbiter elegantiarum of public taste by the same Eagles (1853) and criticized by Margaret Oliphant shortly before Volume IV was published (1855). Therefore, the appendix (*Modern Grottesque*) can be seen as an elliptic way for Ruskin to dismiss all these critiques by identifying the cultural war played out in *Modern Painters* with the ongoing military one and by identifying *Blackwood’s Magazine* with a semi-barbarian enemy.

During the controversy regarding the war in Crimea, Ruskin remains an unwavering supporter. As we already saw, he even develops his pro-war argument as a conclusion to Volume III of *Modern Painters*. Similarly, he weaves his pro-war statement into the conclusion of Volume IV through an appendix in which he superimposes the anti-Russian alliance onto Turner’s work and, through association, over his own writings. Consequently, by labeling *Blackwood’s Magazine* as unpatriotic and reactionary, Ruskin also implicitly dismisses the earlier criticism of Turner as well as the negative reception of his own theory.

²⁴⁹ *Works*, VI, 472.

²⁵⁰ See Stephanie Markovits, *The Crimean War in the British Imagination*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, chapter “Painters of Modern Life.”

Chapter 3 *Modern Painters Volume V*

3.01. Preliminaries

The fifth and final volume of *Modern Painters* (1860) is divided into four parts. The first one, *On Leaf Beauty*, discusses vegetation and botany. The second, *On Cloud Beauty*, discusses clouds and meteorology. More specifically, in these first two parts Ruskin continues to discuss the mountain subject from the Volume IV, with the vegetation, “the veil of the earth,” seen as a symbol for human subsistence and the clouds as signifiers of spirituality and ethereal transformation of matter. The third part, *On Invention Formal*, and the fourth part, *On Invention Spiritual*, respectively discuss formal and spiritual content in painting. In the last two parts, Ruskin makes a more direct effort to connect his art theory and social theory; here, he advocates the return to traditional Christian values such as compassion and cooperation combined with the pragmatism of the Reformation. Overall, the premises of Volume V are mostly found in the previous volumes, but some parts are also articulated in a compilation of Ruskin’s lectures from the period 1858-1859, *The Two Paths* (1859).

In the four years between the publishing of Volume IV (1856) and Volume V (1860), Ruskin is involved in activities that strongly influence his ideas in the last volume. During this interval, he works on the Turner bequest at the National Gallery, gives public lectures on art, and teaches at the Working Men’s College, a London-based alternative learning institution associated with the Christian Socialist Movement. As a result, his interest in social and economic issues and his critique of capitalism intensify over time, a fact that is evident in his writings.

Ruskin’s thinking in Volume V is also influenced by the Indian Mutiny (1857-1858), which shocks him deeply, and by the associated fear of imperial decline. For

instance, in an 1858 lecture²⁵¹ published in *The Two Paths*, Ruskin speaks very highly of the aesthetics of Indian decorative art, while describing it as a manifestation of moral decay. His lecture on this subject is significantly titled “The Deteriorative Power of Conventional Art over Nations,” and its main idea, that “great success in art [is connected] with subsequent national degradation”²⁵² is reprised in *Modern Painters* Volume V.

In Volume V, Ruskin addresses a favorite theme, the decline and fall of empires. Specifically, in *The Stones of Venice*, he suggests that the main obstacle in building a benevolent empire is an exclusively profit-oriented capitalist economy based on an intensely mechanized process of production. The reason is that such a system transforms the workers into the means of production, mere tools performing simplified and repetitive tasks. Briefly, the danger here is that such a system can reduce workers to a lower ontological status and therefore that system has no moral legitimacy and deserves to fall.

Ruskin’s belief becomes more entrenched after 1856, following a period of collaboration with Christian Socialist groups, when he becomes aware of the everyday realities of working-class life. In fact, he becomes convinced that the inhumane conditions of the time are definitive obstacles to the personal improvement of the working classes, which could only be achieved, in his opinion, through education and training in the arts. Therefore, without embracing an actual socialist ideology, Ruskin envisages a third way: compassionate capitalism, built on the moral reformation of the upper classes and the redistribution of profits toward the common good.

In Volumes III and IV, Ruskin argues that the Crimean War had some positive consequences. For example, he believes that the war raised awareness of the impending crisis of civilization. Furthermore, Ruskin posits that the war could shed light on possible solutions to this crisis and also give some hope of sociopolitical renewal. However, the Indian Mutiny, a threat to the very heart of the Empire, dashes his illusions and instead inspires the darker tone of Volume V as well as a stronger pro-colonialist stance that starts to pervade his art theory.

²⁵¹ In an 1858 conference at the Kensington Museum titled *The Deteriorative Power of Conventional Art Over Nations* published one year later in a compilation of lectures under the title *The Two Paths. Being Lectures on Art and Its Application to Decoration and Manufacture Delivered in 1858-9*, Works, XVI.

²⁵² Works, XVI, 268.

Still, the pessimism is somewhat mitigated by some of the emblematic illustrations that are specifically selected for their subtext of hope and redemption. Two examples are the Volume V frontispiece, an Annunciation titled *Ancilla Domini* (Fig.24) and also the emblematic figure *The Hesperid Aegle* (Western Light) (Fig.28). This contradiction in tone between text and images is explained by the fact that the illustrations for the last volume were actually chosen before the Indian Mutiny and the revision of the text took place. In the prefaces to Volumes III and IV, Ruskin shows that he has already selected the illustrations for (the yet unwritten) Volume V, having even relegated some of them into the Volume III in order to balance their number and foreshadow some of the conclusions.

By the end of Volume V, Ruskin increasingly sees the world as a fight with evil and becomes increasingly convinced of its impending doom. Although Ruskin is generally prone to constructing dichotomies before Volume V, he tends to also be interested in a vision based on the idea of the meeting of contraries, where the antinomies are not necessary mutually exclusive, but could be, under certain conditions, integrated in a flexible whole. However, in Volume V, Ruskin's taxonomic vision becomes more rigid, with a more pronounced Eurocentric and pro-colonialist stance. This attitude is explained in his already mentioned lecture given in 1858, where he outlines an essential antinomy between Scotland and India as a comparison of their decorative staples: tartan and cashmere.

3.02. Tartan and Cashmere, Heaven and Hell

Ruskin's understanding of civilization changes from Volumes III to Volume V. Specifically, in Volume V, it loses some of some of its early qualities of inclusion and diversity, thus introducing new tensions in Ruskin's theories. He initially envisages a permissive British Empire, but, after the Indian Mutiny, Ruskin takes an overt colonialist

stance and even promotes disciplinarian measures. His moral support for military action is initially due to the perceived necessity of prevailing upon other European imperialist powers; specifically, he sees the Crimean War as an occasion to improve upon the anachronistic organization of the British army. However, the Indian Mutiny, a conflict that takes place within the army structure, exposes internal conflicts that run much deeper than was previously thought.

As Winston Churchill shows in his *History of the English Speaking Peoples*, British morale rises dramatically after 1848, sustained by a strong belief in the unstoppable, linear progression of history.²⁵³ The lack of uprisings and the strong economy suggest to the people that British policy, despite occasional snag, is generally on the right path. Specifically, the decision to develop an informal empire bound together by trade relations is vindicated. Furthermore, by this time John Stuart Mill has already affirmed (1836)²⁵⁴ that commerce is the ideal vehicle for the spread of civilization because it necessarily establishes contact and exchange networks and therefore works toward modernization and democracy. Additionally, commerce introduces these adjustments at a pace that makes them easier to accept. Therefore, in light of the optimism created by free-market capitalism (as well as the British victory in Crimea), the Indian Mutiny came as an unpleasant shock to most people and it demanded a revision of the informal imperial approach.

Ruskin is traveling in Scotland when he finds out about the Mutiny. Consequently, he is inspired to compare these two British Imperial territories, India and Scotland. More specifically, after the Indian Rebellion, he constructs a new geographically deterministic dichotomy, between an imaginary moral North and its nemesis, an equally imaginary degenerate South. To illustrate this point, he uses contrasting examples from Scottish and Indian decorative arts. Incidentally, through transference, in Ruskin's imperial narrative, the Highlanders of the British Army are seen as exemplary civilized frontiersmen. Additionally, Ruskin thinks that the Scots enrich the British Empire with their high moral

²⁵³ Churchill argued that this belief was reinforced by Thomas Macaulay's highly popular *History of England* (1848) that celebrated the Splendid Revolution and its aftermath of steady technological and administrative progress.

²⁵⁴ See John Stuart Mill, "Civilization," in John Stuart Mill, *Essays on Politics and Society*, (J. M. Robson, ed.), Toronto, University of Toronto Press, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.

character and great military prowess – traits that are, according to him, characteristic of Northern mountain people.²⁵⁵

As we can see, Ruskin is prone to creating stereotypes to explain cultural taxonomies. However, it is relevant to note that his stereotypes are not definitive as their content fluctuates according to political developments. For instance, in Volume IV, Ruskin praises and welcomes the artistic influence of the South. More specifically, in constructing the French national profile, he describes France not only as the cradle of Christian European civilization but also as a cultural exchange site between North and South. He claims that the Northern religious imagination and the “mental and military power” of the Normans were tempered in French territory with “Arabian, Italian, Provençal or other Southern poetry.”²⁵⁶ This combination gives birth to a specific national spirit that later “reacted upon Southern England and [...] met and mingled” again with a pure Northern religious imagination that was “resting like clouds upon the mountains of Scotland and Wales.”²⁵⁷

Ruskin uses the cloud analogy to represent the national mind. By making this analogy, he suggests that national identity might be elusive and changing, but nonetheless real and material. Ruskin sees the spirit of a nation as a sublimated mix of religion, warfare and poetry acting like a dynamic meteorological phenomenon that hovers above geographic locations, follows the movements and displacements of people and is represented, more or less vaguely, into artistic form. In this specific instance, using the cloud association, he manages even to suggest that the French invasion of England in the Middle Ages was a fortunate encounter of spirits that gave way to a new and perfected national mind.

In Volume IV, Ruskin is still appreciative of the South and has an inclusive vision that tries to link Europe and the Middle East. This syncretistic attitude changes in the aftermath of the Indian Rebellion. Therefore, in Volume V, he emphasizes the fact that the spirits of places can, in their cloud-like traveling, carry the potential of dangerous contamination. In this context, Ruskin imagines a moral cultural North that is

²⁵⁵ *Works*, XVI, 261-263.

²⁵⁶ *Works*, V, 429.

²⁵⁷ *Works*, V, 429.

diametrically opposed to a constructed South.²⁵⁸ As a consequence of this vision, he feels the need to distinguish the different cultures into more rigid stereotypes and looks at art as a criterion for such classification. More specifically, Ruskin believes that consistently prolific and high quality art is characteristic of the South and therefore it must be a sign of moral decay and societal decline. It might be relevant to note that he goes to pains to articulate this creed clearly, which is a rare occasion for Ruskin who usually favors convoluted, metaphorical expressions; he does so in the 1858 lecture at Kensington Museum given under the telling title: *The Deteriorative Power of Conventional Art Over Nations*.²⁵⁹ Additionally, the talk sets the premise for the new imagined geography from Volume V, as will be argued below.

In this 1858 lecture Ruskin again employs a compare-and-contrast approach to demonstrate the role that art should play in society. Using the Indian Mutiny as a backdrop, he describes Scotland as a country with a trying Northern climate and no art, in opposition to India, the land of the ultimate South, with tropical scenery and a spectacular artistic heritage. Furthermore, the Indian Mutiny convinced Ruskin that the Highlanders are the most loyal and courageous of British subjects, while the Indians are the most treacherous and violent. He explains these characteristics by using geographic determinism, pointing to differences in climate between North and South. Being of Scottish origin himself, Ruskin knew Scotland well and loved to travel there on occasion. However, it is relevant to note that he never ventured outside Europe and his India is just a product of the imagination that he constructs in an opposition to his ideal Scottish land. That is to say that in the case of India, Ruskin ignores a myriad of social and geographic divisions and imagines instead a homogeneous entity dominated by the same *spiritus loci*. Furthermore, from a cultural point of view, Ruskin describes India and Scotland as determined culturally by their climate; they are “the races of the jungle and of the moor—two national capacities distinctly and accurately opposed. On the one side you have a race rejoicing in art, and eminently and universally endowed with the gift of it; on the other you have a people careless of art, and apparently incapable of it.”²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ *Works*, VII, 175-178.

²⁵⁹ *Works*, XVI.

²⁶⁰ *Works*, XVI, 262.

The capacity to produce and appreciate art is seen by Ruskin in his 1858 lecture as an attribute that is innate in the South and incidental in the North. To continue on the subject of the Scottish-Indian dualism, Ruskin symbolizes this opposition through perceived national symbols in the field of decorative art: Tartan and Cashmere. He describes Tartan as a minimal effort, simple variations of bars of color in rude square chequers, and Cashmere as “fancied involutions [...] almost inimitable in their delicate application of divided hue, and fine arrangement of fantastic line.”²⁶¹ Moreover, the tartan, in Ruskin’s explanation, is the symbol of a country with no valuable monuments or examples of art, while the cashmere represents a land where “the love of subtle design seems universal in the race, and is developed in every implement that they shape, and every building that they raise.”²⁶² Ruskin also talks about an “extreme energy of baseness” displayed by the lovers of art, an energy which threw them back, during the Mutiny, to primal stages of savagery.²⁶³ Furthermore, according to Ruskin, the Indian decline into barbarism was put in practice deliberately “in the midst of the witnessing presence of [the] disciplined civilization,”²⁶⁴ of the British Empire and this premeditation made the act more condemnable. By the end of his argument, Ruskin superimposes the dualism of Heaven and Hell over his own Tartan and Cashmere. Specifically, he writes that “out of the peat cottage come faith, courage, self- sacrifice, purity, and piety, and whatever else is fruitful in the work of Heaven; out of the ivory palace come treachery, cruelty, cowardice, idolatry, bestiality,—whatever else is fruitful in the work of Hell.”²⁶⁵ Briefly, this comparison of tartan and cashmere helps Ruskin to articulate clearly an idea that he only implied until then, that “great success in art [is connected] with subsequent national degradation.”

He then applies this theory to Europe to once again try to show how art generally promotes indolence, sensuality, and superstition:

²⁶¹ *Works*, XVI, 262

²⁶² *Works*, XVI, 263.

²⁶³ “On the one hand, you have an extreme energy of baseness displayed by these lovers of art; on the other,—as if to put the question into the narrowest compass—you have had an extreme energy of virtue displayed by the despisers of art.” *Works*, XVI, 263.

²⁶⁴ *Works*, XVI, 263.

²⁶⁵ *Works*, XVI, 263.

even where no attack by any external power has accelerated the catastrophe of the state, the period in which any given people reach their highest power in art is precisely that in which they appear to sign the warrant of their own ruin; and that, from the moment in which a perfect statue appears in Florence, a perfect picture in Venice, or a perfect fresco in Rome, from that hour forward, probity, industry, and courage seem to be exiled from their walls, and they perish in a sculpturesque paralysis, or a many-coloured corruption.²⁶⁶

According to Ruskin, in order to avoid these negative effects, art should be controlled so that its content is mainly concerned with nature. To achieve this, artists should be trained to limit themselves to such subject matter and also to avoid formal and technical experiments. To illustrate the downsides of a disassociation between art and nature, Ruskin refers back to the Southern cashmere, the Indian example:

it never represents a natural fact. It either forms its compositions out of meaningless fragments of colour and flowings of line; or if it represents any living creature, it represents that creature under some distorted and monstrous form. To all the facts and forms of nature it wilfully and resolutely opposes itself; it will not draw a man, but an eight-armed monster; it will not draw a flower, but only a spiral or a zigzag. It thus indicates that the people who practice it are cut off from all possible sources of healthy knowledge or natural delight; that they have willfully sealed up and put aside the entire volume of the world, and have got nothing to read, nothing to dwell upon, but that imagination of the thoughts of their hearts[.] Wherever art is practiced for its own sake, and the delight of the workman is in what he *does* and *produces*, instead of what he *interprets* or *exhibits*, — there art has an influence of the most fatal kind on brain and heart, and it issues, if long so pursued, in the *destruction both of intellectual power and moral principle*; whereas art, devoted humbly and self- forgetfully to the clear statement and record of the facts of the universe, is always helpful and beneficent to mankind, full of comfort, strength, and salvation.²⁶⁷

To summarize, for Ruskin, the cashmere symbolizes the narcissistic practice of a corrupt humanity - the “art without nature” of a South where climate allows individuals a more facile survival and thus creates conditions where art is made for its own sake. Inversely, Ruskin sees the tartan as characteristic of a people that have to constantly struggle against harshness of weather and have little time to develop art on a large scale – the “nature

²⁶⁶ *Works*, XVI, 264.

²⁶⁷ *Works*, XVI, 265.

without art” of the North. According to Ruskin, given the pernicious effect of “art without nature,” society should envision and promote the type of art that does not err away from natural facts. Therefore, in order to have a positive role in the community, the artist must not withdraw into the ivory tower of an autonomous aesthetic field but should try to discover and follow the Truth of Nature. This is important to Ruskin because he believes that art can accelerate “the ruin of the nation by which she is practiced.”²⁶⁸ Furthermore, he believes that that the moment the artist begins to contemplate esthetic accomplishment at the expense of the study and interpretation of nature marks the beginning of the fall of his society.

3.03. North and South; discipline and hubris

The North, a rough land but also a (divine) work of art in itself, teaches people morality stemmed from a strict ethic of work. On the other hand, the South is like an experiment designed to learn about how peoples react if offered too much repose. Based on these premises, Ruskin develops in Volume V a theory of the dualism of human nature and by extension, of society. In other words, Ruskin posits that there is a North and a South in every individual and every country. Also, the two poles do not complete each other in an interdependent relationship. Instead, the South has to be kept in check (sometimes violently) by a vigilant North. This antagonism constitutes a major theme of Volume V and Ruskin models it on the biblical model of the fight with temptation.

In Volume V, Ruskin reprises some ideas from the 1858 lecture and creates an environmentally deterministic geo-artistic taxonomy based on the North-South dualism where the North is cast as naturally morally superior to the South. Ruskin takes advantage

²⁶⁸ *Works*, XVI, 269.

of this discussion to further develop his notions of reformed capitalism and civilization. He now firmly adds that of discipline to the principles of compassion and moderation. In Volume III, Ruskin mentions the importance of discipline on a personal and social level as he developed his theodicy-like argument with regard to education and war. In Volume V, Ruskin extends this argumentation to his geographic vision and considers the Northern climate to be “the rough school of the world,”²⁶⁹ where hardship basically generates virtue by imposing a reverence for nature together with a strong work ethic. Briefly, Ruskin presents the North as a vital source of energy for a modern British society that is in danger of falling victim to Southern influences.

Following his tendency for appropriation, Ruskin uses Turner’s work to make his case. He argues that in the historic paintings relating to Carthage, Rome, and Venice, William Turner metaphorically represents the main corrupting forces in history that Ruskin believes to be a threat to the British Empire. These are: the vain pursuit of wealth, power, and beauty. All three temptations are conducive to a self-destructive hubris and are linked with the South. In the second part of Volume V, Ruskin uses two of Turner’s paintings, *The Garden of the Hesperides* (Fig.32) and *Apollo and Python* (Fig.32), to put forward the theme of the never-ending fight with the evil of temptation.

Throughout Volumes III and IV, Ruskin is critical of capitalism and sees it as a pseudo-civilizing force. Specifically, he thinks that the new technology and industry that commerce brings to a place ultimately exhibits a standardizing effect that obliterates diversity and colorful local cultures. In this context, it is interesting to note that in Volumes III and IV Ruskin has a somewhat positive view of what he describes as semi-civilized peoples; Native Americans, Chinese, and Indians.²⁷⁰ He believes these to be organic societies that maintain their individuality and emotional authenticity by adapting themselves to their own environments. While he still refers to them as semi-civilized

²⁶⁹ *Works*, VII, 178.

²⁷⁰ Surprisingly, Ruskin took a light approach even to sati, the old Indian tradition of the self-immolating widows, which was usually one of the main argument for Indian barbarity in the British empire: “...suppose that you have put the Red Indian in tight shoes; taught the Chinese how to make Wedgwood’s ware, and to paint it with colors that will rub off; and persuaded all Hindoo women that it is more pious to torment their husbands into graves than to burn themselves at the burial. Gradually, thinking on from point to point, we shall come to perceive that all true happiness and nobleness are near us, and yet neglected by us; and that till we have learned how to be happy and noble, we have not much to tell, even to Red Indians.” *Works*, V, 381-382.

nations, Ruskin likens these cultures to pre-fifteenth century Europe and Renaissance Venice, the lowest common denominator being partiality to color in visual art:

And this is the reason for the somewhat singular, but very palpable truth that the Chinese, and Indians, and other semi-civilized nations, can color better than we do, and that an Indian shawl or Chinese vase are still, in invention of color, inimitable by us. It is their glorious ignorance of all rules that does it; the pure and true instincts have play, and do their work,—instincts so subtle, that the least warping or compression breaks or blunts them; and the moment we begin teaching people any rules about color, and make them do this or that, we crush the instinct generally for ever. Hence, hitherto, it has been an actual necessity, in order to obtain power of coloring, that a nation should be half-savage: everybody could color in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; but we were ruled and legalized into grey in the fifteenth;—only a little salt simplicity of their sea natures at Venice still keeping their precious, shellfishy purpleness and power; and now that is gone; and nobody can color anywhere, except the Hindoos and Chinese; but that need not be so, and will not be so long; for, in a little while, people will find out their mistake, and give up talking about rules of color, and then everybody will colour again, as easily as they now talk.²⁷¹

It is evident that in Volumes III and IV (before the Indian Mutiny), the Indian Cashmere lacks any negative connotation for Ruskin. In fact, Ruskin admits it as a concept and sees it as an ideal to be imitated by European art. He specifically praises the sense of color that he thinks is representative of man's link to nature. Furthermore, at that time, Ruskin believes that European artists gradually lost the "power of coloring" as a result of the over-rationality of the Renaissance. One exception is Venice, where Ruskin believes that the coloring instinct was kept alive because the area was economically dependent on the sea and maritime activities, thus maintaining a closer interdependence with the natural environment. Ruskin argues that nineteenth century semi-civilized peoples, such as those discussed earlier, could teach the so-called civilized world how to color again and how to retrieve its lost innocence by extension.

However, Ruskin changes this theory of coloring in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny so that in Volume V he no longer suggests Indian and Chinese art as examples to be followed by European artists. In fact, in Volume V, art in general is seen as a dubious

²⁷¹ *Works*, V, 123.

and potentially corruptive influence. Therefore, Ruskin follows the dualism he had developed in the tartan-cashmere argument and superimposes it on the European continent. It is not by chance that he insists on praising Northern England, Northern France, and Northern Italy as cultural landscapes that can teach important lessons to travelers. By Volume V, his vision becomes strictly Eurocentric as he starts looking for a way to balance the North-South dualism in Europe and to find a new unity through the combination of the early original values of Catholicism and Protestantism - spiritual asceticism and contemplation on the one hand and pragmatic action and reform on the other.

According to Ruskin, “the simplest Evangelical faith and the purest Romanist practice”²⁷² could be found in the Highlands and in the Alps. According to him, the reason for this spiritual purity lies in the strong link between society and environment imposed by the harsh alpine climate. For example, in Volume IV he shows that:

always, among Protestants, (...) formalism, respectability, orthodoxy, caution, and propriety, live by the slow stream that encircles the lowland abbey or cathedral; and that enthusiasm, poverty, vital faith, and audacity of conduct, characterize the pastor dwelling by the torrent side. In like manner, taking the large aspects of Romanism, we see that its worst corruptions, its cunning, its worldliness, and its permission of crime, are traceable for the most part to lowland prelacy; but its self-denials, its obediences, humilities, sincere claims to miraculous power, and faithful discharges of pastoral duty, are traceable chiefly to its anchorites and mountain clergy.²⁷³

The words Ruskin uses to describe the best Protestant traits suggest dynamism and action (enthusiasm, audacity), while those describing the Catholic qualities imply stillness and passivity (obedience, humilities). The thing that they both have in common at this level is the renunciation of material gain (poverty, self-denial). As E.T. Cook observes,²⁷⁴ in Volume V, Ruskin extrapolates these considerations where he suggests the conciliation between these two Christian denominations by combining the force of action of the one with the contemplative spirit of other through the binding effect of the ethic of work. Volume V is a step in the development of the future Ruskinian proposition for what he

²⁷² *Works*, VI, 430.

²⁷³ *Works*, VI, 430.

²⁷⁴ *Works*, VII, xliii.

calls a true religion of humanity built on the principle “that the human work must be done honorably and thoroughly.”²⁷⁵

In Ruskin’s opinion, harsh climate imposes a “discipline compelling to action”²⁷⁶ which transforms the North into a kind of natural military academy, or in his words, the “rough school of the world.”²⁷⁷ Inversely, he shows that the South is diametrically opposed, with hot weather and an overabundance of vegetation – what he calls “sultriest heaven;”²⁷⁸ the inhabitants of such landscape can’t help but fall prey to repose and hedonism. Overall, according to Ruskin, peoples of the North learn to see geographic and meteorological realities as lessons in discipline and cooperation. Furthermore, although they may seem to be at a disadvantage compared with the South, Northerners actually are privileged by a more defined closeness to God. This closeness is given by the specific climate which sustains a sacred symbolic interpretation of the world. Here, Ruskin uses the example of the perpetual interplay of rain and sun of the moss land that calls for frequent gazing upon the sky. This means that the inhabitants of the place are continually in touch with one of the most powerful symbols of transcendence that generates instant religious associations:

What they have to separate them from barren rock, namely, their moss and streams, being dependent on (the sky’s) direct help, not on great rivers coming from distant mountain chains, nor on vast tracts of ocean-mist coming up at evening, but on the continual play and change of sun and cloud.

Note this word “change.” The moss-lands have an infinite advantage, not only in sight, but in liberty; they are the freest ground in all the world. You can only traverse the great woods by crawling like a lizard, or climbing like a monkey—the great sands with slow steps and veiled head. But bare-headed, and open-eyed, and free-limbed, commanding all the horizon’s space of changeful light, and all the horizon’s compass of tossing ground, you traverse the moss-land. In discipline it is severe as the desert, but it is a discipline compelling to action; and the moss-lands seem, therefore, the rough schools of the world, in which its strongest human frames are knit and tried, and so bent down, like the northern winds, to brace and brighten the languor into which the repose of more favored districts may degenerate.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ Cited by E.T.Cook in “Introduction,” *Works*, VII, xliii.

²⁷⁶ *Works*, VII, 178.

²⁷⁷ *Works*, VII, 178.

²⁷⁸ *Works*, VII, 179.

²⁷⁹ *Works*, VII, 177-178.

Ruskin shows here how the implicit symbolic effect of the sky is reinforced by the rain itself, which is in fact the most direct way of receiving water, the essence of life. The alternation between sunny and rainy periods during the day is a continual reminder of the force of the two primal elements, light and water, and of their vital role in renewing nature. By “moss-lands,” Ruskin claims he is referring to the European North. However, Denis Cosgrove and John Thornes argue that Ruskin actually refers to the Western and Northern uplands of Britain, characterized in their weather by the passage of the frontal systems²⁸⁰ and by a constant interplay of sunshine and rain.²⁸¹ Cosgrove and Thornes claim that Ruskin then transfers these observations to all of Northern Europe.

Therefore, it follows that Ruskin sees Northern England and Scotland as a symbolic locus that bears the hope of redemption for the whole of modern civilization that is in danger of falling as a result of being tarnished by the hedonistic ideals of the South.

Ruskin suggests that the North of Britain changes the South of the country in the same way Britain changes the world. Therefore, the British North must be the vital source of energy for the whole empire. In making these generalizations, Ruskin is influenced by the specific situation in Britain where the geographic and economic divide gave birth to an antithetical perception of the North as a dark, industrial place and of the South as a luminous, green land. The two representations are often seen in an open conflictual relationship, one of the best known example being Elizabeth Gaskell’s novel, *North and South*. By imagining his utopian North, Ruskin tries also to appease the North-South tension in British society that threatened the cohesion of the metropole at a time when international military conflicts seemed to be endemic.²⁸²

The North-South divide has always been an important theme in British policy and, as Douglas Pocock argues, “the consistent negative portrayal, or plain neglect, of the North of England at the expense of the South in novels and poems, has contributed to a

²⁸⁰ Denis Cosgrove, John E. Thornes, “Of Truth of Clouds: John Ruskin and the Moral Order in Landscape,” in Douglas C.D. Pocock (ed.), *Humanistic Geography and Literature. Essays on the Experience of Place*, London and New York, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2014, p.45, note 52.

²⁸¹ *Ibidem.*, p.36.

²⁸² See also Stephanie Markovits, *Crimean War in British Imagination*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009, chapter “From East to West to *North and South*,” pp. 86-98.

Southern-based or –biased perceptual frame of reference.”²⁸³ Therefore, in order to balance this dualism, measures to propagate a counter-image were periodically put in place. For example, Ruskin’s imagined geography from Volume V offers such a counter-image in which, in Pocock’s words, “physical place is re-placed (...) by an image of a place”²⁸⁴ through an interplay of literature, geography and art. Specifically, Ruskin proposes an ideological construct of a moral and active North that is perpetually bound to the sky through its natural (harsh) environment. However, even if Ruskin uses the term generically, the North he describes is not inclusive. This is similar to instances where he applies his construct of the Alps only to Switzerland and France even though the Alps also cross other countries.

3.04. A moral North in the West

Ruskin’s North is not only defined by snow and ice, but also by lights and shadows projected on the skies. In spite of all the geology, geography, and meteorology that Ruskin employs, his North remains a fictional one, inspired in great part by local and imperial politics. In constructing his North, Ruskin tends to use religious symbolism based on an ascensional suggestion: the look up to the sky in search for a closer proximity to God. The Ruskinian North, as it is depicted in Volume V, is more of a cultural construct than a geographic term - a moral concept related to the idea of a Western Christian Civilization. As is the case with most of his ideological concepts, Ruskin does not offer clear definitions on this subject, but works with insinuation, distortions and implied associations which are sometimes presented with visual aides.

²⁸³ Douglas C.D. Pocock “Introduction: Imaginative Literature and the Geographer,” in Douglas C.D. Pocock, (ed.), *Humanistic Geography and Literature. Essays on the Experience of Place*, London and New York, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2014, pp. 14-15.

²⁸⁴ *Ibidem.*, p.16.

The superimposition of North and West, made in metaphorical terms, is actually present in illustrations from all three volumes, mediated through the idea of sunset, a natural phenomenon that occurs in the West. Actually, most of the drawings that retain an emblematic quality are crepuscular representations from different Northern regions, and Ruskin takes care to emphasize this fact when he mentions them in the text. For example, *St George of the Seaweed*, *Lombard Apennine*, *Land, Lake, Cloud (near Como)*, are images from Northern Italy taken at sunset. In Volume V, Ruskin adds a Northern French emblematic representation to this list, an original drawing called *Light in the West. Beauvais* (Fig.23) that illustrates cloud perspective at twilight.

Light in the West. Beauvais is placed in the middle section of Volume V, in the chapter dedicated to the nature and representation of clouds. While the images selected for this section are accurate renditions of different types of clouds and of cloudscape perspective, the chapter is nonetheless rich in symbolic religious content. An example is the aforementioned illustration, which is in fact an engraving based on one of Ruskin's most popular original watercolors. In it, Ruskin analyzes the theatrical lighting of the crepuscular rays, their rich and almost ineffable textures, and the complex atmospheric perspective they create. The composition is open and horizontal, with strong and dynamic clashes of forms, lights, and shadows. By placing at the base of the representation a small, simplified image of the Beauvais cathedral, Ruskin achieves a sense of compositional stability and religious symbolism. Stylistically, the work shows a marked opposition between the realistic and detailed rendition of the sky and the stylized body of architecture. Like Turner's windmill from Volume IV, the cathedral is silhouetted against twilight, appearing as a hieratic icon that transforms the image from a denominative into a connotative illustration. The building, detached from its urban surroundings, has a generic quality because of the lack of detail, which amplifies its symbolic efficiency.

Considering Ruskin's description of the sky from Volume IV as "waters which rise and float,"²⁸⁵ we can see the Beauvais cathedral as a Ruskinian island-church fastened in a sea of air. In Ruskin's rendition, the cathedral appears surrounded by dark Northern clouds much like San Giorgio in Aliga that was described and represented in Volume III

²⁸⁵ *Works*, VI, 108.

as an island-church rising from dark Northern waves. The Beauvais cloudscape reinforces Ruskin's argument that the Anglo-French alliance of the Crimean War was legitimized through the medieval solidarity of the Christian civilization founded by France at the beginning of the Middle Ages. This idea is first expressed in Volume III²⁸⁶ and is reprised in Volume IV as Ruskin writes an ode to the spire of the church of Calais, the first French monument he encounters when traveling to the Continent.²⁸⁷ Furthermore, in Volume IV, Ruskin describes the rest of his journey through Northern France as a joyful pilgrimage towards the ultimate natural cathedral, the Swiss Alps: "the whole of Northern France (except Champagne), dull as it seems to most travelers, is to me a perpetual Paradise."²⁸⁸

In the case of *Light in the West. Beauvais*, the title plays an important role in building ambiguity and turning the represented landscape into a metaphor. The different geographic references in the title add to the visual presentation and bring to mind Ruskin's symbolic North. Firstly, we sense an ascension, an upwardly look at a panoramic sky. Secondly, we are told it is Beauvais, Northern France, the place of a famous medieval cathedral which Ruskin represents almost hieroglyphically at the base of the composition. Furthermore, instead of simply naming the drawing *Sunset at Beauvais* or *Beauvais Cathedral at Sunset*, Ruskin uses an ambiguous poetical description of the natural phenomenon so that the title can also be interpreted as "Medieval Cathedral in Beauvais is a Light in the West." This symbolism of the sunset as an enlightened Christian West becomes essential by the end of Volume V as I will argue at the end of this chapter when I will analyze the emblematic allegory *Hesperid Aeglé*, titled by Ruskin with a Greek denomination that can be translated as Western Light or as Bright Twilight.

The importance Ruskin places on France brings to mind his support for the Anglo-French alliance during the Crimean War and his admiration for the cathedrals of Northern France. In Volume IV, Ruskin speaks about a common Anglo-French national mind that he believes produced some illustrations of old manuscripts and the cathedrals of the Middle Ages.²⁸⁹ He shows that this homogenous medieval cultural unit was initially a leader in the field of art, but "as the general intellect of the two nations was

²⁸⁶ *Works*, VI, 416.

²⁸⁷ *Works*, VI, 11-12.

²⁸⁸ *Works*, VI, 418-419.

²⁸⁹ *Works*, VI, 408-409.

steadily on the increase (...) their art intellect was as steadily retrograde,"²⁹⁰ which resulted in Italy taking the lead. Ruskin attributes this change to landscape determinism. He claims that

the mountain influence of Italian scenery [induced] a disposition to such indolent or enthusiastic reverie, as could only express itself in the visions of art; while the comparatively flat scenery and severer climate of England and France, fostering less enthusiasm, and urging to more exertion, brought about a practical and rational temperament, progressive in policy, science, and literature, but wholly retrograde in art.²⁹¹

Arguably, Ruskin is referring to the Renaissance period when he proposes these surprising regressive stereotypes that not only brush away all the specificities of the real places but even go against them. He imagines England and France together not only in cultural unity but also as a single geographical territory with typical Northern characteristics - flat landscape, severe weather, active population and a rational collective mentality. Conversely, he sees Italy as a geographical paradox, a mountainous country with a mild climate and an indolent, dreamy and artistic people. In so doing, Ruskin describes a phantasmal land of the past that could sustain his mid-Victorian metaphorical vision about the Anglo-French alliance as a moral North in Western Europe.

3.05. National stereotypes and types of mind

In Volume V, Ruskin delves again into the realm of stereotypes by using the notion of national mind in order to better explain his vision of a past homogeneous Christian society whose spiritual unity was shattered in modern times. He suggests that a national

²⁹⁰ *Works*, VI, 436.

²⁹¹ *Works*, VI, 437.

profile always fluctuates, like a work in progress defined by the fight with evil and temptation, like the North-South duality. In Volume V, Ruskin completes his exercise in stereotyping with Italian and German examples which he illustrates with details chosen almost arbitrarily from the works of Fra Angelico, Salvator Rosa, Giorgione and Albrecht Dürer. Although Ruskin develops this effort in national profiling towards the end of the book, he manages to also place it in the opening of the volume. Specifically, he takes one of the illustrated examples of his argument out of its original context and uses it as a frontispiece. This example is the Madonna from a Fra Angelico Annunciation (Fig.24) that Ruskin chooses to illustrate the idealistic side of the Italian type of mind. By placing this image at the beginning of Volume V, he hints at the fact that the main theme of the book is not the landscape and its representation anymore but his own regressive utopia.

Ruskin chose this particular frontispiece at the last moment, shortly before the book went to print. Even so, it is evident that he selected the image for its emblematic quality, in the same way he did with the other two frontispieces, chosen as “properly introductory to (the) whole subject.”²⁹² By transforming the Fra Angelico reproduction into the frontispiece, Ruskin affirms again his appreciation for the Italian primitives whom he sees as representatives of a time of sincere piety, innocence, and hope. Arguably, he wants also to emphasize the importance of the Italian culture at a moment when Italy’s faith was in balance, seeing that Volume V was finished during the Second Italian War of Independence (1859).

This major nineteenth-century European war saw a French-Sardinian alliance opposing the Austrian Empire that at the time was ruling the Northern Italian regions.²⁹³ When the conflict broke out, Ruskin was in German territory making, at his father’s insistence, a last field trip before putting the finishing touches on the last volume of *Modern Painters*. As an admirer of the Second French Empire, Ruskin was passionately against the British decision to not intervene on behalf of the French-Sardinian alliance. Therefore, he wrote a series of open letters to the press which also detailed some of his

²⁹² *Works*, VI, 4.

²⁹³ The Second Italian War of Independence culminated in the infamous battles of Magenta and Solferino (1859), with huge human losses that triggered the establishment of the First Geneva Convention and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

cultural constructs.²⁹⁴ For instance, in a letter published in *The Scotsman* during the war (July 1859), Ruskin compares the conflict to some fourteenth century ones between Austria and Switzerland. Incidentally, Ruskin gets confused in trying again to classify the characteristics of the German national mind, as the reality of the region and of the political situation was too complex and nuanced to be easily comprised under just a few, unifying traits. In his letter, he compares the Austrian soldiers with the Highlanders, the Indians and the Prussians only to create in the end a generalized category of the German army: magnificent soldiery fighting for beer and Vaterland without questioning authority or having a moral system of values.²⁹⁵

We see that Ruskin easily returns to his obsessive anti-German trope that symbolizes all his fears for the future of his imagined benevolent empire. Still, there is a difference of attitude in Volume V as opposed to the previous volumes, as Ruskin tries now to build a more balanced argument. His field-trip through German land made him aware of the diverse reality of the place and as a consequence he stops stretching his reductive tendencies to the extreme. Although Ruskin does not cease to criticize the art and policy of the German Confederation, he begins to admire certain aspects of German culture such as German food, the splendor of Prussian military parades, the beauty of German women and the quality of the collections of old masters in German galleries.²⁹⁶ Therefore, in Volume V, Ruskin abstains from the kind of drastic exaggeration about German culture that he displays in the previous books (as was the case for instance of Volume IV where he affirmed at one moment that, although he did not have “historical knowledge enough to prove it,” he was sure that the Germans had an absolute joy in ugliness that stemmed from “the habits of sedentary life, protracted study, and general derangement of the bodily system in consequence” to which were added “general vice, cruelty, and dissipation”).²⁹⁷ As a result of his 1859 German immersion, in the last volume of *Modern Painters* Ruskin tries to amend his caricatural take on German culture by looking at some of Dürer’s works in order to find the positive qualities of the German national mind. Although he remains critical of the modern Germans, Ruskin goes back in

²⁹⁴ E.T.Cook, “Introduction,” *Works*, VII, lv.

²⁹⁵ The letters were also published during his life in a compilation; see John Ruskin, *Arrow of the Chace*, Boston, Dana Estes and Company, 1891, pp.209- 213.

²⁹⁶ See E.T. Cook, “Introduction,” *Works*, VII, lv-lvi.

²⁹⁷ *Works*, VI, 400.

time to see how he could integrate them into his imagined harmonious medieval Europe and to explain why they have changed.

Ruskin chooses a reproduction after Dürer (Fig.27) to illustrate a type of mind that he thinks is still present in Episcopalian Protestantism.²⁹⁸ He uses this reproduction as a figure, which means that it is a xylography that has no title associated with, being numbered only (as figure 100). What makes it stand out in the visual economy of the book is the fact that it is a single leaf woodcut, taking the space of a whole page. This is rare occurrence in *Modern Painters*, where the figures are usually disseminated throughout the text, as opposed to the plates which are displayed separately.

Figure 100 represents a bishop holding a missal in one hand and the pastoral staff in another. It is a solemn and hieratic representation with an enhanced expressive quality that comes from a delicate woodcutting technique that favors stronger contrasts and more vibrant lines than those of metal engraving. The silhouette is contoured with a distinct and fluid line that foreshadows the Glasgow School sinuous outline. By aggrandizing the image and by giving it a special compositional treatment Ruskin transcends its denotative role and accentuates its symbolic significance. He explains in the text that this is a representation of the type of mind during Dürer's times, when German culture was at its best, before falling pray to the temptations of modern times.²⁹⁹

This pre-modern German national mind is, according to Ruskin, "severely rational and practical, yet capable of the highest imaginative religious feeling"³⁰⁰ and therefore, attempting to synthesize the best qualities of both North and South. However, the synthesis can not be perfectly achieved because there is "some defect still in intellect," and, although nobly prevailing over evil, it is not "so entirely victorious as to conquer sadness."³⁰¹ In other words, Ruskin believes that the essential flaw of the German mind is melancholy which can determine pessimism and intellectualism and he uses Dürer's engraving *Melancholia* to prove his point.³⁰²

It is a notable change for Ruskin to place the German mind so close to spiritual perfection. The reason for this unusual appreciation is his new view of medieval Europe,

²⁹⁸ *Works*, VII, 372.

²⁹⁹ *Works*, VII, 372.

³⁰⁰ *Works*, VII, 372.

³⁰¹ *Works*, VII, 372.

³⁰² *Works*, VI, 312-314.

as a slightly larger community, integrating also the German space which had been until then so categorically criticized. Ruskin illustrates his stance with impressions from his 1859 passage through Nürnberg, Dürer's hometown, including a local landscape sketch which, he thought, retained the specific atmosphere of the close knit community from Dürer's time. He then comes back to his old stance against German philosophy to explain why modern Germany has fallen from grace. He states that the German type of mind is that of the thinker and as such it favors the development of philosophy which is a "dangerous profession (and) from the time of the Aristophanes thought-shop to the great German establishment (...) has been often harmful enough to mankind."³⁰³ Ruskin implies that a process similar to capitalist industrialization took place in the academic realm, and in the German speaking land this process was carried to the extreme. He deplores the loss of traditional manufactures like those of "the older and more serviceable commodities of Nürnberg toys and Berlin wool," abandoned in favor of the "thought-manufactory"³⁰⁴ that became instead, in his view, a national trade mark.

Ruskin considers that Dürer's bishop represents a collective mentality, a type of mind. He states that there is a hierarchy of the different types of mind based on the moral force they gain in the fight with temptation. As the types of mind are reflected in artistic representations, therefore there must be a hierarchy of art that should be based on the moral criterion. Furthermore, Ruskin presents the different stages of the collective mind based on old masters' works, which he considers to be representatives of the nations they represent. Of course, Ruskin applies the modern concept of nation retrospectively to a time when European political entities were differently structured, which does not help the coherency of his argument. He uses examples from Philips Wouvermans, Salvator Rosa, Fra Angelico, Dürer, and Giorgione, but he does not illustrate all of them. Ruskin establishes that there are two basic types of mind: the carnal, best represented in painting by Wouvermans,³⁰⁵ and the spiritual, best seen in the work of Fra Angelico.³⁰⁶ Wouvermans is not reproduced at all, while Angelico (Fig.24) is on the frontispiece. As in the case of the North-South duality, these two types are not equivalent and the spiritual

³⁰³ *Works*, VII, 201.

³⁰⁴ *Works*, VII, 200.

³⁰⁵ "the unredeemed, carnal appetite for mere sensual pleasure." *Works*, VII, 372.

³⁰⁶ "an entirely spiritual mind, wholly versed in the heavenly world, and incapable of conceiving any wickedness or vileness whatsoever." *Works*, VII, 373.

one has more value. Even if a combination of them is possible, the mix is always unstable as the carnal side has to be confronted and repressed. Ruskin identifies three main types that can be born from this confrontation and that he thinks are represented in painting. For him, Salvator exemplifies a type of mind that fights temptation but loses the battle,³⁰⁷ while Dürer shows a type that wins the confrontation but its victory is marred by regret.³⁰⁸ Salvator (Fig.26) is illustrated in an insignificant manner as a small detail lost inside the text while the Dürer (Fig.27) example takes a whole page. Finally, Ruskin affirms that there is also a perfect type of mind represented in Giorgione's work, a type that wins the fight with temptation and achieves harmony between spiritual contemplation and pragmatic action.³⁰⁹ Moreover, Giorgione's image is not only an example in this type-of-mind taxonomy, but it is also the sole illustration of an entire later chapter, "Hesperid Aegle"(Fig.28).

In order to make his case, Ruskin builds an elaborate, associative, non linear presentation. He combines text, woodcut figures, and engraved plates that are not always presented in successive order and require the reader to go back and forth between chapters. By choosing to under-reproduce or in some cases to not reproduce at all his negative examples, Ruskin actually tries to hide the weakest points of his argument. While he can venture to make exaggerated assumptions and generalizations in the text helped by his arsenal of figures of speech and additive associations, it is impossible to find images that could sustain his reductive negative categories especially when he transfers them to peoples and countries.

Ruskin also uses this strategy of selective reproduction to sustain his art taxonomy, as the importance given to the presentation of a certain image suggests the place of the painter in Ruskin's proposed hierarchy. For instance, Wouvermans does not even get to be visually represented as Ruskin mentions that his painting is too well known; Salvator Rosa's example, printed as Figure 99, has the smallest dimensions; Dürer's image, although it takes up a whole page and is carefully composed, is not an engraved plate and has no title. Meanwhile, Fra Angelico and Giorgione have a special treatment: their

³⁰⁷ "an awakened conscience, and some spiritual power, contending with evil, but conquered by it, and brought into captivity to it" *Works*, VII, 372.

³⁰⁸ "nobly prevailing over evil, yet no so entirely victorious as to conquer sadness." *Works*, VII, 372.

³⁰⁹ *Works*, VII, 372.

reproductions are engraved and placed strategically to frame the main body of text in Volume V. Moreover, Ruskin makes another effort of appropriation by giving them new, symbolic titles and emblematic roles in his book. Fra Angelico's piece becomes *Ancilla Domini* (Lord's Handmaiden) signifying spirituality and retreat from the world, and Giorgione's fragment becomes *The Hesperid Aegle* (Western Light) signifying spirituality and reforming action.

3.06. *Ancilla Domini*

Ancilla Domini (Fig. 24) was chosen as a frontispiece at the last minute, as it was initially conceived as plate number 77, to be placed together with the other examples in Ruskin's exposition of the hierarchy of the types of mind. The frontispiece is an engraved reproduction of a detail of one of Fra Angelico's reliquaries known as *Annunciation and Adoration of the Magi*.³¹⁰ The detail is taken from the *Annunciation* panel and represents the Madonna seated with a missal in her lap, in front of a flat and decorative background. Today, Fra Angelico's original work is housed in the Museo di San Marco in Florence, but Ruskin had seen (and sketched) it at the sacristy of Santa Maria Novella.

Elisabeth Helsinger remarks that the frontispiece's "meaning seems to exceed its designated illustrative function,"³¹¹ its purpose being "to serve as an emblem for the religious role of art generally—and hence to be an effort by Ruskin to dedicate even this last volume to the service of God, despite gloomy conclusions on the possibility of

³¹⁰ See Laurence B. Kasden, Pia Palladini, *Fra Angelico*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005, p.149.

³¹¹ Elisabeth Helsinger, *Ruskin and the art of the Beholder*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1990, p.293.

definite faith which fill the last part of the volume.”³¹² However, Helsinger does not include it in her analysis of Ruskin’s double-works because there still remains the possibility that it may have been a hasty improvisation after an initial plate fell through. Incidentally, this is also the opinion of the editors of the library edition of Ruskin’s works even if they did not find any further corroborative information.³¹³

It is interesting to note that when Ruskin raised *Ancilla Domini*’s status from regular plate to frontispiece he did not fill its initial place on the list of illustrations with another image, and did not adjust the numbering, which created a gap in the succession of the plates, jumping from plate 76 directly to 78. This gap was not rectified in the following reprints either, and was reprised as such by Cook and Wedderburn in the definitive library edition of the complete works. Seeing that the editions that were reissued during Ruskin’s lifetime had all been revised and annotated by the author himself, this gap in the numbering of the plates appears more as an intended interactive strategy than as a perpetuated slip. Therefore, if we consider Ruskin’s habit of amending his own work at the last minute to reflect political events, the Fra Angelico frontispiece could be seen not only as the result of an accident but also as a revision under the influence of the latest European events, like the Second Italian War of Independence (1859).

Ruskin chooses for his frontispiece an Italian Madonna from the Early Renaissance, a period which he considers to be an age of positive action, hope and faith. He speaks about this in Volume IV, when he compares Ghirlandaio’s and Claude’s views of Pisa, presented in the previous chapter. Throughout the last volumes of *Modern Painters*, Ruskin speaks about Early Renaissance art as the reflection of a time when the continent was united by an unbroken Christian devotion, before the corruption of Catholicism and the Protestant split. In the presentation of the types of mind, Ruskin uses *Ancilla Domini* also as an example of spiritual art made by a monk artist who had no conception of evil, as opposed to the artists of late Renaissance, like Salvator Rosa, who succumbed to

³¹² *Ibidem*, note 16.

³¹³ “the drawing from Angelico. “Ecce Ancilla Domini,”(sic) was (...)to have been No. 77, and to have been inserted at p. 369, but it was afterwards used as the Frontispiece: presumably an illustration that Ruskin had intended for frontispiece fell through at the last moment. In order not to disturb the original numbering, the number 77 has similarly been skipped in all subsequent editions.” ET Cook, Alexander Wedderburn, “Bibliographical Note,” *Works*, VII, lxxi.

mundane temptations. This is an opposition that Ruskin generally refers to as pre and post Raphaelism in art, reflecting the mid Victorian cultural wars that often used Italian art as a veiled way to express political attitudes.³¹⁴ Pre-Raphaelitism was also the name of the new national British school of painting and poetry, a movement that caused great critiques and debates after it was publicly launched in 1848. Ruskin was a supporter and mentor of the Pre-Raphaelites and echoes of his position are found in Volume V's frontispiece.

The title of the frontispiece is derived from the expression "Ecce Ancilla Domini" (This is the Handmaiden of the Lord), which figures in the Latin version of the *Gospel of Luke* and in the Catholic prayer *Angelus*, but which is also the title of one of Dante Gabriel's Rossetti's most well known early paintings.³¹⁵

Rossetti had sparked a fierce public debate in the 1850s with his *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (also an Annunciation) (Fig.25) in which he challenged the conventions of religious representation. Rossetti wanted to revive and Victorianize Early Renaissance religious art by combining a realistic contemporary portrait with a compressed spatial representation, minimalist palette, and catholic symbolism. Dante Gabriel Rossetti was a member of the High-Church, an anglican orientation more open to catholic practices, and he was also heavily influenced by the mid-Victorian Oxford Movement, which tried to reinstate the original traditions of Catholicism. Furthermore, Ruskin himself lived through a moment of religious crisis in 1858, when he renounced his strict evangelical faith and became open to High Church influences. Therefore, although the Annunciation that Ruskin uses for the frontispiece is not iconographically close to Rossetti's, by giving it a similar title Ruskin hints at his support for the Pre-Raphaelites, which he believed had the potential of reviving British painting, and acknowledges his new syncretic vision that looks for ways to return to an imagined genuine, pre-modern unity in Europe. He combines Fra Angelico with Rossetti and blends together old-Italy and new-Britain to

³¹⁴ As Maura O'Connor showed, during the nineteenth century, Italy was conceptualized in Britain as a repository of European culture and played a major role in English political imagination. See Maura O'Connor, *The Romance of Italy and the English Political Imagination*, New York, Saint Martin's, 1998.

³¹⁵ The association with Rossetti's title seems to be made automatically at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century as is proved by the editors of *The Library Edition* of Ruskin's works who mention the Fra Angelico frontispiece with the title of Rossetti's painting instead of the abbreviated one chosen by Ruskin. See *Works*, VII, lxvi.

talk about the renewal of the empire through the return to earlier Christian values of devotion and spirituality. Moreover, frustrated by British non-intervention policy during the Second War of Italian Independence, Ruskin expresses his stance by choosing the Fra Angelico reproduction as a frontispiece and making it the symbol of his regressive ideal of a continental homogeneity.

Throughout all the last three volumes of *Modern Painters*, Ruskin's attempts to describe and taxonomize national characters through art representations are marred by inconsistency and confusion, as he unapologetically lets his biases permeate his writing. Therefore, as political events continue to unfold, Ruskin continues to develop his propositions by adding nuances and associations that accumulate into an amalgam of compounded polarities supporting Joep Leerssen's observation that "the ultimate cliché about any nation is that it is 'a nation of contrasts'."³¹⁶

Ruskin tries to explain his confusing superimposition of images and counter-images by the inherent duality of human nature caught in a continuous confrontation with the temptation of hubris. The results of this confrontation are variable, determining different types of mind. These types shift in time following not only geographical conditions but also political and cultural events and their different forms are depicted in art. The examples he uses are chosen based on specific connotations that he thinks are relevant for Victorian Britain. For instance, Fra Angelico and Salvator Rosa represent pre and post Raphaelism, or the old aristocratic ethos and the new middle-class one. To these, Ruskin adds Giorgione who opens the way to a number of associations with Britain. Venice has already been used by Ruskin as Britain's historical alter-ego and Giorgione was an iconic Venetian master whose name was also reminiscent of St George: Christian martyr, victor in the symbolic confrontation with evil, and patron saint of England.

Ruskin complicates further the web of allusions and comparisons built around Giorgione's example by weaving in Turner's work and biography, classical mythology and critique of industrial Britain. Both Giorgione and Turner are fictionalized to fit Ruskin's views and arguments and the image to represent Giorgione's work is modified

³¹⁶ Joep Leerssen, "Image," in Manfred Beller, Joep Leerssen (ed.), *Imagology. The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, Amsterdam, New York, Rodopi, 2007, p. 344.

and given a new name: *The Hesperid Aeglé* (Fig 28). Ruskin constructs another emblematic figure that becomes crucial for the second part of the book as he uses it not only to build his argument on the different types of mind, but also to illustrate two entire chapters dedicated to the analysis of two of Turner's mythological works: *The Goddess of Discord Choosing the Apple of Contention in the Garden of the Hesperides* (Fig.31) and *Apollo and Python* (Fig.32), neither of which being reproduced in the book.

3.07. The healing power of The Hesperid Aeglé

The Hesperid Aeglé depicts a seminude in contrapposto, referencing one of Giorgione's frescoes, painted cca.1508, on an exterior wall, under the roof of Fondaco dei Tedeschi (The German Trading House) in Venice.³¹⁷ Ruskin's rendition is in fact a reproduction of another reproduction, as he uses Anton Maria Zanetti's 1760 engraving after the original³¹⁸ (Fig.29) as a source for *The Hesperid Aeglé*. However, in his rendition, Ruskin brings the depicted character closer to the viewer and transforms the original standing figure into a torso.

The fresco was badly damaged but that did not stop Ruskin to consider it one of the greatest works of Giorgione and an example of the strength of Venetian art "derived from acceptance of natural truth."³¹⁹ In his view, it depicts also the perfect Italian type of mind, a type that existed in Venice at the beginning of the sixteenth century when the glory of

³¹⁷ Now at the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice.

³¹⁸ Published in Anton Maria Zanetti "the Younger," *Varie Pitture a Fresco de' Principali Maestri Veneziani*, Venice, 1760, See Ian Bliss, "Comments by Zanetti, 1760, and Zanetti, 1771, on the colour of Giorgione and Titian," note to the *Electronic Edition of Modern Painters*, volume I, <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/ruskin/empi/notes/izcgt01.htm>, 14 March 2014 and *Dictionary of Art Historians*, <http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/zanettia.htm>, 14 March 2014.

³¹⁹ *Works*, VII, 439.

La Serenissima was at its height. This type of mind is superior even to the spiritualist one depicted by Angelico because it is interested not only in the reverie of devotion but also in transformative action. In Ruskin's view, before falling prey to material temptation, Venice represented the meeting of a "high spiritual power and practical sense ... with entirely perfect intellect, contending with evil; conquering it utterly, casting it away for ever, and rising beyond it into magnificence of rest."³²⁰ Giorgione's fragmentary figure becomes the emblem of an ideal nation engaged in a process of reform.

As Ian Bliss shows, in order to build his cases, Ruskin does not hesitate to make categorical judgments about Giorgione's paintings, even if he is not really acquainted with his work.³²¹ It is also the case of *The Hesperid Aegle* which Ruskin needs to present as an illustrious example in order to legitimate its emblematic status and therefore, he constructs a prestigious aura around it. Ruskin uses Giorgione mainly for ideological reasons, more specifically to draw comparison between early Renaissance Venice and contemporary Britain. Ruskin refers to the painter as "George of Georges" and "George of the Brave Castle"³²² referencing St George, the ultimate British identity marker. Similarly in Volume III (and in *The Stones of Venice*), Ruskin had translated the name of the Venetian church, San Giorgio in Aliga, to Saint George of the Seaweed presenting it as an island-church that was, like the British Isles, surrounded by dark, Northern types of waves (and not by the blue, Southern ones).³²³

Furthermore, Ruskin sees Giorgione also as a homologue of Turner from the past and finds it telling that Turner was born on the 23rd of April, St George's day. In the chapter "The Two Boyhoods" Ruskin describes Giorgione living in a spectacular Venice as in a sort of golden New Jerusalem that supposedly inspired him to create bright visions of hope like the nude on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi.³²⁴ Meanwhile, some hundred years later, Turner lived in a polluted industrial city and was crushed by the infernal life of modern London. However, the profound sympathy he felt for the struggles of common

³²⁰ *Works*, VII, 372.

³²¹ For instance, Ruskin refers at one time to the *Castelfranco Madonna* as one of the two best pictures in the world, even if he knew it only as an engraving. See Ian Bliss, "Ruskin's Knowledge of Giorgione's Work," note to the *Electronic Edition of Modern Painters*, volume I, www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/ruskin/empi/notes/izorz03.htm, 14 March 2014.

³²² *Works*, VII, 374.

³²³ *Works*, X, 4-5.

³²⁴ *Works*, VII, 374-388.

people made him still see a gleam of hope; according to Ruskin, he codified this sentiment in his work by studying and representing constantly the light of sunset, a calming red glow after a day of toil. This was considered by Ruskin to be not only the main characteristic of Turner's art but also an innovation in English painting.³²⁵ Turner's sunset light is thus a symbol of healing and hope in an ominous, industrial world. To illustrate it Ruskin uses Giorgione's vermillion nude which he considers to be a perfect allegory of this symbolic sunset under the title *The Hesperid Aeglé*, Western Brightness.

Ruskin develops his argument at length, throughout the last chapters of Volume V, as a prophetic sermon built on digressions and associations from a large array of fields: classical languages and mythology, art history, theology, and literature. He uses *The Hesperid Aeglé* as a visual aide in recoding Turner's work through a complex strategy based on remediation and intermediation. Ruskin filters Giorgione's fresco through Zanetti's print, through Turner's oil painting and through his own engraved representation. He attaches to it a convoluted narrative about the never-ending fight with temptation and also about the need to retrieve a lost balance between spirituality and pragmatic action in order to heal the wounds inflicted by modern capitalism and to deter the fall of empire.

Despite the avalanche of explanations and implications, Ruskin's discourse remains elliptical, as he does not always give all the premises of his reasoning. For instance he does not signal the fact that Giorgione's nude was chosen as a Turner-like illustration also because it resembles the semi-nude mythological figures from *The Garden of the Hesperides*. As Ruskin does not actually show Turner's painting, the comparison remains to be made only by the initiated readers, those who are acquainted with Turner's work. This comparison requires a mental process of juxtaposition similar to Ruskin's strategy of explaining an image by focusing on a single selected detail. As we saw in the case of some illustrations from Volume IV, usually Ruskin's intention is to approach and enter the image mentally, but in the case of *The Hesperid Aeglé* he goes in the opposite direction, by pretending to lift a character out of the picture, to bring her closer to the viewer and introduce her by name.

³²⁵ *Works*, VII, 413.

Hesperid/hesperian, meaning Western or Occidental is derived from the Greek word *hesperios*, which designates at the same time the evening and the West. Aeglé, brightness in Ruskin's translation, is the name of one of the Hesperid nymphs, the one that is most often mentioned in classical sources. Ruskin develops a long exposé on classical mythology and etymology in order to anchor and sustain the deep significance of Aeglé, the singing nymph with calming, healing powers, as the most positive presence from the whole hesperian group.³²⁶ He attaches the word Hesperid to Aeglé, as if it were a surname, in an effort to suggest and to link together the natural phenomenon of the sunset (brightness of the evening) with the cultural construct of the enlightened/reformed West (brightness of the West.) This allegorical name brings to mind the emblematic title *Light in the West. Beauvais*, which was used in the first part of Volume V to describe the crepuscular rays, and also to symbolize the regressive Ruskinian ideal of an uncorrupted Christian Europe.³²⁷

The Hesperid Aeglé is used as main illustration for two of the final chapters of Volume V. These chapters are dedicated to describing, analyzing, and practically re-codifying two mythological paintings by Turner that Ruskin thought had a common theme – the fight against evil.

The first one, *The Garden of the Hesperides* (1806) (Fig.31) is a large composition grouping a number of mythological figures in a wide landscape, recounting the moment when the goddess of discord came after the golden apple that would later start the Trojan War. As discussed in the Volume IV section, Ruskin tends to select a single element of a

³²⁶ This approach shows the extent of Ruskin's new syncretistic vision. By Volume V he arrives to fully accept and integrate classical mythology into his approach. This places Volume V in opposition to Volumes I and II, which were heavily influenced by the early exclusive evangelicalism and anticlassicism of the author. In fact, Volume V marks the final point of an arc in Ruskin's personal development and also the beginning of a new stage in his life – a time of political involvement on one hand and doubt in the redemptive power of art on the other.

³²⁷ Ruskin had seen the Venetian fresco for the first time in 1845 as it is mentioned in a letter to his parents where he talks about "a fragment or two of Giorgione (...) purple and scarlet, more like a sunset than a painting."³²⁷ (Harold I. Shapiro, *Ruskin in Italy. Letters to his Parents, 1845*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1972, p.219). In time, this short and somewhat dismissive account is charged with Ruskin's accumulating interests and obsessions becoming in 1860 an over-charged, flamboyant interpretation that still retains at the core his initial impression, a sunset glowing on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. The location of the fresco must have been relevant for Ruskin, who looked for symbols and significations everywhere. Therefore, having the old headquarters of the German merchants in Venice marked with an allegory of the sunset made by "George of Georges," was like a confirmation of Ruskin's regressive utopia which now accepted also the medieval bishops and manufacturers from Nürnberg and Berlin.

painting and use it as a key to his interpretation of the work in question. In the same way he used the carriage, a small detail, to explain the meaning of Turner's *Pass of Faido*, he singles out a small dragon sitting on the mountaintop in *The Garden of the Hesperides*. The dragon is for Ruskin a symbol of the evil of greed, Mammon, which echoed the miltonian imagery of *Paradise Lost*.

The second of Turner's mythological works illustrated by *The Hesperid Aeglé* is *Apollo and Python* (1811). This is also a large horizontal oil painting depicting the god of light and poetry resting after his fight with Python. Although Apollo seems to have won the confrontation, as the monster dies bleeding in front of him, the victory is mitigated by the apparition of a small serpent from the open wound of the dying monster. In this case, too, Ruskin selects the most significant detail to explain the meaning of the work. He chooses to focus on the new-born creature which he calls the corrupter and the treasure-destroyer.³²⁸ In his view, the small serpent symbolizes the intrinsic duality of the world, the eternal nature of evil, the never-ending battle that must be fought against it.

In both of these paintings, evil is symbolized by fantastic beasts reminiscent of the satanic dragon and the infernal snake from Milton's religious epic *Paradise Lost*. Moreover, in the classical stories, Ladon, the Hesperian dragon, and Python, the Delphic serpent, are killed in heroic confrontations that mirror St George's Christian legend. The paintings are described in Ruskin's evocative word-painting style but none of them are reproduced. Instead, they are illustrated with the allegorical figure based on Giorgione's nude, *The Hesperid Aeglé*. In this way Ruskin can control more efficiently his complicated strategies of persuasion; instead of being obliged to stay close to the image, he can digress and accumulate his usual layers of associations. In fact, Ruskin uses the two Turner works as a basis for the construction of a personal moral parable about the dangers of excess, more specifically, excess of power, wealth and beauty. His aim in so doing is to show, legitimized by the combined authority of Turner and Giorgione, that these apparently positive attributes can be harmful in the absence of equal distribution and therefore could cause the dissolution of society.

Ruskin conducts a complex analysis of *The Garden of the Hesperides* in which he ultimately sees Turner's forewarning about the dangers that threaten modern Britain. *The*

³²⁸ *Works*, VII, 420.

Garden of the Hesperides blends in Ruskin's syncretistic vision with the mythological Hesperian Isles, or Fortunate Isles, that have been used since Elizabethan times, as a synecdoche for Britain.³²⁹ Ruskin believes that Turner, like himself, was studying the causes of the fall of European Empires and metaphorically revealing his results in his paintings through the use of classical and historical subjects. Therefore, he suggests that *The Garden of the Hesperides* is in fact a distillation of three of Turner's recurrent historical subjects, namely Carthage, Rome, and Venice. Each of these stood as an example for the three corruptive powers: Carthage "showing the death which attends the vain pursuit of wealth; Rome, showing the death which attends the vain pursuit of power; Venice, the death which attends the vain pursuit of beauty."³³⁰ This hubris is due, in his view, to the decline of the Christian faith and the rise of materialism, which gave way to modern Europe as an accumulation of different national characters with no spiritual link between them. Ruskin showed that

rising between the infancy of Reformation, and the palsy of Catholicism;—between a new shell of half-built religion on one side, daubed with untempered mortar, and a falling ruin of outworn religion on the other, lizard-crannied, and ivy-grown;—rose, on its independent foundation, the faithless and materialized mind of modern Europe—ending in the rationalism of Germany, the polite formalism of England, the careless blasphemy of France, and the helpless sensualities of Italy; in the midst of which, steadily advancing science, and the charities of more and more widely extended peace, are preparing the way for a Christian church, which shall depend neither on ignorance for its continuance, nor on controversy for its progress; but shall reign at once in light, and love.³³¹

In this statement Ruskin actually proposed a vision for the future based on a dialectic movement: outworn religions meet with advancing science to give way to a Neo-Christianity that combines sense and sensibility, reason and emotion. However, the main obstacle in achieving this harmonious state is the strict specialization and professional separation that take place in modern times. Ruskin illustrates his point by comparing "a

³²⁹ As it is attested by Robert Herrick's *The Hesperides* and Ben Jonson's *The Fortunate Isles and their Union*. See H. David Brumble, *Classical Myths and Legends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Dictionary of Allegorical Meanings*, Chicago, London, Routledge, 2013, p.170

³³⁰ *Works*, VII, 437.

³³¹ *Works*, VII, 327.

monk of La Trappe, a French soldier of the Imperial Guard, and a thriving mill-owner;” all three living separate lives and practicing what he calls “an asceticism”³³² of their respective professions, which leads them to be diminished ontologically. Therefore, he posits that “men exclusively occupied either in spiritual reverie, mechanical destruction, or mechanical productiveness fall below the proper standard of their race, and enter into a lower form of being.”³³³ He then builds a profile for an ideal human type (of the future) who leads a “contemplative and protective” life which

(A) does not lose itself in the monk’s vision or hope, but delights in seeing present and real things as they truly are; which (B) does not mortify itself for the sake of obtaining powers of destruction, but seeks the more easily attainable powers of affection, observance, and protection; which (C), finally, does not mortify itself with a view to productive accumulation, but delights itself in peace, with its appointed portion. So that the things to be desired for man in a healthy state, are that he should not see dreams, but realities; that he should not destroy life, but save it; and that he should be not rich, but content.³³⁴

Ruskin actually refers here to what he sees as the necessary reformation of the modern world into a version of compassionate, constructive capitalism and of the upper classes into benevolent, practical, protective and frugal rulers. He dreams about an integrative system in which the internal tensions would be appeased and the contraries would be harmonized. The perfected human type was symbolized by Giorgione’s nude on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, with “high spiritual power and practical sense; but now, with entirely perfect intellect, contending with evil; conquering it utterly, casting it away for ever.”³³⁵ The signifier of this ecumenical vision of hope is the red Western light of sunset allegorized in *Hesperid Aeglé*. *Hesperid Aeglé/Western Brightness* and the frontispiece *Ancilla Domini/Handmaiden of the Lord* seem like the two closing lateral panels of a polyptych, framing an elaborate display of symbolic scenes that are not clearly delimited but often bleed into each other and are rendered in a composite way combining words and drawings together.

³³² *Works*, VII, 424.

³³³ *Works*, VII, 425.

³³⁴ *Works*, VII, 425.

³³⁵ *Works*, VII, 373.

3.08. Peace is a fortress

The intricacy of Ruskin's prose from the closing of *Modern Painters* is also matched by the way he arranges his text on the pages. In some places the text is literally replaced on the page by hypertrophied footnotes that also gain the right to have their own illustrations. Therefore, Ruskin's discourse becomes polyphonic and his argumentation is organized in multiple registers that branch out from one another and have to be followed with care going back and forth between text, footnotes and plates. Moreover, the footnotes' illustrations are occasionally more abundant than those of the text. For instance, a footnote on a Swiss location in the chapter on *Hesperid Aeglé* is accompanied by three engraved plates while the text of the whole chapter only has one corresponding engraved illustration. Furthermore, while the voice from the text uses generalizations, metaphors and symbolism to create a quasi-apocalyptic religious poem in prose, the voice in the footnotes is more sober and factual, albeit still in a somewhat dramatic manner.

The main text develops as a dark depiction of the present state of facts, while the footnotes contain suggestions and personal solutions to alleviate what Ruskin believes to be the crisis of modern Britain. The things to be done at home are linked in the footnotes to the appeasement of social unrest through the implementation of a benevolent patriarchal order which should go back to a mostly rural way of life,³³⁶ encourage an

³³⁶ "All work with fire is more or less harmful and degrading; so also mine, or machine labor. They at present develop more intelligence than rural labor, but this is only because no education, properly so called, being given to the lower classes, those occupations are best for them which compel them to attain some accurate knowledge, discipline them in presence of mind, and bring them within spheres in which they may raise themselves to positions of command. Properly taught, a ploughman ought to be more intelligent, as well as more healthy, than a miner." *Works*, VII, 427.

ethical consumerism,³³⁷ reform the school curriculum,³³⁸ provide education for the working class³³⁹ and, finally, impose a national costume for the lower classes.³⁴⁰ Ruskin details all these points in a sort of political manifesto with the aim to stress the main directions of social reform. Thus, all these appeasing measures appear to be intended to restrain social mobility and reinforce the status quo. For instance, Ruskin thought that an esthetically unifying national costume would gratify the desire “to look well without inducing (...) the hope, peculiarly English, of being mistaken for a person in a higher position of life.”³⁴¹ Furthermore, the rural way of life should be sustained because industrial work brings “the lower classes [...] within spheres in which they may raise themselves in positions of command” and therefore upset the traditional social balance.³⁴²

Meanwhile, the things that remain to be done in Europe concern the return to vigilance and defense against the dangers of the unpredictable, amorphous, semi-civilized lands East of Switzerland. This is affirmed textually and visually in the footnotes through a return to the image of Switzerland as the fortress of Western Europe. Ruskin refers directly to historical examples of Swiss theaters of confrontation and chooses to illustrate his point by translating and completing another of Turner’s work which he names *The Nets in the Rapids* (Fig.33). He actually pairs on the same page two of Turner’s sketches that are now catalogued, each of them, in the Tate Gallery under the same title:

³³⁷ “I cannot repeat too often (for it seems almost impossible to arouse the public mind in the least to a sense of the fact) that the root of all benevolent and helpful action towards the lower classes consists in the wise direction of purchase; that is to say, in spending money, as far as possible, only for products of healthful and natural labor.” *Works*, VII, 427.

³³⁸ “...every child in a civilized country should be taught the first principles of natural history, physiology, and medicine; also to sing perfectly, so far as it has capacity, and to draw any definite form accurately to any scale. These things it should be taught by requiring its attendance at school not more than three hours a day, and less if possible (the best part of children’s education being in helping their parents and families).” *Works*, VII, 428.

³³⁹ “Modern systems of improvement are too apt to confuse the recreation of the workman with his education. He should be educated for his work before he is allowed to undertake it; and refreshed and relieved while he practices it.” *Works*, VII, 428.

³⁴⁰ “Every effort should be made to induce the adoption of a national costume. Cleanliness and neatness in dress ought always to be rewarded by some gratification of personal pride; and it is the peculiar virtue of a national costume that it fosters and gratifies the wish to look well, without inducing the desire to look better than one’s neighbors—or the hope, peculiarly English, of being mistaken for a person in a higher position of life. A costume may indeed become coquettish, but rarely indecent or vulgar; and though a French *bonne* or Swiss farm-girl may dress so as sufficiently to mortify her equals, neither of them ever desires or expects to be mistaken for her mistress.” *Works*, VII, 428.

³⁴¹ *Works*, VII, 428.

³⁴² *Works*, VII, 427.

Rheinfelden from the North-West (1844).³⁴³ Entering into confessional mode, he recalls how, when cataloguing Turner's work, he became intrigued by the recurrence of a certain Swiss landscape in Turner's sketches and decided to investigate further:

A scratched word on the back of one of them, "Rheinfels," which I knew could not apply to the Rheinfels near Bingen, gave me the clue to the place;—an old Swiss town, seventeen miles above Basle, celebrated in Swiss history as the main fortress defending the frontier toward the Black Forest.³⁴⁴

Ruskin explains that Rheinfelden was the town that chose Switzerland over the Hapsburg Empire, fought for its choice and defended the borders. On the other side of the frontier, the Black Forest seems to be an ominous place, although in reality it is also an alpine chain with similar geologic structures to those described by Ruskin as cathedrals of the earth and fortresses of defence. Ruskin's Black Forest is the amorphous, possibly contaminating semi-civilized space of Central Europe while Ruskin's Rheinfelden is a symbolic fortress in the battle for fixed borders, regulated territory and coexistence of different languages and confessions in a civilized meeting of the contraries. Ruskin recalls how he hurried to see the place, "the moment I had got Turner's sketches arranged in 1858," and how he drew it "on every side on which Turner had drawn it, giving every detail with servile accuracy, so as to show the exact modifications he made as he composed his."³⁴⁵ This testimony witnesses the fact that the footnote illustrations are a late addition to the book and not a part of the original program that Ruskin affirmed was put in place in 1856. The footnote illustrations actually resurrect the theme of the preceding volumes, vigilance and defense, born out of fear of invasion and contagion, still valid in the context of endemic intra European conflicts. Therefore, by summoning the image of a fortified medieval Rheinfelden, Ruskin suggested a barrier to be installed toward the Central and the eastern parts of the continent in order to defend *Hesperid Aeglé*, the enlightened West, in its effort of reformation.

³⁴³ <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-rheinfelden-from-the-north-west-d35142> and <http://tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-rheinfelden-from-the-north-west-d35140>. 14 March 2014.

³⁴⁴ *Works*, VII, 436.

³⁴⁵ *Works*, VII, 436-437.

Rheinfelden, in the Swiss canton of Argau, is a town on the Swiss-German border, mirrored on the other side by a city with the same name, Rheinfelden in the German district of Baden-Württemberg. The two locations formed a single city before Napoleon established the Swiss demarcation line on the natural border of the Rhine. Turner filled a whole sketchbook with depictions of the Swiss Rheinfelden, from which Ruskin chooses two sketches to exemplify again the simple and the Turnerian topography, as illustrated by the master himself. Mirroring the same approach from the fourth volume, where he analyzes in a similar way *Pass of Faido*, he now pairs two Turnerian sketches together in order to show how one is closer to the actual topography while in the other a lot of geographical and architectural details are eliminated for the sake of a more simple and dynamic composition.

By naming this double reproduction *The Nets in the Rapids*, Ruskin calls the viewer's attention to the fishing nets represented at the center of the composition in both of the sketches. In one of them the nets are seen in the distance, while in the other they are close to the foreground. Ruskin pairs these two Turnerian works in a way that brings to mind one of the montage-like techniques from Volume IV; the use of spatial transition by juxtaposing two images. In this case, Ruskin puts together an overview of Rheinfelden with a view taken from the center of the overview image.

In this side-by-side presentation, the fishing nets appear as a landmark that clarifies Turner's physical point of view; in the first example the artist overlooks the town and sees the bridge and the nets in the distance, while in the second one he is closer to them, which tells us that he entered the city along the banks of the river and is now at the foot of the bridge. In both images the nets are represented vaguely, by using swift, nondescript lines that contrast with the structured architecture of the bridge. This should tell us that Turner did not really descend to the river but he rather imagined what a viewer would be able to see from the proximity of the nets. Had he really been there, the nets would have been described in a more precise way. Furthermore, in the overview sketch the bridge appear as an integral part of a larger civilian settlement described spatially through a succession of horizontal lines and planes. In the close-up the point of view shifts to the right side, the perspective is exaggerated, the bridge now seems to be a road toward a fortress and the landscape gains military undertones. The close-up is a constructed

Turnerian topography, an imagined landscape that reflects the spirit of the town: main fortress defending the frontier.

Ruskin follows this model of the double depiction with two companion pieces presenting his own vision of Rheinfelden. He first gives a veridical, simple topography of the place, *The Bridge in Rheinfelden* (Fig. 34), followed by a personal interpretation which bears the title *Peace* (Fig.35). He does not display them together on the same page like he did with the Turnerian examples, as one of these images, *Peace*, is also the main illustration of the last chapter of Volume V (also titled “Peace.”) In this second Rheinfelden landscape, Ruskin makes drastic compositional choices reducing the bridge in the extreme and exiling it to the side of the composition while expanding the fortification to the point of obliterating the horizon. In fact, Ruskin makes use again of his cinematic vision, and presents actually the next installment in the series of *The Nets in the Rapids*, in a feat of creative geography. With *The Nets in the Rapids*, Ruskin showed how Turner drew an overview of the landscape and then he made a projection of what he supposed could be seen from the inside of that overview. Turner focused on the bridge and imagined that once arrived at its foot he could see the fortress. For his part, Ruskin makes the next imagined spatial transition and cuts to a close-up of the fortified wall. *Peace* is the last step in a succession of cuts that get us from outside the city, near the bridge, and then over the bridge, to the fortress itself.

Surprisingly enough, *Peace* is the only one of Ruskin’s original landscapes that depicts a human presence, namely a small feminine figure seated on the grass in an attitude of repose. Ruskin doesn’t explain, or even mention this unique addition in the illustrative program of the book, which can thus be likened to a hapax legomena, a word that appears only once in the corpus of a text. A possible interpretation could be inferred from the comparison with one of Turner’s drawings (from 1807-1808, engraved and published in 1812), *Winchelsea, Sussex* (Fig. 36). Turner’s drawing is a part of a series of representations focusing, as Matthew Imms shows, on the medieval fortifications of Winchelsea,³⁴⁶ a town that was part of Royal Military Road and Royal Military Canal, “major defences protecting the neighbouring Romney Marsh area of Kent from the threat

³⁴⁶For his 21st birthday Ruskin had received as present from his father one of Turner’s Winchelsea watercolors, the last of the series.

of invasion by Napoleon.”³⁴⁷ In the lower left side of Turner’s work a small compositional group is represented, as a seated woman with two children and a standing soldier, thus referencing the location as meeting place for the military families. Imms also mentions that Ruskin analyzed the use of this iconographic motif (of the seated women and children) in Turner’s whole series on Winchelsea and believed that the artist expressed a “sympathy absolutely infinite” for the “soldier’s wife resting by the roadside”³⁴⁸ depicted in *Winchelsea, Sussex*. Having this example as a reference, it becomes possible to interpret the seated feminine figure from Ruskin’s *Peace* as a Ruskinian echo of Turner’s infinite sympathy for military wives and also as a reminder of the need of vigilance in the face of danger of invasion and contamination. The fact that the detail of the seated woman is not mentioned anywhere in the text, even if it is iconographically unique in the context of *Modern Painters*, can be linked to Ruskin’s habit of occasionally using coded personal references, as in the case of the title for *Gates of the Hills* or even *The Hesperid Aegle*. Moreover, from a stylistic point of view, *Peace* does not match Ruskin’s drawing characteristics but rather those of Turner’s sketch. Instead of symbolic simplifications and larger touches and lines, we have a lot of small details marked in short lines reminiscent of Turner’s quick linear accents in watercolor. Furthermore, the veiled association between Winchelsea and Rheinfelden, is typical of Ruskin’s constant linking, be it direct or subliminal, of continental geography to British symbols and places, as in another telling instance from Volume V, where he compares a mountain in Tyrol traversed by a patch of rhododendrons with the silhouette of Queen Victoria wearing the blue royal ribbon over her chest.³⁴⁹

The small, serene figure in repose actually reinforces the fortress aspect of the place and the title *Peace* means the opposite, announcing in fact the endemic conflicts and border shifting in Europe and the need for military defense. Moreover, unlike all the other original landscapes in the book, the present one is not clearly placed through its title in a geographic context which emphasizes its general symbolic quality. The fortified wall

³⁴⁷ Matthew Imms, “*Winchelsea, Sussex* c.1807–8 by Joseph Mallord William Turner,” catalogue entry, August 2008, in David Blayney Brown (ed.), *J.M.W. Turner: Sketchbooks, Drawings and Watercolours*, December, 2012, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/jmw-turner/joseph-mallord-william-turner-winchelsea-sussex-r1131747>, 14 March 2014.

³⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁴⁹ *Works*, VII, 116.

from *Peace* is like a prototype for Churchill's image of the *Iron Curtain*. In fact, the 1946 speech that Churchill gave at Fulton on post-war geopolitics bore a similar name, being titled *Sinews of Peace*³⁵⁰ and, like Ruskin's illustration, it spoke in fact of war. Although a direct link between Churchill's vision and Ruskin's composition is not apparent, an indirect one is more likely to be taken into consideration leading thus to the British imperial imagination of the nineteenth-century, which called for vigilance in the face of the amorphous and dangerous Central-Eastern Europe.

³⁵⁰ See Winston Churchill, "The Sinews of Peace," in James W. Muller, *Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech Fifty Years Later*, Columbia, Missouri, University of Missouri Press, 1999, p.10.

Conclusion

Ruskin and Churchill can be seen as main representatives and supporters of Victorian imperialism. In times of complex conflicts, they both use the concept of European Christian civilization,³⁵¹ albeit selectively applied, to inspire mobilization. Furthermore, they both attempt to translate the geopolitics of their time into symbolic images and to express their political views through meditations and writings on art. Moreover, they both have a special interest in landscape painting and for the cognitive mechanisms of representation. As a result, Ernst Gombrich sees them as two of the most significant theorists of the mechanisms of perception in his book *Art and Illusion. A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*.³⁵² Due to their interest in art theory, both tend to use art in political discourse. However, their understanding of the place and role of art for the human experience ultimately differs, as does their general takes on politics

While Ruskin uses art as a screen to project his views on social reform and imperial defense, Churchill compares painting to war. For Churchill, landscape painting is a game of strategy; he views oil painting in particular as a medium that offers real power mainly because you can always “scrape it all away”³⁵³ thus enabling “a fresh start to be made.”³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ Churchill uses the concept in his war speeches, defined on basis close to the early Ruskinian interpretation from Volumes III and IV, involving inclusion and balance between freedom and individual responsibility. See Winston Churchill, “Their Finest Hour,” in *Speeches of Winston Churchill*, Churchill Centre and Museum, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/122-their-finest-hour>, 12 March 2014, and also Winston Churchill, “Never Despair,” in *Speeches of Winston Churchill*, Churchill Centre and Museum, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/102-never-despair>, 12 March 2014. Also, Winston Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace,” in James W. Muller, *Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” Speech Fifty Years Later*, Columbia, Missouri, University of Missouri Press, 1999, p.10.

³⁵² Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion, A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, Washington, Pantheon Books, 1960.

³⁵³ Winston Churchill, *Painting as a Pastime*, Cornerstone Library, New York, 1965, pp.18-19.

³⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

In an essay from 1922 entitled *Painting as a Pastime*,³⁵⁵ Churchill presents painting as a battlefield. He argues that painting, rhetoric and war are based on similar principles: they are exercises of power made by a leader with a unity of vision in the manipulation of a number of formal elements based on a strategy and adapted to a specific terrain.³⁵⁶ Unlike Ruskin, Churchill refers only to technical or formal aspects of painting with no allusions to spirituality when he uses art as an analogy for war and politics.

In stark contrast to Ruskin, Churchill is a secular and pragmatic thinker. In fact, Churchill blames the Indian Mutiny on misplaced Christian missionary zeal. In his book *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, Churchill writes of “Bible reading”³⁵⁷ imperial administrators who “dreamt of Christianizing and Europeanizing the sub-continent,”³⁵⁸ an attitude that led to disaster in 1857. However, Churchill seems to recognize the instrumental value of Christian rhetoric as he does not shy away from making use of it himself in times of necessity. For example, after the fall of France in the Second World War,³⁵⁹ Churchill recognizes that an emotional rather than a pragmatic approach is needed to rally the people, and so he uses religious concepts for its mobilizing character.

Churchill’s rhetoric is rich in imagery and dramatic language. As such, he makes frequent use of associative techniques to convey emotion or to achieve a certain desired effect. These techniques typically appeal to subliminal or immediate associations to the collective stereotypes of the time. One such emblematic image is that of the Iron Curtain. An iron curtain is a safety device for theater houses developed in the eighteenth century after a fire at the Drury Lane Theater.³⁶⁰ Therefore, by applying this term to the European theater, Churchill acknowledges a certain theatricality of world politics. Furthermore, he manages to frame an ideological concept by charging it with a concrete, geographical definition that echoed old political imageries.

³⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, pp.19-22.

³⁵⁷ Winston Churchill, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples. The Great Democracies*, New York, Dodd, Mead & Company, 1969, p.80.

³⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁵⁹ Winston Churchill, “We Shall Fight on the Beaches,” in *Speeches of Winston Churchill*, Churchill Centre and Museum, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/128-we-shall-fight-on-the-beaches>, 12 March 2014.

³⁶⁰ For the intellectual history of the concept, see Patrick Wright, *Iron Curtain. From Stage to Cold War*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

Nine years after the Iron Curtain speech, Churchill sees the world as a painting in progress, trying to balance its chromatic composition through the dosage of saturated contrasts. In his last speech to the House of Commons (1955), Churchill uses an art analogy to explain his stance on nuclear arming, specifically the concept of saturation in painting:

‘Saturation’ in this connection means the point where, although one Power is stronger than the other, perhaps much stronger, both are capable of inflicting crippling or quasi-mortal injury on the other with what they have got. It does not follow, however, that the risk of war will then be greater. Indeed, it is arguable that it will be less, for both sides will then realize that global war will result in mutual annihilation.³⁶¹

This unexpected mix of images of art, war, and civilization resembles Ruskin’s strategies of persuasion. While Churchill does not directly discuss Ruskin’s influence on his oratory style, it is known that he was on familiar terms with Ruskin’s work. For example, Ruskin is the only source that Churchill cites on his essay on painting. Additionally, in *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, Churchill affirms that Ruskin and Dickens are instrumental in the advancement of British democracy in the nineteenth century because of their relentless penchant for social critique. Moreover, he describes Ruskin in a few expressive lines as an authentic reformer who

In the midst of his long life he turned from the study of painting and architecture to modern social problems. His heart lay in the Middle Ages, which he imagined to be peopled by a fraternity of craftsmen harmoniously creating works of art. Peering out upon the Victorian scene, this prophetic figure looked in vain for similar accomplishment. Bad taste in manufacture, bad relations between the employers and men, aroused his eloquent wrath.

³⁶¹ Winston Churchill, “Never Despair,” in *Speeches of Winston Churchill*, Churchill Centre and Museum, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/102-never-despair>, 12 March 2014.

His was a voice that cried the way both to new movements in the arts and to socialism in politics.³⁶²

Given the fact that Churchill is a fervent critic of Socialism, his professed admiration for Ruskin is somewhat of a surprise. However, Churchill must recognize in Ruskin's symbolic constructions the ideology of the benevolent empire and the geopolitical imagination that comes with it. Moreover, when Churchill is born in 1874, Ruskin already has widespread recognition in the British academic establishment and even made Slade professor at Oxford. It is important to note that Churchill is very much a product of his time, namely the long nineteenth century. As Leo Amery, the conservative British politician writes in his diaries: "the key to Winston is to realize that he is a Mid Victorian, steeped in the politics of his father's period."³⁶³ Therefore, Churchill's interests naturally resonate with issues characteristic of this period – symbolic geopolitical constructs linked to the obsession to preserve the empire, which are omnipresent in Ruskin's work.

Both Churchill and Ruskin use their great literary skills to transform unpleasant political reality into fictional stories and symbolic images that are easier to accept and promote. However, one difference between them is that Ruskin, profoundly religious and driven by a sense of guilt, writes cryptic epopees, while Churchill, profoundly pragmatic and unapologetic, has a clear-cut style that helps him relay his message unambiguously. Larry Wolff observes that "what made Churchill's imagery so powerful (were) the traces of an intellectual history (that) invested with meaning"³⁶⁴ apparently new borders that in reality were marked from a long time ago "in the public culture and its mental maps."³⁶⁵ Basically, Wolff argues that under the influence of Churchill's symbolic imagery and in the context of the Cold War, the western geographic imagination reverted to the eighteenth century understanding of Europe as divided between an enlightened civilized West and a barbaric Slavic East. However, in the period from the Enlightenment to the Cold War, the cultural separation inside the continent was not as precise. In my research,

³⁶² Winston Churchill, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples. The Great Democracies*, New York, Dodd, Mead & Company, 1969, p.69.

³⁶³ Cited in Richard Toye, *Churchill's Empire. The World that Made Him and the World He Made*, London, Macmillan, 2010, p.33.

³⁶⁴ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1994, pp. 3-4.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.4.

I wanted to uncover if there were symbolic intra-European borders still in existence during the nineteenth-century, and to unveil some of the mechanisms that give form and life to these imagined geographical constructs.

John Ruskin's *Modern Painters* Volumes III, IV, and V seemed ideally suited to this subject as they combine landscape, natural science, art, and politics with a larger, European vision. Furthermore, John Ruskin was not just a popular representative of a global empire, but also an artist, a traveler, a geologist, and a social reformer, things that helped him craft powerful cultural images and a complex symbolic geography that left an indelible imprint in the British artistic and political imagination. The last volumes of *Modern Painters* show how "artistic selection creates meaning,"³⁶⁶ and how the meeting of art, physical geography, cultural judgments and political apprehensions can create imaginary lands and peoples. Moreover, these imagined places and nations can become as real as the true ones in the popular consciousness and public discourse. Furthermore, constructed places and peoples are by nature variable, which means that they are hard to define or control, even for their creators. Finally, they contain compounded layers of images and counter-images that do not annihilate each-other, so that the same symbolic construction can be seen in time alternatively as a model or a monster.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁶ Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands. Essays and Criticism. 1982-1991*, London, Granta Books, p.103.

³⁶⁷ See Gisela Argyle, *Germany as Model and Monster. Allusions in English Fiction, 1830s-1930s*, Montreal, Kingston, London, Ithaca, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002. Also, see Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Cultural Representation of Characters. A Survey*, Amsterdam and New York, Rodopi, 2007, pp.342-344.

Illustrations

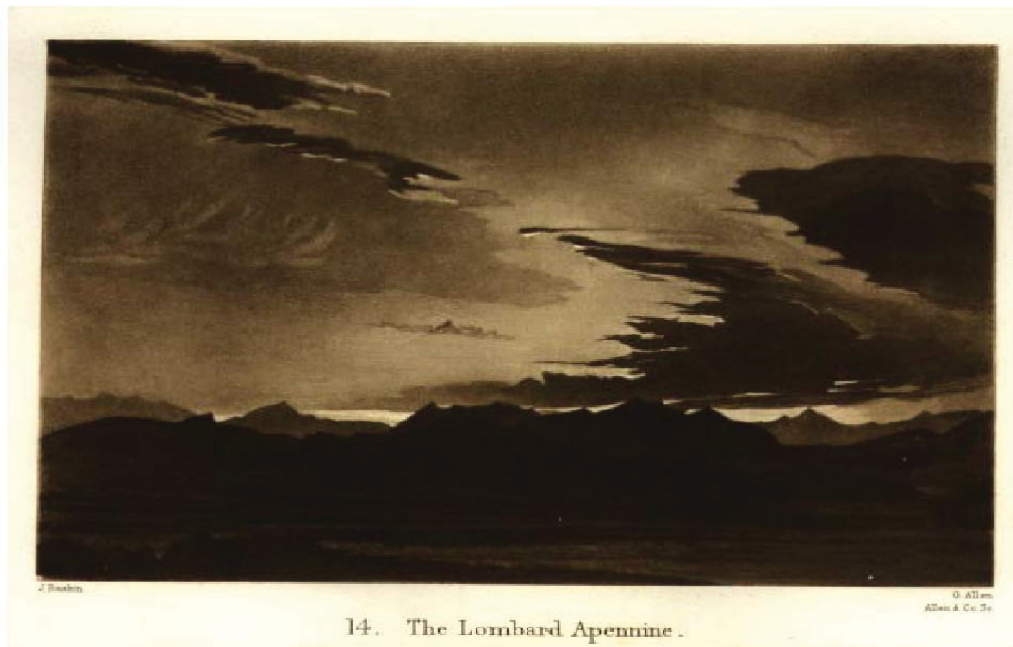


Fig. 1. John Ruskin, *The Lombard Apennine*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters III* as Plate 14.

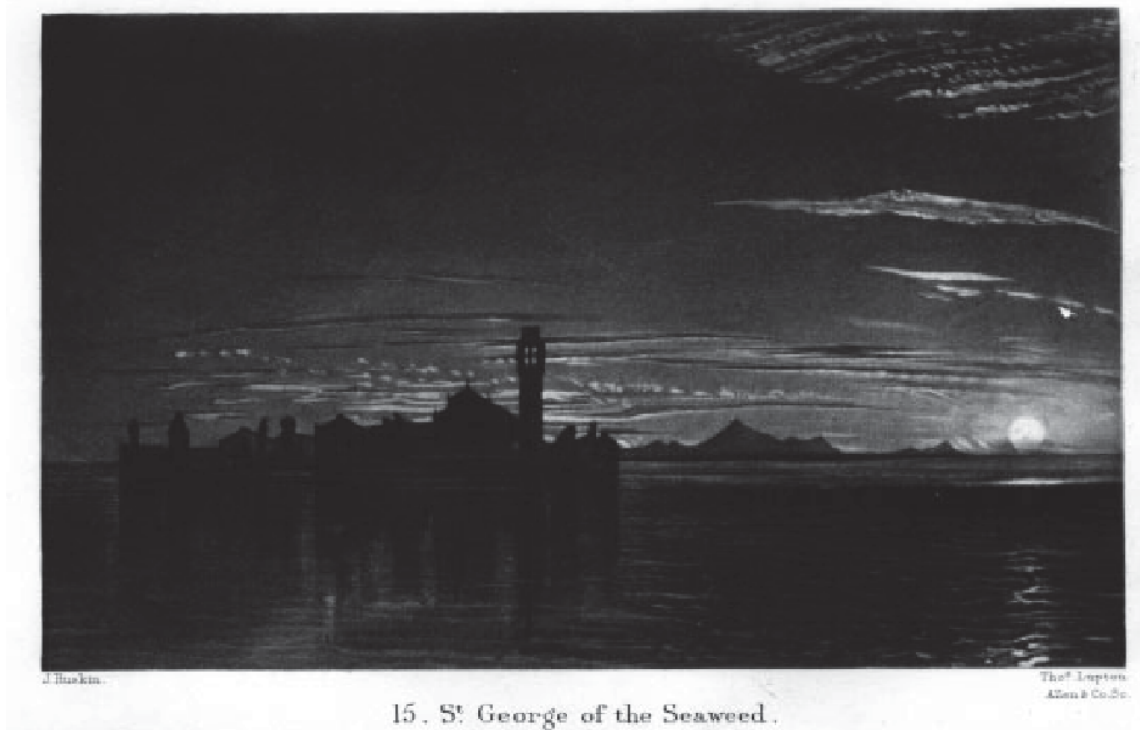


Fig. 2. John Ruskin, *St George of the Seaweed*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters III* as Plate 15.



Fig.3. John Ruskin, *Lake, Land and Cloud. Near Como*, 1856, engraving, frontispiece for *Modern Painters III*.

Image removed

Fig.4. Luke Howard, *Clouds*, 1803, engraving, illustration to “Essay on the Modification of Clouds,” *Philosophical Magazine*, 1803.

Image removed

Fig. 5. Luke Howard, *Storm Clouds*, 1803, engraving, illustration to “Essay on the Modification of Clouds,” *Philosophical Magazine*, 1803.

Image removed

Fig. 6. J.W. Whympers, *The Cirro-Cumulus or Sonder-Cloud*, 1846, woodcut, illustration for Charles Tomlinson, *The Rain Cloud, or the Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World*, London, 1846.

Image removed

Fig. 7. J.W. Whymper, *The Cumulo Stratus, or Twain-Cloud*, 1846, woodcut, illustration for Charles Tomlinson, *The Rain Cloud, or the Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World*, London, 1846

Image removed

Fig. 8. J.W. Whymper, *Different Appearances of the Same Clouds to Different Observers*, 1846, woodcut, illustration for Charles Tomlinson, *The Rain Cloud, or the Account of the Nature, Properties, Dangers and Uses of Water in Different Parts of the World*, London, 1846.



Fig.9. John Ruskin (after JMW Turner), *Pass of Faido: Turnerian Topography*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 20.



Fig.10. John Ruskin, *Pass of Faido: Simple Topography*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 21.



Fig. 11. John Ruskin (after JMW Turner), *The Gates of the Hills* 1856, engraving, frontispiece for *Modern Painters IV*.

Image removed

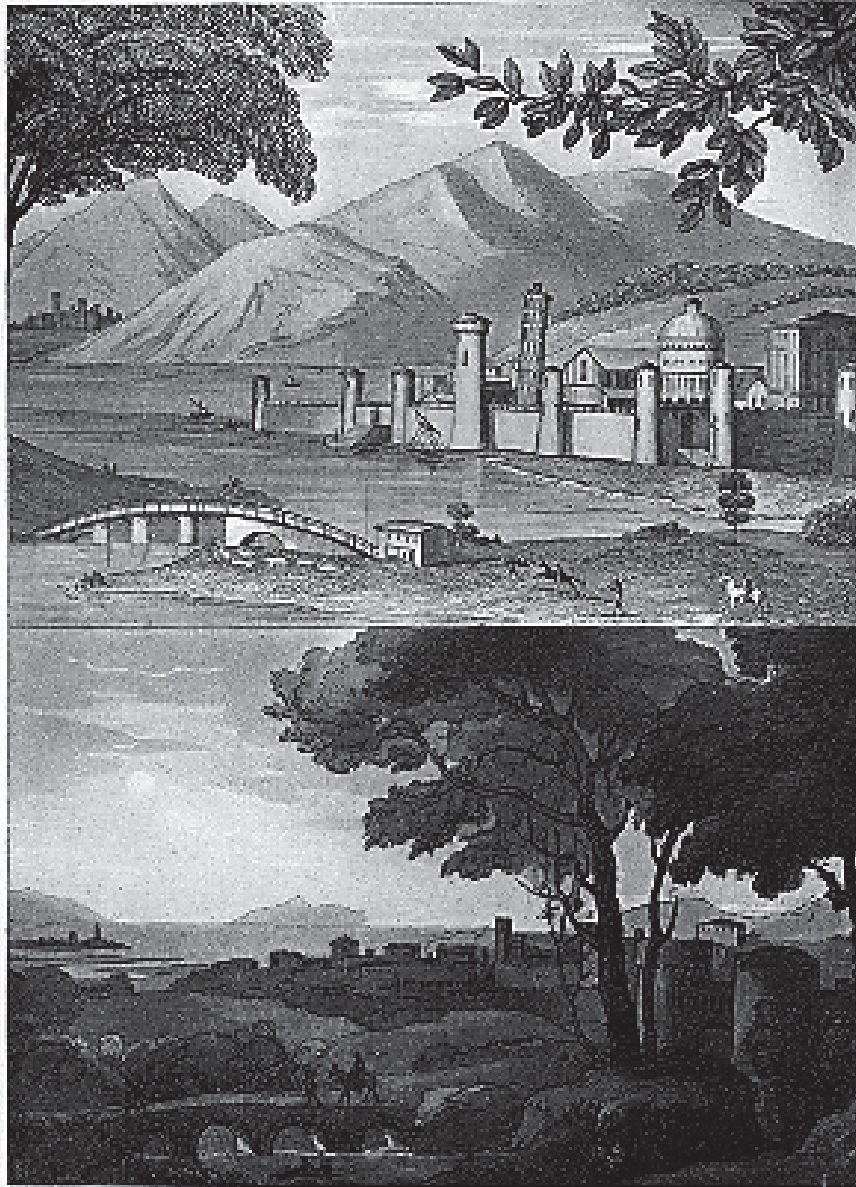
Fig.12. JMW Turner, *The Pass at Faido. St. Gotthard*, cca 1843, watercolor and graphite, Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

Image removed

Fig. 13. JMW Turner, *Mt. St. Gotthard.Pass*, 1806-7, watercolor, sketch for *Liber Studiorum*, Tate Gallery, London.

Image removed

Fig.14. John Ruskin, *Faido*, 1869, ink on paper, sketch from a letter to Charles Eliot Norton, August 15 1869.



Ghirlandajo and Carion.

Claude Lorraine
Milton & Co. Sc.

18. The Transition from Ghirlandajo to Claude.

Fig. 15. John Ruskin (after Domenico Ghirlandajo and Claude Lorraine), *The Transition from Ghirlandajo to Claude*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 18.

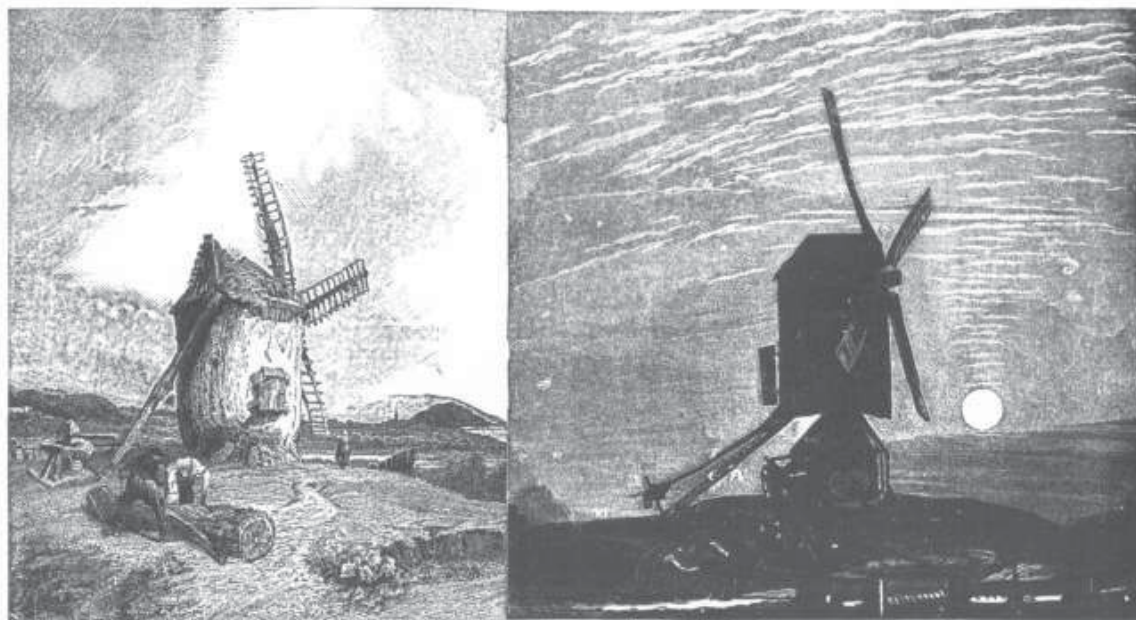


Fig.16. John Ruskin (after Clarkson Frederick Stanfield and JMW Turner), *The Picturesque of Windmills. Pure Modern and Turnerian*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 19.

Image removed

Fig.17. JMW Turner, *Windmill and Lock*, 1811, etching and watercolor, Tate Gallery, London.

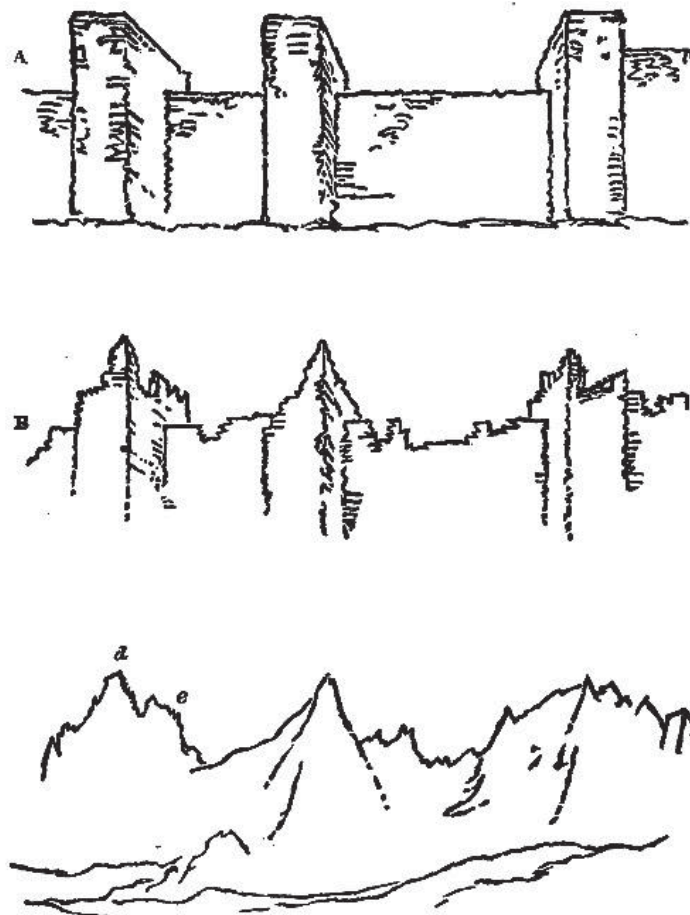


Fig.18. John Ruskin, *Fig. 35*, 1856, woodcut, illustration for *Modern Painters IV*.



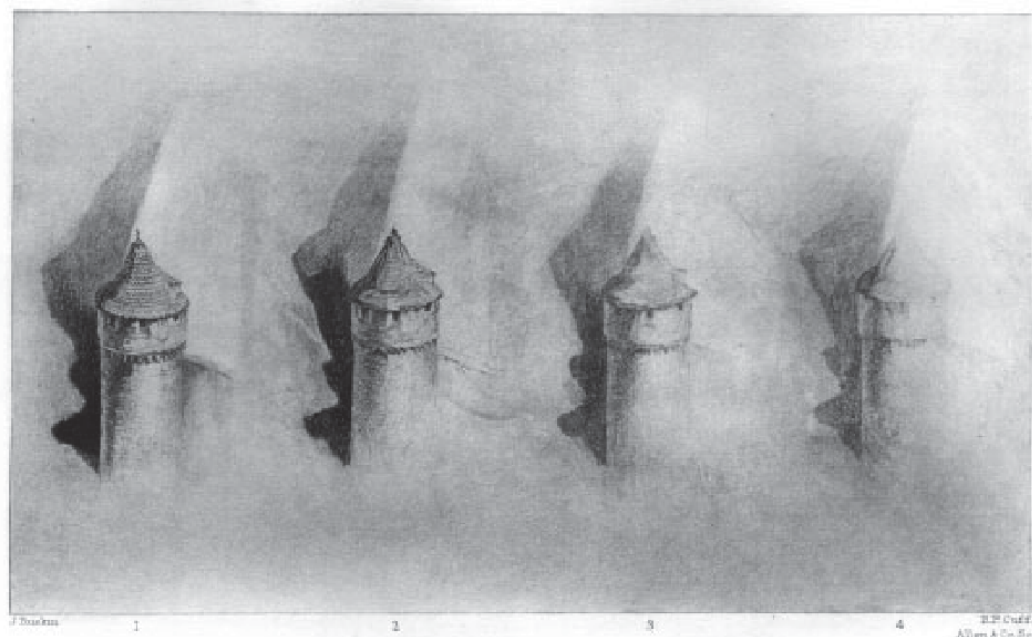
24 The Towers of Fribourg

Fig. 19. John Ruskin, *The Towers of Fribourg*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 24.



25. Things in general .

Fig. 20. John Ruskin, *Things in General*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 25.



26 . The Law of Evanescence .

Fig.21. John Ruskin, *The Law of Evanescence*, 1856, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters IV* as Plate 26.

Image removed

Fig. 22. John Leech, *General Février Turned Traitor*, 1855, woodcut, published in *Punch*, March 10 1855.



J. Ruskin.

J. C. Argyropoulos
1870. & Co. N.Y.

66 . Light in the West. Beauvais .

Fig.23. John Ruskin, *Light in the West, Beauvais*, 1860, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* as Plate 66.



Fig.24. John Ruskin (after Fra Angelico), *Ancilla Domini*, 1860, engraving, frontispiece for *Modern Painters V*.

Image removed

Fig.25. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Ecce Ancilla Domini*, 1850, oil on canvas mounted on panel, Tate Gallery, London.

What need had it to be elsewhere? Was not the Val d'Arno, with its olive woods in white blossom, paradise enough for a poor monk? or could Christ be indeed in heaven more than here? Was He not always with him? Could he breathe or see, but that Christ breathed beside him, and looked into his eyes? Under every cypress avenue the angels walked; he had seen their white robes, whiter than the dawn, at his bed-side, as he awoke in early summer. They had sung with him, one on each side, when his voice failed for joy at sweet vesper and matin time; his eyes were blinded by their wings in the sunset, when it sank behind the hills of Luni.

There may be weakness in this, but there is no baseness; and while I rejoice in all recovery from monasticism which leads to practical and healthy action in the world, I must, in closing this work, severely guard my pupils from the thought that sacred rest may be honourably exchanged for selfish and mindless activity.

§ 14. In order to mark the temper of Angelico, by a contrast of another kind, I give in Fig. 99 a facsimile of one of the heads in Salvator's etching of the Academy of Plato.¹ It is accurately characteristic of Salvator, showing, by quite a central type, his indignant, desolate, and degraded power. I could have taken unspeakably baser examples from others of his etchings, but they would have polluted my book, and been in some sort unjust, representing only the worst part of his work. This head, which is as elevated a type as he ever reaches, is assuredly debased enough; and a sufficient image of the mind of the painter of Catiline and the Witch of Endor.

§ 15. Then, in Fig. 100 (overleaf), you have also a



Fig. 99

¹ [For another reference to this Plate, see above, p. 89 and Fig. 58. The picture of "Catiline" is in the Pitti Palace, Florence; the "Witch of Endor," in the Louvre; for another reference to it, see Vol. X. p. 128.]

Fig. 26. John Ruskin, *Fig. 99* inserted into the page 371, 1860, woodcut, illustration for *Modern Painters V*.



Fig.27. John Ruskin(after Albrecht Dürer), *Fig. 100*, 1860, woodcut, illustration for *Modern Painters V*.



Fig.28. John Ruskin (after A.M. Zanetti II), *The Hesperid Aegle*, 1860, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 79.

Image removed

Fig.29. Anton Maria Zanetti II, “the Younger,” *Standing Female Nude After Giorgione*, 1760, engraving, British Museum, London.

Image removed

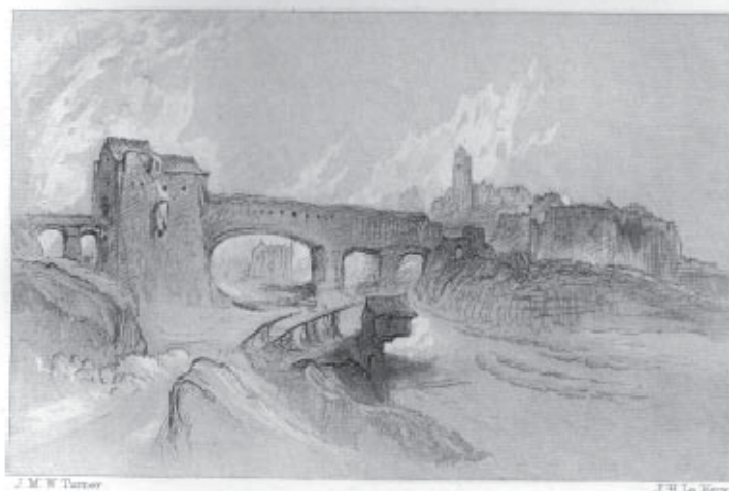
Fig.30. Giorgione (Giorgio da Castelfranco), *La Nuda (Fondaco dei Tedeschi)*, cca.1508, fresco, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.

Image removed

Fig. 31. JMW Turner, *The Goddess of Discord Choosing the Apple of Contention in the Garden of the Hesperides*, 1796, oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London.

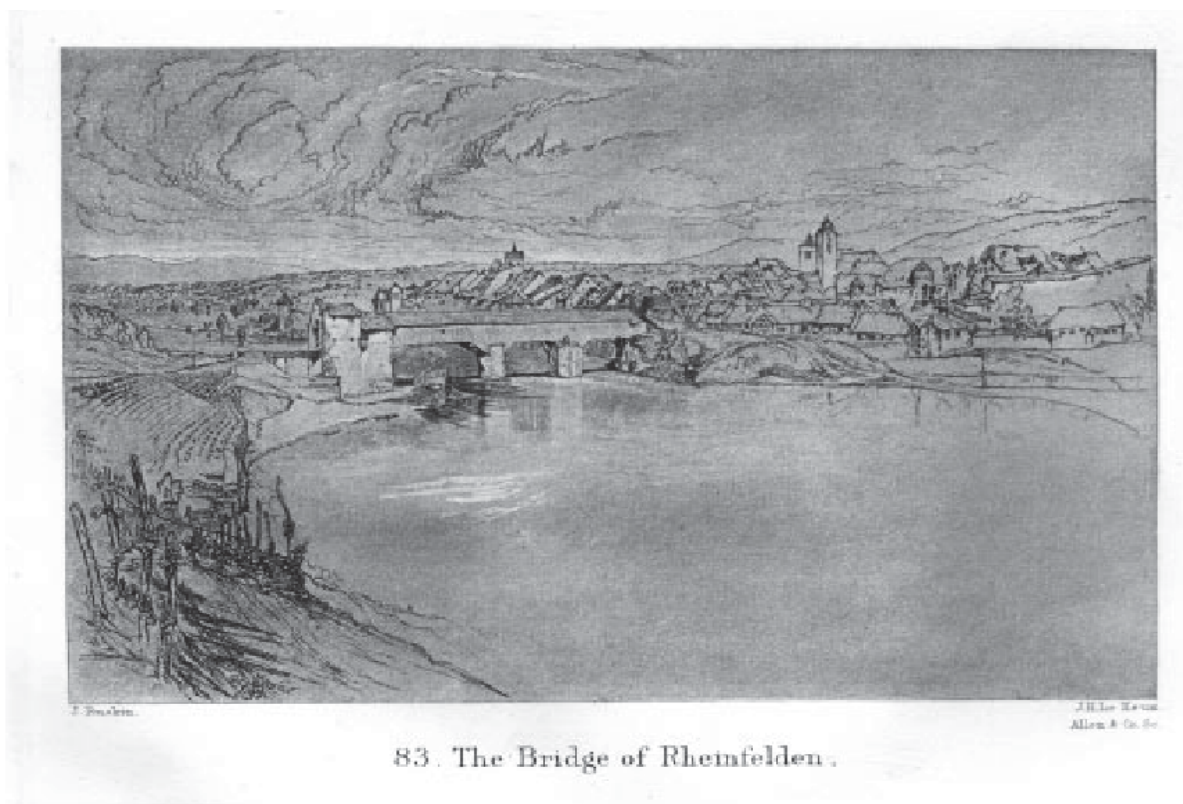
Image removed

Fig. 32. JMW Turner, *Apollo and Python*, 1811, oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London.



82. The Nets in the Rapids.

Fig.33. John Ruskin after JMW Turner, *The Nets in the Rapids*, 1859, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* as Plate 82.



83. The Bridge of Rheinfelden.

Fig.34. John Ruskin, *The Bridge of Rheinfelden*, 1859, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters* as Plate 83.



Fig.35. John Ruskin, *Peace*, 1860, engraving, illustration for *Modern Painters V* as Plate 84.

Image removed

Fig. 36. JMW Turner, *Winchelsea, Sussex*, 1807-8, graphite and watercolor on paper, Tate Gallery, London.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

1. Works by John Ruskin

The Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin, edited by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, London, George Allen, 1903-1912.
 Also on CD-Rom, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
 Beginning with 2014 made available in their entirety on line by the Ruskin Library and Research Center, Lancaster University at
www.lancaster.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib/Pages/Works.html.

2. Correspondence and diaries

BRADLEY, John Lewis (ed), *Ruskin's Letters from Venice. 1851-1852*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1955.
 BRADLEY, John Lewis, Ian OUSBY (ed), *The Correspondence of John Ruskin and Charles Eliot Norton*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987.
 BURD, Van Akin (ed), *The Ruskin Family Letters: The Correspondence of John James Ruskin, his Wife and their Son John, 1801-1843*, 2 vol., Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1973.
 CATE, George Allen (ed), *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin*,

- Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1982.
- EVANS, Joan, John Howard WHITEHOUSE (ed), *The Diaries of John Ruskin*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 3 vol., 1956-1959.
- HAYMAN, John (ed), *John Ruskin: Letters from the Continent, 1858*, Toronto, Buffalo and London, University of Toronto Press, 1982.
- LUTYENS, Mary, *Effie in Venice*, London, John Murray, 1965.
- LUTYENS, Mary, *Young Mrs. Ruskin in Venice: Unpublished Letters of Mrs. John Ruskin Written from Venice, Between 1849-1852*, New York, Vanguard Press, 1967.
- SHAPIRO, Harold I.(ed), *Ruskin in Italy: Letters to his Parents, 1845*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972.

Secondary sources

1. Works on John Ruskin

- ABSE, Joan, *John Ruskin, The passionate Moralists*, London, Melbourne, New York, Quartet Books, 1980.
- ANTHONY, Peter D, *John Ruskin's Labour: A Study of Ruskin's Social Theory*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- AUTRET, Jean, *L'influence de Ruskin sur la vie, les idées et l'œuvre de Marcel Proust*, Geneve, Droz, Lille, Giard, 1955.
- AUTRET, Jean, *Ruskin and the French before Marcel Proust*, Geneve, Librairie Droz, 1965.
- BANN, Stephen, "The Colour in the Text: Ruskin's Basket of Strawberries," in John Dixon Hunt, Faith M. Holland (ed), *The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the Imagination of John Ruskin*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982.
- BANN, Stephen, "Writing Giorgione," in M.A. Abbas, Tak-Wai Wong, *Literary Theory Today*, Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 1981.
- BATCHELOR, John, *John Ruskin: No Wealth but Life*, London, Chatto&Windus, 2000.
- BEETZ, Kirk H., *John Ruskin: A Bibliography 1900-1974*, Metuchen, NJ, Scarecrow Press, 1976.
- BIRCH, Dinah, *Ruskin's Myths*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1988.
- BIRCH, Dinah, *Ruskin and the Dawn of the Modern*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1999.
- BLOOM, Harold (ed), *John Ruskin, Modern Critical Views*, New York, Chelsea, 1986.
- BONADEO, Alfredo, *L'Italia et gl'italiani nell'immaginazione romantica inglese : Lord*

- Byron, John Ruskin, D.H. Lawrence*, Napoli, Societa editrice napoletana, 1984.
- BORIS, Eileen, *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris and the Craftsman Ideal in America*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1986.
- BRADLEY, J.L., *A Ruskin Chronology*, Basingstoke and New York, Macmillan, 1997.
- BRADLEY, J.L., *Ruskin: The Critical Heritage*, London and Boston, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.
- BROOKS, Michael, *John Ruskin and Victorian Architecture*, New Brunswick and London, Rutgers University Press, 1987; London, Thames and Hudson, 1989.
- BROWN, Judith M., "Reading *Unto This Last* – A Transformative Experience: Gandhi in South Africa", in Rachel Dickinson, Keith Hanley, ed., *Ruskin's Struggle for Coherence. Self-Representation through Art, Place and Society*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Press, 2006.
- CARDINAL, Roger, "Ruskin and the Alpine Ideal," in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel(ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007
- CARRIER, David, *England and its Aesthetes, Biography and Taste: John Ruskin, Walter Pater, Adrian Stokes, Essays*, Amsterdam, G.&B. Arts International, 1997.
- CASALIGHI, Carmen, "Lessons of Multiple Perspective: Ruskin, Turner and the Inspiration of Venice," in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel (ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- CASALIGHI, Carmen, Paul MARCH-RUSSELL (ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- CASTERAS. Susan (ed), *John Ruskin and the Victorian Eye*, New York, H.N. Abrams, 1993.
- CATE, George Allen, *John Ruskin: a reference guide*, Boston, Mass., G. K. Hall& Co., 1988.
- CAWS, Mary Ann, "Against Completion: Ruskin's Drama of Dream, Lateness and Loss," in Regina Barrea, (ed), *Sex and Death in Victorian Literature*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1990.
- CERUTTI, Toni, ed., *Ruskin and the Twentieth Century: the Modernity of Ruskinism*, Vercelli, Edizioni Mercurio, 2000.
- CERUTTI, Tony, "'Blind mouths': Ruskin and the Reading of the Text," in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel (ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- CIANCI, Giovanni and Peter NICHOLLS (ed), *Ruskin and Modernism*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, Palgrave, 2001.
- CLEGG, Jeanne, *John Ruskin. An Arts Council Exhibition*, London, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1983.
- CLEGG, Jeanne, *Ruskin and Venice*, London, Junction Books, 1981.
- CONNER, Patrick, *Savage Ruskin*, London, Macmillan: Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1979.
- CONTESSI, Gianni, *Écritures dessinées. Art et architecture de Piranesi à Ruskin*, sp, Infolio éditions, 2002.
- COSGROVE, Denis, John E. Thornes, "Of Truth of Clouds: John Ruskin and the Moral Order in Landscape," in Douglas C.D. Pocock (ed.), *Humanistic Geography and*

- Literature. Essays on the Experience of Place*, London and New York, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2014
- COSTANTINI, Paolo et Italo ZANNIER (ed), *I Dagherrotipi della collezione Ruskin*, Firenze ; Alinare ; Venezia, Arsenale, 1984.
- CRAIG, David M., *John Ruskin and the Ethics of Consumption*, University of Virginia Press, 2006.
- DALEY, Kenneth, *The Rescue of Romanticism: Walter Pater and John Ruskin*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 2001.
- DEARDEN, James S., *John Ruskin: A Life in Pictures*, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1979.
- DeSYLVA, Geoffrey F., *John Ruskin's Modern Painters I and II. A Phenomenological Analysis*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Press, 1981.
- DICKINSON, Rachel, Keith HANLEY (ed.), *Ruskin's Struggle for Coherence. Self-Representation through Art, Place and Society*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Press, 2006.
- DICKINSON, Rachel, "“A Glass Picture”: A Window into Ruskin's Aesthetic,” in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel (ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- DOWLING, Linda, *The Vulgarisation of Art. The Victorians and Aesthetics Democracy*, University of Virginia Press, 1996.
- DOWNES, David Anthony, *Ruskin's Landscape of Beatitude*, Published for California State University, Chico, by University Microfilms International, 1980.
- EAGLES, Stuart, "The 'insinuating touch of influence': Aspects of Ruskin's Political Legacy,” in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel (ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- EAGLES, Stuart, *After Ruskin. The Social and Political Legacies of a Victorian Prophet, 1870-1920*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011.
- FAULKNER, Peter, "Ruskin and Morris,” in *The Journal of William Morris Society*, 14.1, Autumn, 2000, pp. 6-17.
- FAULKNER, Peter, "Ruskin and the British Empire,” in *The Journal of William Morris Society*, 14.1, Autumn, 2000, pp. 54-66.
- FELLOWS, Jay, *Ruskin's Maze: Mastery and madness in his Art*, Princeton, N.J., et Guildford, Princeton University Press, 1992.
- FINLEY, C. Stephen, *Nature's Covenant: Figures of landscape in Ruskin*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981.
- FITCH, Raymond E., *The Poisoned Sky: Myth and Apocalypse in Ruskin*, Athens, Ohio And London, Ohio University Press, 1982.
- FULLER, Peter, "The Geography of Mother Nature,” in Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (ed), *The Iconography of Landscape*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- GAMBLE, Cynthia, *Proust as Interpreter of Ruskin: the Seven Lamps of Translation*, Birmingham, Alabama, Summa Publications, 2002.
- HANLEY, Keith, "Becoming Ruskin: Travel Writing and Self Representation in *Praeterita*,” in Ashley Chantler, Michael Davies, Philip Shaw (ed), *Literature and Authenticity, 1780-1900, Essays in Honour of Vincent Newey*, Burlington, Ashgate, 2011.

- HANLEY, Keith, "Ruskin's Holy Land: The Sacred Language of Landscape," in Rachel Dickinson, Keith Hanley, (ed.), *Ruskin's Struggle for Coherence. Self-Representation through Art, Place and Society*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Press, 2006.
- HANLEY, Keith and John K. WALTON, *Constructing Cultural Tourism. John Ruskin and the Tourist Gaze*, Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto, Channel View Publications, 2010.
- HARTLEY, Lucy, "'Griffinism, grace and all': the Riddle of the Grotesque in John Ruskin's *Modern Painters*," in Colin Trodd, Paul Barlow and David Amigoni (ed), *Victorian Culture and the Idea of the Grotesque*, Ashgate, s.p., 1998.
- HAYMAN, John, *John Ruskin and Switzerland*, Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1990.
- HÉLARD, André, *John Ruskin et les cathédrales de la Terre*, Chamonix, Éditions Guérin, 2005.
- HELSINGER, Elizabeth, *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder*, Cambridge, Mass. and London, Harvard University Press, 1982.
- HELSINGER, Elizabeth, "Ruskin and the Politics of Viewing: Constructing National Subjects," in *Harvard University Art Museum Bulletin*, vol.3,no1, 1994.
- HELSINGER, Elizabeth, "The Structure of Ruskin's *Praeterita*," in George P Landow(ed), *Approaches to Victorian Autobiography*, Athens, OH, Ohio University Press, 1979.
- HENDERSON, Willie, *John Ruskin's Political Economy*, Londres, Routledge, 2000.
- HERBERT, L. Robert, (ed.), *The Art Criticism of John Ruskin*, Garden City, New York, Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964.
- HERRMANN, Luke, *Ruskin and Turner*, London, Faber and Faber, 1968; New York and Washington, Frederick A. Praeger, 1969.
- HERSEY, George L., "Ruskin as an Optical Thinker", in John Dixon Hunt, Faith M. Holland(ed.), *The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the Imagination of John Ruskin*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982.
- HEWISON, Robert, *John Ruskin: The Argument of the Eye*, London, Thames and Hudson; Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976.
- HEWISON, Robert, *Ruskin and Venice*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1978; new edition, London, Pilkington Press, 2000.
- HEWISON, Robert, *Ruskin, Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites*, London, Tate Gallery, 2000.
- HEWISON, Robert, (ed), *Ruskin's Artists: Studies in the Victorian Visual Economy*, Aldershot et Brookfield, Ashgate, 2000.
- HEWISON, Robert, "Sex and the City – Death in Venice: An Argument about Ruskinian Myth," in Rachel Dickinson, Keith Hanley, (ed.), *Ruskin's Struggle for Coherence. Self-Representation through Art, Place and Society*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Press, 2006.
- HILTON, Tim, *John Ruskin: The Early Years. 1819-1859.*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985.
- HILTON, Tim, *John Ruskin: The Later Years*, Yale, New Haven and London, 2000.
- HULL, Howard, "Geographer of the Soul: John Ruskin's 'Fairy Books of Science,'"

- in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel (ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- HUNT, John Dixon, *The Wider Sea: A Life of John Ruskin*, London, Dent; New York, Viking Press, 1982.
- HUNT, John Dixon, Faith M. HOLLAND (ed.), *The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the Imagination of John Ruskin*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982.
- JACKSON, Kevin, *The Worlds of John Ruskin*, London, Pallas Athene & The Ruskin Foundation, 2010.
- JAUDEL, Philippe, *La Pensée sociale de John Ruskin*, Paris, Librairie Marcel Didier, 1972.
- LANDOW, George P., *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1971.
- LANDOW, George P., *Ruskin*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985.
- LANG, Michael H., *Designing Utopia: John Ruskin's Urban Vision for Britain and America*, Montréal, New York, Black Rose Books, 1999.
- LEON, Derrick, *Ruskin. The Great Victorian*, Hamden, Connecticut, Archon Books, 1969.
- LE QUESNE, A.L. (ed), *Victorian Thinkers: Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold, Morris*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993.
- LINKS, Joseph G., *The Ruskins in Normandy: A Tour in 1848 with Murray's Handbook*, New York, Vanguard Press, 1974.
- LUTYENS, Mary, *Millais and the Ruskins*, London, John Murray; New York, Vanguard Press, 1968.
- LUTYENS, Mary, *The Ruskins and the Grays*, London, John Murray; New York, Vanguard Press, 1972.
- MERRILL, Linda, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial in Whistler vs Ruskin*, Washington, Smithsonian Institution, 1992.
- MORDAUNT CROOK, J., "Ruskinian Gothic," in John Dixon Hunt, Faith M. Holland (ed.), *The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the Imagination of John Ruskin*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982.
- O'GORMAN, Francis, *John Ruskin*, Stroud, Sutton, 1999.
- O'GORMAN, Francis, "Ruskin's Mountain Gloom," in Rachel Dickinson, Keith Hanley(ed), *Ruskin's Struggle for Coherence. Self-Representation through Art, Place and Society*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Press, 2006.
- PENNY, Nicholas, *Ruskin's Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum*, Phaidon, Christie's Ltd, 1988.
- PEVSNER, Nikolaus, *Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc: Englishness and Frenchness in the Appreciation of Gothic Architecture*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1969.
- PROUST, Marcel, *On Reading Ruskin: Prefaces to La Bible d'Amiens and Sesame et les Lys*, selections, editions et traductions de Jean Autret, William Burford et Philip J. Wolfe, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987.
- RAMOS, Iolanda, "Museums of the People: A Signifying Practice of Order within a Community," in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel(ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- READ, Richard, "Anglo-Italian Contrasts in Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*," in Carmen

- Casalighi, Paul March-Russel(ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007
- RHODES, Robert and Ianik DEL IVAN(ed), *Studies in Ruskin : Essays in Honor of Van Akin Burd*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1982.
- ROSENBERG, John D., *The Darkening Glass: A Portrait of Ruskin's Genius*, New York And London, Columbia University Press, 1961.
- SAWYER, P. L., *Ruskin's Poetic Argument: The Design of the Major Works*, Ithaca, New York and London, Cornell University Press, 1985.
- SCHMIDT, Martin, "From the Picturesque to the Genuine Vernacular: Nature and Nationhood in Ruskin's Architectural Thought, 1830-1860," in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel(ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- SCOTT, Jeremy, "The Words on the Page and the Eye of the Soul: Ruskin's Literary Vision and *The King of the Golden River*," in Carmen Casalighi, Paul March-Russel(ed), *Ruskin in Perspective. Contemporary Essays*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- SHERBURNE, J. C., *John Ruskin; or The Ambiguities of Abundance; a Study in Social and Economic Criticism*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972.
- SIMPSON, Marc, "The dream of the Dragon: Ruskin's Serpent Imagery," in John Dixon Hunt, Faith M. Holland (ed), *The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the Imagination of John Ruskin*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982.
- SMITH, Lindsay, *Victorian Photography, Painting and Poetry: The Enigma of Visibility in Ruskin, Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- SONSTROEM, David, "Prophet and Peripathetic in *Modern Painters* III and IV," in Robert Rhodes and Del Ivan Janik, (ed), *Studies in Ruskin. Essay in Honor of Van Akin Burd*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1982.
- SPEAR, Jeffrey L., *Dream of an English Eden: Ruskin and his Tradition in Social Criticism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1984.
- STEIN, Richard L., *The Ritual of Interpretation: The Fine Arts as Literature in Ruskin, Rossetti, and Pater*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, Harvard University Press, 1975.
- THIELE, David, "Ruskin, Authority, and Adult Education", in Rachel Dickinson, Keith Hanley (ed.), *Ruskin's Struggle for Coherence. Self-Representation through Art, Place and Society*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Press, 2006.
- TOWNSEND, Francis G., "On Reading John Ruskin," in Richard A. Levine(ed), *The Victorian Experience: The Prose Writers*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1982.
- UNRAU, John, *Looking at Architecture with Ruskin*, London, Thames and Hudson: Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1978.
- UNRAU, John, *Ruskin and St Mark's*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1984.
- VILJOEN, Helen Gill, *Ruskin's Scottish Heritage: A Prelude*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1956.
- WALTON, Paul, *The Drawings of John Ruskin*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972.
- WALTON, Paul, *Master Drawings by John Ruskin: Selections from the David Thomson Collection*, London, Pilkington Press, 1998.

- WASCHEK, Matthias, Fabrice DOUAR (ed), *Relire Ruskin*, Paris, Musée du Louvre, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 2003.
- WETTLAUFER, Alexandra K., *In the Mind's Eye. The Visual Impulse in Diderot, Baudelaire and Ruskin*, Amsterdam-New York, Rodopi, 2003.
- WHEELER, Michael and Nigel WHITELEY (ed), *The Lamp of Memory: Ruskin, Tradition and Architecture*, Manchester, New York, Manchester University Press, 1995.
- WHEELER, Michael(ed), *Ruskin and Environment: The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, Manchester et New York, Manchester University Press, 1995.
- WHEELER, Michael(ed), *Time and Tide: Ruskin and Science*, London, Pilkington Press, 1996.
- WHEELER, Michael, *Ruskin's God*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- WIHL, Gary, *Ruskin and the Rhetoric of Infallibility*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1985.

2. General works

- ADAMOVSKY, Ezequiel, *Euro-Orientalism. Liberal Ideology and the Image of Russia in France (1740-1880)*, Oxford and New York, Peter Lang, 2006.
- ADAMS, James Eli, *Dandies and Desert Saints. Styles of Victorian Masculinity*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1995.
- ALTICK, Richard D., *Victorian People and Ideas. A Companion for the Modern Reader of Victorian Literature*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, London, 1975.
- ANDERSON, Benedict., *Imagined Communities. Reflection on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1991.
- ARGYLE, Gisela, *Germany as Model and Monster. Allusions in English Fiction, 1830s-1930s*, Montreal, Kingston, London, Ithaca, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
- BAKER, Alan R. and Mark BILLINGE (ed), *Geographies of England. The North-South Divide, Material and Imagined*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- BAKER, Alan R. and Mark BILLINGE, "Material and Imagined Geographies of England," in Alan R. Baker and Mark Billinge (ed), *Geographies of England. The North-South Divide, Material and Imagined*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- BALAKRISHNAN, Gopal(ed), *Mapping the Nation*, London, Verso, n.d.
- BARRELL, John, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt. "The Body of the Public,"* New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1986.
- BARRINGER, Tim, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999.
- BARTLETT, C. J., *Great Britain and Sea Power, 1815-1853*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963.

- BAUCON, Ian, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1999.
- BELLER, Manfred, Joep LEERSEN, (ed.), *Imagology. The Cultural Construction and Literary Representations of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, Amsterdam, New York, Rodopi Publishers, 2007.
- BILLINGE, Mark, "Divided by a Common Language: North and South, 1750-1830," in Alan R. Baker and Mark Billinge (ed), *Geographies of England. The North-South Divide, Material and Imagined*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- BLAYNEY BROWN, David, *Turner et les Alpes. 1802*, catalogue d'exposition, Martigny, Suisse, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, 1999.
- BREWER, John, *The Pleasures of the Imagination. English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997.
- BRIGGS, Asa, *A Social History of England. New Edition. From the Ice Age to the Channel Tunnel*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1994.
- BULLEN, J.B., *The Pre-Raphaelite Body. Fear and Desire in Painting, Poetry, and Criticism*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998.
- CHEETHAM, Mark A., *Artwriting, Nation, and Cosmopolitanism in Britain. The "Englishness" of English Art Theories*, Burlington, Ashgate, 2012.
- CHRISTENSEN, Allan Conrad, *Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Contagion: 'Our feverish contact'*, London and New York, Routledge, 2005.
- CHURCHILL, Kenneth, *Italy and English Literature, 1764-1930*, London and Basingstoke, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1980.
- CHURCHILL, Winston S., *A History of the English Speaking People. The Great Democracies*, New York, Dodd, Mead & Company, 1958.
- CHURCHILL, Winston S., *Painting as a Pastime*, New York, Cornerstone Library, 1950.
- CLAEYS, Gregory, *Imperial Sceptics. British Critics of Empire, 1850-1920*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- COLLEY, Linda, *Forging the Nation. 1707-1837*, Pimlico, 2003.
- COLLINI, Stefan, Richard WHATMORE, Brian YOUNG, *Economy, Policy and Society: British Intellectual History, 1750-1950*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- COLLINI, Stefan, Richard WHATMORE, Brian YOUNG, *History, Religion and Culture: British Intellectual History, 1750-1950*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- COSGROVE, Denis and Stephen DANIELS (ed), *The Iconography of Landscape*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002
- COSGROVE, Denis, *Apollo's Eye. A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imagination*, Baltimore and London, John Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- COSGROVE, Denis, *Geography & Vision. Seeing, Imagining and Representing the World*, London, New York, Taurus, 2008.
- COSGROVE, Denis E., *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, Madison, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998..
- DACOSTA KAUFFMAN, Thomas and Elizabeth PILLIOD(ed.), *Time and Place. The*

- Geohistory of Art*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005.
- DACOSTA KAUFMANN, Thomas, *Toward a Geography Of Art*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- DELLAMORA, Richard, *Masculine Desire. The Sexual politics of Victorian Aestheticism*, Chapel Hill and London, University of North Carolina Press, 1990.
- DOWLING, Linda, *The Vulgarization of Art. The Victorians and Aesthetic Democracy*, Charlottesville and London, University Press of Virginia, 1996.
- DOYLE, Michael W., *Empires*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1986.
- EAGLETON, Terry, Frederic JAMESON, Edward W. SAID, *Nationalisme, colonialisme et literature*, Presses universitaires de Lille, 1994.
- EISENMAN, Stephen F., *Nineteenth Century Art. A Critical History*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1994.
- FAWCETT, Trevor, *The Rise of English Provincial Art. Artists, Patrons, and Institutions outside London, 1800-1830*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974.
- FIGES, Orlando, *The Crimean War. A History*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2010.
- FIRCHOW, Peter Edgerly, *The Death of the German Cousin. Variations on a Literary Stereotype, 1890-1920*, Lewisburg, London and Toronto, Bucknell University Press. Associated University Presses, 1986.
- FLINT, Kate, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- FRAWLEY, Maria H., *A Wider Range. Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England*, Rutherford. Madison. Teaneck, London and Toronto, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Press, 1994.
- GELLNER, Ernest, *Culture, Identity and Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- GELLNER, Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1983.
- GIANNETTI, Louis, *Understanding Movies*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1993.
- GIROUARD, Mark, *The Return to Camelot. Chivalry and the English Gentleman*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1981.
- GO, Julian, *Patterns of Empire. The British and American Empires, 1688 to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- GOLDSWORTHY, Vesna , *Inventing Ruritania. The Imperialism of Imagination*, Yale University Press, 1998.
- GRAHAM, Gerald S., *A Concise History of the British Empire*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1970.
- GREENFELD, Liah, *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, 1992.
- HAMBLYN, Richard, *The Invention of Clouds. How an Amateur Meteorologist Forged the Language of Skies*, London, Picador MacMillan, 2002.
- HATT, Michael, Charlotte KLONK, *Art History. A Critical Introduction to Its Methods*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006.
- HENDERSON, Heather, *The Victorian Self: Autobiography and Biblical Narrative*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1989.
- HEYCK, T. W., *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England*, London

- Sydney, New York, Croom Helm, St. Martin's Press, 1982.
- HILTON, Timothy, *The Pre-Raphaelites*, Harry N. Abrams, Inc, New York, 2000.
- HOBBSAWM, Eric, Terence RANGER(ed), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- HOBBSAWM, Eric, *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*, New York, Vintage Books, 1996.
- HOSKINS, W. G., *The Making of the English Landscape*, London, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1955.
- HOWELL, Philip, "Industry and Identity: the North-South Divide and the Geography of Belonging, 1830-1918," in Alan R. Baker and Mark Billinge (ed), *Geographies of England. The North-South Divide, Material and Imagined*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- HOWES GLEASON, John, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain. A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion*, New York, Octagon Books, 1972.
- HUGUES, Micheline, *L'utopie*, Paris, Nathan, 1999.
- JAHANBEGLOO, Ramin, *Gandhi. Aux sources de la non-violence. Thoreau ; Ruskin ; Tolstoi*, Paris, Editions du Felin, 1998.
- JAMES, Lawrence, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire*, New York, St. Martin Press, 1994.
- JAMESON, Frederic, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1981.
- JENKYNs, Richard, *Dignity and Decadence. Victorian Art and the Classical Inheritance*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1992.
- JOLL, James (ed), *Britain and Europe. Pitt to Churchill. 1793-1940*, London, Nicholas Kaye, 1950.
- KAISER, David Aram, *Romanticism, Aesthetics and Nationalism*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- KEEGAN, John, *A History of Warfare*, New York, Vintage Books, 1994.
- KENNEDY, Paul M., *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914*, New York, Humanity Books, 1988.
- KUCICH, John, *Imperial Masochism, British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2007.
- KUMAR, Krishan, *The Making of English National Identity*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- KUMAR, Krishan, *Utopianism*, Open University Press Milton Keynes, s.p., 1991.
- LEVIN, Michael, *John Stuart Mill on Civilization and Barbarism*, New York, Routledge, 2005.
- LLOYD, Robert, *Spatial Cognition, Geographic Environments*, Dordrecht, Boston, London, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997.
- MANGAN, J.A., *The Games Ethic and Imperialism. Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal*, London, Frank Cass Publishers, 1998.
- MARCHAND, Suzanne L., "German Orientalism and the Decline of the West," in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 145, no 4, December 2001.
- MARKOVITS, Stephanie, *Crimean War in British Imagination*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009
- MARIN, Louis, *Politiques de la représentation*, Editions Kimé, Paris, 2005.

- McKIM, Kristi, *Cinema as Weather. Stylistic Screens and Atmospheric Change*, New York, Routledge, 2013.
- MITCHELL, W.J.T.(ed) *Landscape and Power*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- MORRIS, William, *On Art and Socialism*, London, John Lehman, 1947.
- MYERS, Greg, "Science for Women and Children. The Dialogue of Popular Science in the Nineteenth Century," in John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (ed), *Nature Transfigured. Science and Literature, 1700-1900*, Manchester, New York, Manchester University Press, 1989.
- NEWALL, Christopher, Scott WILCOX and Colin HARRISON, *The Poetry of Truth. Alfred William Hunt and the Art of Landscape*, Oxford New Haven, Ashmolean Museum, Yale Center for British Art, 2004.
- NICOLSON, Marjorie Hope, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1963.
- NOCHLIN, Linda, "The Political Unconscious in Nineteenth-Century Art," in *Art Journal*, Winter 1987, Vol. 46, No. 4.
- NOCHLIN, Linda, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society*, New York, HarperCollins, 1991.
- O'CONNOR, Maura, *The Romance of Italy and the English Political Imagination*, New York, Saint Martin's, 1998.
- OLWIG, Kenneth Robert, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic. From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World*, Madison. Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.
- PARSONS, Timothy H., *The British Imperial Century. 1815-1914, A World History Perspective*, Lanham. Boulder. New York. Oxford, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 1999.
- PECOUT, Gilles (ed), *Penser les frontières de l'Europe du XIX^e siècle au XX^e siècle: elargissement et union. Approches historiques*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2004.
- POCOCK, Douglas C.D. (ed.), *Humanistic Geography and Literature. Essays on the Experience of Place*, London and New York, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2014.
- PORTERFIELD, Todd, *The Allure of Empire. Art in the Service of Empire, 1798-1836*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1998.
- PRETTEJOHN, Elizabeth (ed), *After the Pre-Raphaelites : Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1999.
- PUGH, Martin, *The Making of Modern British Politics. 1867-1939*, Oxford UK and Cambridge U.S.A., Blackwell, 1993.
- ROBERTS, Dana Lee (ed), *Converting Colonialism. Visions and Realities in Mission History. 1786-1914*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.
- ROBINSON, Ronald, John GALLAGHER, Alice DENNY, *Africa and the Victorians. The Official Mind of Imperialism*, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1981.
- RICH, Norman, *The Age of Nationalism and Reform, 1840-1890*, New York, London, W.W. Norton & Company, 1977.
- RICHARDS, Thomas, *The Imperial Archive. Knowledge and the Fantasy of the Empire*, London, New York, Verso, 1993.

- ROSE, Andrea, *The Pre-Raphaelites*, Phaidon, London, 1993.
- ROSE, Phyllis *Mariages Victoriens*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1988.
- ROSENBERG, John, *Elegy for an Age. The Presence of the Past in the Victorian Literature*, London, Anthem Press, 2005.
- RYAN, James R., *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- SAID, Edward W., *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage Books. A Division of Random House, Inc., New York, 1994.
- SCHAMA, Simon, *Landscape and Memory*, Toronto, Random House of Canada, 1995.
- SEIGEL, Jerrold, *Bohemian Paris. Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930*, New York, Elisabeth Sifton Books. Viking, 1986.
- SIEGEL, Jonah, *Desire and Excess: the Nineteenth-Century Culture of Art*, Princeton, Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2000.
- SPECK, W. A., *A Concise History of Britain. 1707-1975*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- TOYE, Richard, *Churchill's Empire. The World that Made Him and the World He Made*, London, Macmillan, 2010.
- TUAN, Yi-Fu, *Topophilia. A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1974.
- WALLERSTEIN, Immanuel, *European Universalism. The Rhetoric of Power*, New York, London, The New Press, 2006.
- WALLERSTEIN, Immanuel, *The Modern World-System. IV. Centrist Liberalism Triumphant. 1789-1914*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2011.
- WALLERSTEIN, Immanuel, *World-Systems Analysis. An Introduction*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2004.
- WATSON, George, *The English Ideology. Studies in the Language of Victorian Politics*, London, Allen Lane, 1973.
- WHITE, Hayden, *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 1975.
- WILLIAMS, Patrick, Laura CHRISMAN, *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory. A Reader*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- WILLIAMS, Raymond, *The Country and the City*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1973.
- WILLIAMS, Raymond, *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, London, Verso, 1980.
- WOLFF, Larry, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1994.
- WRIGHT, Patrick, *Iron Curtain. From Stage to Cold War*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.
- ZERNER, Henri, *Ecrire l'histoire de l'art. Figures d'une discipline*, Paris, Gallimard, 1997.
- ZORGBIBE, Charles, *L'imperialisme*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1996.

3. Secondary sources in hypertext

- BERTOLETTE, William F., *British Identity and the German Other*, PhD Thesis, Louisiana State University,
<http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-01242012200750/unrestricted/BertoPhD.pdf>.
- BLAYNEY BROWN, David (ed), *J.M.W. Turner: Sketchbooks, Drawings and Watercolours*, December 2012,
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/jmw-turner>
- CHURCHILL, Winston, *Selected Speeches*,
<http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill>.
- CODELL, Julie F., *John Ruskin's Political Economy of Art: Valuing Victorian Artist's Labor*,
<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/codell.html>.
- GOSSMAN, Lionel "Unwilling Moderns: The Nazarene Painters of the Nineteenth Century," in *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide. A Journal of Nineteenth Century Visual Culture*, v.2, issue3, 2003,
<http://www.19thcartworldwide.org/index.php/autumn03/273-unwilling-moderns-the-nazarene-painters-of-the-nineteenth-century>
- LANDOW, George P., *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin*
[www.victorianweb.org.authors/ruskin/atheories/contents.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/atheories/contents.html).
- LANDOW, George P., *There Began to Be a Great Talking About the Fine Arts*
http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/fine_arts/criticism/html.
- LANDOW, George P., *Elegant Jeremiahs: The Sage from Carlyle to Mailer*
<http://www.victorianweb.org/genre/ej/contents/html>.
- LEONI, Giovanni, *Fonti e fortuna critica di Pittori Moderni*,
<http://www.icar.poliba.it/storiacontemporanea/letture/leoni/fontiefortunacritica.pdf>.
- SAWYER, Paul L., *Ruskin's Poetic Argument: The Design of his Major Works*
<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/sawyer/contents.html>.
- WILDMAN, Stephen, *A Ruskin Bibliography*, Ruskin Library, Lancaster University,
<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib/Documents/bibliography.pdf>.
- John Ruskin. Overview. 1819-1900*,
<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/index.html>.

4. Internet sites

- The Churchill Centre and Museum*,
<http://www.winstonchurchill.org>.
- The Electronic Edition of Modern Painters volume I*,

- <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ruskin/empi>.
The Journal of William Morris Studies,
<http://www.morrissociety.org/journal.shtml>.
Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide. A Journal of Nineteenth Century Visual Culture,
<http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org>.
Rossetti Archive,
<http://www.rossettiarchive.org>.
Ruskin Library,
<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib>.
The Ruskin Research Centre,
<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ruskin>.
Tate Gallery,
<http://www.tate.org.uk>.
The Victorian Web,
<http://www.victorianweb.org>.