

Nineties diversities in outlook and form in poems. Especially interesting may be Prins's, in which Meynell's silences in verse are the focus. These she adapted from Patmore on metrics, "turning his theory into a poetics of pauses that would appeal to cultivated ears" (p. 265). Thain's critique of Roman Catholic concepts of the Trinity underlying/underlining the writing duo and their dog may be the most provocative essay (in several senses) in the collection.

Finally, another panorama of women writers and writing, *Encyclopedia of British Women's Writing, 1900-1950*, ed. Faye Hammill, Esme Miskimmin, and Ashlie Sponenberg (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), includes entries on Alice and Viola Meynell, Ella D'Arcy, Ethel Coburn Mayne, Netta Syrett, Mina Loy, Charlotte Mew, May Sinclair, Edith Sitwell, plus such general entries as "Health and Medicine," "Homosexuality (Male)," "Lesbianism," "Little Magazines," "Modernism," and "Women's Movement." This book also is a "must" for anybody who understands that "the 1890s" did not cease to be at 11:59 p.m., 1899, but that indeed those Nineties possessed viability that is still discernable even today. Books like this one are often overlooked in this time of critical theory orientation, no matter how useful they may be, and the editors deserve high commendation for assembling such a useful reference-research compilation.

The Pre-Raphaelites

FLORENCE S. BOOS

The past year has brought us *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, The Chelsea Years, 1863-1872*, III. 1871-72, the fifth volume of a series originally to be prepared by the late William Fredeman, and completed after his death in 1999 by a consortium of editors listed as Roger C. Lewis, Jane Cowan, Roger W. Peattie, Allan Life, and Page Life. Fredeman's hand may be seen in the work's voluminous appendices, bibliography, and "Biographical and Analytical Index" (pp. 379-676), and one of the nine appendices reproduces his *Prelude to the Last Decade: Dante Gabriel Rossetti in the Summer of 1872* (1971), a reconstruction of the period of Rossetti's mental breakdown that Fredeman based on his research in the Penkill and Angeli papers.

The work's "Biographical and Analytical Index," in particular, recapitulates prior entries in the indexes to the first five volumes (1835-72), and Fredeman (presumably) explained his rationale for such care as follows: "Among the many deficiencies of the Doughty-Wahl edition of Rossetti's letters, perhaps the most serious—certainly the most inconvenient—was the absence of an index. While some users may feel that this editor has erred in the opposite direction, the ultimate test will be in the reliability and usefulness of the index to scholars, students, and readers who consult it" (p. 487).

One reason why many may in fact wish to consult this index is that it offers a summary of the contents of all letters published in the edition to date, under a number of rubrics (names, artworks, and publications among them). Rossetti's relations with William Morris, for example, take up four columns, with Ford Madox Brown more than eight, and with Charles Augustus Howell about seven. Other appendices offer editorial views (presumably Fredeman's) of the antecedents of Elizabeth Siddal's suicide, as well as Rossetti's experiments with spiritualism and his conjectures about immortality (according to William Michael Rossetti, "he credited neither immediate bliss after death nor irrevocable 'damnation,' but rather a period of purgation and atonement, with gradual ascent, comparable more or less to the purgatory of Roman Catholics" [p. 403]).

As in earlier volumes, the letters in this one reveal a self-absorbed but often generous man at his best and worst: capable of genuine eloquence in notes to families of deceased artists and affection for close friends such as Ford Madox Brown and Thomas Hake; and of ill-temper in negotiations with much-tried patrons and overbearing demands on his long-suffering employees and friends.

Readers aware of the pain Rossetti's affair with Jane Morris caused her husband will also find evasive several of his letters from Kelmscott Manor in the summer and early fall of 1871, in which he blandly alluded to family readings of Shakespeare and made polite references to Morris' journey to Iceland, but pointedly ignored the reasons for his stoic friend's absence. Rossetti expressed urbane boredom with the nearby village ("only 117 inhabitants in Kelmscott, a hoary sleepy old lump of beehives as ever you saw" [September 4; p. 135]), but graciously acknowledged that "I have been here some days now & it is simply the loveliest place in the world—I mean the house and garden & immediate belongings" (July 16; p. 71), and for a time seriously considered the possibility of permanent settlement there. In an 1872 letter to Aglaia Coronio, Morris glossed such plans and other aspects of the situation as follows: "Rossetti has set himself down at Kelmscott as if he never meant to go away; and not only does that keep me away from that harbour of refuge, (because it is really a farce our meeting when we can help it) but also he has all sorts of ways so unsympathetic with the sweet simple old place, that I feel his presence there as a kind of a slur on it" (November 25, 1872; *Letters*, ed. Kelvin, 1:12).

Rossetti's 1871 letters also commented at length on his own and others' poetry, set forth blunt criticisms and suggestions for the work of friends and acquaintances such as Hake, John Payne, and W. B. Scott, and expressed satisfaction that his eyesight had improved and his earning power had not waned. He was creatively active as well, drafting "Sunset Wings," "Cloud Confines," "Down Stream," "The Chimes," "Soothsay," and "Rose Mary," as well as twenty-seven sonnets for "The House of Life," and the only signs of

(understandable) agitation appeared in his responses to Robert Buchanan's now-famous assault on "The Fleshly School of Poetry," which appeared under the pseudonym of Thomas Maitland in the October 1871 *Contemporary Review*. Initially, at least, Rossetti tried to brush off Buchanan's "abuse [which] comes in a form that even a bard can . . . grin at without grimacing" (to F. S. Ellis; October 8, 1871), but he wrote other letters of inquiry and outrage in which he attempted to marshal critics and supporters in his defense and prepared (against the advice of several of his friends) the counterattack which appeared as "The Stealthy School of Criticism" in the *Athenaeum* for December 1871.

The letters preserved from January through May showed little or no forewarning of Rossetti's June 2nd attempted suicide, however—so little, in fact, as to give rise to suspicions that many may have been destroyed. On May 28, Rossetti wrote his purchaser James Leathart about a sale, and on June 4 put off a proposed visit from another client George Rae with an explanation that he was "a good deal engaged." He wrote Robert Browning on June 5 to thank him warmly for a copy of *Fifine at the Fair* (a work he later interpreted as a hostile attack), and wrote his mother on June 21 to assure her he had arrived safely at Urrard House in Perthshire, the rural location chosen for his convalescence. Most of the extant letters from the next two months—to William Michael Rossetti, Ford Madox Brown, Charles Augustus Howell, and Thomas Gordon Hake (whose son George worked as his attendant)—focused on money-raising and provision for Fanny Cornforth, or expressed gratitude for his friends' and brother's kindness and concern.

As he recovered from his breakdown, Rossetti moved to a house in Trowan near Perth in September and resumed more normal modes of correspondence from there, writing F. S. Ellis to recommend publication of a novel by his friend Hake, to Fanny to alert her to delays in his return to London, and to Brown to describe the new paintings he hoped to undertake. In Kelmscott by late September, he gradually returned to his painting and intricate financial maneuvers, and wrote with a certain bravado to Howell on September 30 that "the pictures I shall be painting now will be a great advance on my best hitherto, as the last thing or two I have done prove conclusively."

As this brief summary suggests, few scholarly revelations emerge from the most recent volume of Rossetti's collected letters, but the continuing project remains an invaluable source of insight for critics and historians into the complicated interpenetration of Rossetti's creative gifts, unquestioned accomplishments, and precarious mental equilibrium.

In his introduction to *Haunted Texts: Studies in Pre-Raphaelitism in Honour of William E. Fredeman* (2003), a retrospective of the revival of Rossetti scholarship initiated by Fredeman's *Pre-Raphaelitism: A Bibliocritical Study* (1965), David Latham outlines briefly something of Fredeman's unusual life-course, from his origins as a ward of state in a public orphanage in Arkansas,

to his preparation of the dissertation which became *A Bibliocritical Study* and subsequent career as an academic and patron of younger students of Pre-Raphaelitism at the University of British Columbia.

Latham also reviews the historical and semantic evolution of the term "Pre-Raphaelitism," and observes correctly that much of the notion's appeal has derived from its interdisciplinary diffusion. Citing Morris' definition of romance as "the capacity for a true conception of history, a power of making the past part of the present" (p. 5), he further argues that Pre-Raphaelite texts are "haunted" by their programmatic intention to view "the present through prefigurations from the past and the eternal through the concrete details of mythology" (p. 3), and comments on Pre-Raphaelite preoccupation with preternaturally "natural" detail in moments of crisis and uses of "the decorative" to "eternalize the mundane" (p. 15). Appropriately, given the generative diffusion of the term, Latham concludes that "truth for the Pre-Raphaelite is the variety of possibilities suspended among different readings" (p. 19). His article offers an excellent starting point for study of Pre-Raphaelitism's historical and interpretive ramifications, as well as a thoughtful guide to recent criticism.

In his article "A Commentary on Some of Rossetti's Translations from Dante," Jerome McGann interprets Rossetti's *dicta* in *The Early Italian Poets* (1861) that "a good poem shall not be turned into a bad one," that "faithful" but not "literal" translations are desirable, and that translators should seek metrical (not semantic) equivalents in the prosody of the target-language as partial anticipations of twentieth-century translation theory.

In support of Rossetti's view, McGann also offers careful readings of the seventeen poems of "Vita Nuova," construes Rossetti's uses of "a multiplicity of short words and ground[ing of] the rhythm in words of one syllable" as a sophisticated effort to echo the rhythms of the work's Italian original, and concludes his tribute with a kind of secular-chiliastic assertion that "Rossetti's poetry as everyone knows, is replete with haunted texts, where the present world is regularly impinged upon by forces from the past and spirits of the dead. Rossetti's translation of the *Vita Nuova* is exactly that kind of text—less a translation, in the ordinary sense, than a raising from the dead through a secular reinvention of a key Christian economy, prefiguration. The New Life of Dante's autobiography, in his view of the matter, is that one far-off sublime event to which its whole creation, unbenownst to itself, moved" (p. 49).

In "Rossetti's Elegy for Masculine Desire: Seduction and Loss in the 'House of Life,'" E. Warwick Slinn analyzes the progression of the poem's images, from a stage in which the male speaker seduces a woman by "appropriating her qualities in order to define and qualify his own" (p. 55), to a recognition of his own predicament in which "poetic identity is tied to the present absence of a female other and where loss, if not inherent, is certainly endemic" (p. 57) and "love" "becomes . . . merely an abstract noun,

a signifier without a referent" (p. 65). Observing that the emptiness of this formula would be "no surprise to contemporary feminine psychoanalysis," Slinn concludes that "courtly love structures could not provide suitable roles for female poets without considerable modification, as both Elizabeth Barrett Browning in "Sonnets from the Portuguese and Christina Rossetti in 'Monna Innominata' demonstrate; but *The House of Life* shows that these structures also fail to sustain male identity and idealism" (p. 6).

In "The Great Pre-Raphaelite Paper Chase: A Retropective," a talk read in 1994, five years before his death, William Fredeman reviewed his career as a collector and editor as well as the changing fortunes of Pre-Raphaelitism, a topic considered so insignificant in his youth that his dissertation committee was reluctant to let him pursue it. Recalling with zest yesteryear's low prices for Pre-Raphaelite artifacts (and regretting the bargains and finds which escaped him), Fredeman also remembered with special fondness his discovery of the Penkill papers in an attic trunk unopened since Alice Boyd's death in 1897 (cf. the mansard-discovery of "dolly's-secret" in A. S. Byatt's *Possession*), as well as his close personal ties with Rossetti's niece Helen Rossetti Angeli, who offered him (and through him, us) not only the Angeli-Dennis collection, but a bountiful store of personal information about the Rossetti family as well.

With characteristic asperity and tenacity, finally, Fredeman reviewed and enumerated for his 1994 audience the delays, quarrels, and inaccuracies of the Doughty-Wahl edition which his own edition of Rossetti's letters was designed to supplant, and his narrative conveys twelve years later the passion and single-mindedness which made him one of Victorian literary criticism's foremost archival scholars.

In "William Michael Rossetti and the Making of Christina Rossetti's Reputation," Roger Peattie draws together the impressive evidence of William Michael's consistent and indefatigable efforts to aid his sister's career and reputation, in response to other critics' claims that William Michael hindered or exploited his sister's work. Not only did William support her financially between 1854 and 1876, for example, but he also spent much of the last twenty years of his life editing and arranging for posthumous publication of her letters and verse, including many poems not published in her lifetime. He rejected her religious faith but appreciated her gifts, and wrote to his daughter Olivia in 1898 that Christina was "truly a very great poet; & one cannot read a dozen lines of her without coming upon something which rings true to all time" (p. 89).

William Michael Rossetti—the self-effacing lifelong chronicler of his siblings and associates—has also (and at long last) become a subject in his own right, in Angela Thirlwell's *William and Lucy: The Other Rossettis* (Yale Univ. Press, 2003)—an account which lends strong support to William Fredeman's assertion that William "was almost the only man of action [in the Pre-Rapha-

elite Brotherhood], and without him there would have been no Brotherhood, no *Germ*, no *PRB Journal*, and no movement to leave its mark on the history of English art.”

Thirlwell’s work also rescues from ancillary obscurity William’s gifted and mercurial wife Lucy Brown Rossetti, a feminist biographer who shared her husband’s progressive views, and raised four independent and artistically inclined children before she succumbed to tuberculosis in (what would now be) early middle age. Lucy Rossetti was also an accomplished portraitist, who rendered Mathilde Blind, André (the son of the family’s French cook) and others in chalk, and painted oil and watercolor tableaux of “Romeo and Juliet in the Tomb,” “Ferdinand and Miranda Playing Chess,” “The Fair Geraldine or the Magic Mirror,” and (a particularly interesting subject, I think) “Margaret Roper Rescuing the Head of Her Father.”

By way of diversion, Thirlwell also offers readers dozens of reproductions of hitherto little-known artworks and photographs: paintings by Ford Madox Brown; a lavishly illustrated (dual) family tree; William and Lucy’s wedding photograph; and (a surprise, at least to me) drawings by William of his mother, his sister Christina, and John Everett Millais. The quality of these drawings suggests that he might have enjoyed a modest artistic career, had he not assumed the heavy obligation to pay the family’s bills.

At a deeper level, finally—drawing on diaries, private correspondence, and contemporary reminiscences and arranging her exposition in diachronic sections (“Scenes from Family Life,” “The Victorian,” “Pre-Raphaelite,” “Artist,” “Man of Letters,” “Marriage,” “Radicals,” “The Patient,” and “Coda”)—Thirlwell has provided readers with an almost Chekhovian account of the passionate bonds which united “William and Lucy,” as well as the mingled idealism and insecurity of Lucy Rossetti’s temperament in her last valetudinarian decade. *William and Lucy’s* absorbing account of a “sexually frank, avowedly agnostic, politically radical and committedly feminist” (as well as artistic, literary, and cosmopolitan) couple corrects as well as supplements our understanding of lives and accomplishments of the “movement”’s “brothers,” wives, and sisters.

In “To the Rossettis, from the Solomons: Five Unpublished Letters” (*N & Q*, March 2005), Roberto C. Ferrari reproduces and comments on five letters from the artists Simeon and Rebecca Solomon, in evidence for his assertion that the Solomons and Rossettis were more closely acquainted than biographers have assumed. William Rossetti wrote two favorable reviews of Solomon’s artwork in 1858, and in 1864 Solomon offered to join WMR on a trip to Paris. In other letters, Simeon also praised William Michael’s Whitman edition and apologized to Dante for his failure to return an artistic prop. Rebecca Solomon wrote to Dante Rossetti to seek his advice on one of her paintings, remark on her impoverished state, and (sadly) implore him to

hire her as an assistant. Simeon Solomon was later shunned after an arrest for indecent exposure and attempted “buggery” in 1873; Rebecca died in a handsome cab accident in 1886; and Simeon, by then an alcoholic, died in poverty in 1905.

In “Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Burdens of Nineveh,” (VLC 33, no. 2), Andrew M. Stauffer develops a number of historical and interpretive insights into the revisions and antecedents of Rossetti’s “Burden of Nineveh.” Tracing Romantic representations of Egyptian and Assyrian artifacts as a sign of the decay of past imperial empires, Stauffer finds precedents for Rossetti’s interpretation of the bull as a prophecy of potential British decay in an unusual range of sources: Byron’s *Sardanapalus* (1821), for example, illustrations and poetry in *Punch* (1850), Alfred William Hunt’s 1851 poem “Nineveh,” and a story in Dickens’ *Household Words* (titled “The Nineveh Bull,” 1851).

Most important, of course, was Austen Henry Layard’s *Nineveh and Its Remains* (1849), whose illustrations invited symbolic parallels between the Assyrian king’s employment of bands of slaves to drag the immense bull to its original station and Layard’s employment of Arab laborers to haul the bull to a British ship. In his conclusion, Stauffer construes Rossetti’s poem as an instance of Ricoeurian “appropriation”—the use of past artifacts to generate new forms of present self-awareness—and wryly compares the poem’s allusions to the mummy’s uncovering with Rossetti’s exhumation of his poetic manuscript from his wife’s tomb.

Christina Rossetti’s work has been reexamined in four articles which appeared this year. In “A Chink in the Armour: Christina Rossetti’s ‘The Prince’s Progress,’ ‘A Royal Princess,’ and Victorian Medievalism” (*Women’s Writing* 12, no. 1), Noelle Bowles argues that the two cited poems critiqued Victorian romanticizations of the medieval world, and “more than any of her other works, revise[d] and subvert[ed] the cultural framework of Victorian neo-feudalism and its authoritarian, patriarchal philosophy” (p. 116).

The desultory and unmotivated hero of “The Prince’s Progress,” for example, fails to complete his quest and redeem his intended princess, in a portrayal which effectively sends up Victorian depictions of chivalry and suggests that “the man real women wait for may not be worth the suffering and self-abnegation” (p. 119). Similarly, Rossetti’s “Royal Princess”—who comes to understand the oppressions which have goaded her father’s subjects to rebel, and offers her jewels to the needy—enjoins us to do likewise. Unfortunately, however, “we do not witness [the princess’] confrontation with the crowd or her reception by the masses. . . . [for to] enact the envisioned solidarity of women and workers was perhaps too radical a step for Rossetti to take” (p. 121), and Bowles concludes that “if readers are enchanted by the glamour of medievalism and blindly accept its socio-political tenets, Christina Rossetti suggests they will be happy never after” (p. 124).

In “Christina Rossetti’s Poetic Vocation” (*Women’s Writing* 12, no. 2), Sarah Fiona Winters takes issue with Gilbert and Gubar’s interpretation of *Maud* as an allegorical conflict between literary ambition and religious renunciation, and argues that Rossetti pursued her vocation as a means of serving God through her public voice. Setting aside obvious tensions between secular and religious desires evident in Rossetti’s early poetry, Winters contrasts her motivations with Gerard Manley Hopkins’ ambivalent responses to “fame” and publication, and concludes that “Rossetti actively sought to publish her poetry because she was able to reconcile her identities as a woman and as a poet by subsuming both under her identity as a Christian” (p. 299).

In “The Edge of Sisterhood in Christina Rossetti’s ‘The Convent Threshold’” (*JPRS* 14, Fall), Scott Rogers suggests that the poem’s protagonist may be a “fallen woman” about to enter a house of “reclamation,” and argues that “convents were closely involved in efforts to reclaim fallen women, and this association complicates the assumption that crossing the convent threshold only entails becoming a nun, since there were many similarities between a fallen woman entering a house of reclamation and a nun entering the cloister” (p. 31). Finding the poem’s absence of any portrayal of life within the convent “a sanitizing of the relationship between the fallen woman and the institution of reclamation” (p. 34), he concludes that Rossetti had had little or no direct contact with such institutions when she composed “The Convent Threshold” (July 9, 1858), but began “to examine more fully what lies beyond the convent threshold . . . as her own knowledge of the inner workings of those communities [became] more complete while volunteering at Highgate Penitentiary” (p. 41).

In “‘Eat Me, Drink Me, Love Me’: Eucharist and the Erotic Body in Christina Rossetti’s *Goblin Market*” (*VP* 43, no. 4), Marylu Hill interprets the scene in which Laura sucks goblin juices from her sister Lizzie as a “regenerative meal” and “body offered as sacrifice and then as food—which is precisely how the Eucharist is defined throughout Church history” (p. 462). Noting that E. B. Pusey’s 1855 *Doctrine of the Real Presence* interpreted the eucharist as an “antidote” for the apple of sin which must be imbibed through a “real, actual, though Sacramental and spiritual drinking” (p. 466), Hill argues that “Rossetti forces our concept of the erotic body to an entirely new limit” (p. 465), and concludes that “Rossetti offers a masterful illustration of how the forces of the erotic and the spiritual might be yoked together to reveal the body as something desirable yet also the very stuff of sacrifice and redemption” (p. 470).

The year’s most extensive collection of articles devoted to William Morris is a commemorative double issue of the *Journal of William Morris Studies* edited by Rosie Miles. In her opening essay, “Morris’s Ethics, Cosmopolitanism and Globalisation,” Regenia Gagnier assesses Morris’ achievements and socialist

convictions in the context of late-nineteenth-century preoccupations with perennial tensions between “individual freedoms and social provisions,” and explores some of the implications of Morris’ stubborn refusal to distinguish “the Fine” from “the Good,” as well as his denial that genuine individuality can flourish in the absence of equality and social justice. Observing correctly that Morris was a “great writer of pilgrims, travellers and refugees” (pp. 19-20), and that an ethic of “hospitality: the treatment of the Guest or the Other” (p. 12) was deeply important to him, Gagnier also assimilates his protagonists’ loneliness, cultural internationalism, and willingness to overcome hostility to the virtues of an idealized “kosmopolitēs,” or world-citizen. In her conclusion, she suggests that “his hospitality toward guests and others,” as well as “his disenchantment and . . . critical engagement with his own age” and often-dismissed and sometimes-maligned medievalism (‘the past is another country’) “keep . . . before our minds images of freedom . . . and . . . justice for pilgrims, guests and refugees of time and space . . . like and not like our own” (p. 24).

In “Rediscovering the Topography of Wonder: Morris, Iceland and the Late Romances,” Phillippa Bennett construes Morris’ response to the remote beauty of Iceland as a not “wholly intelligible” reaction which profoundly affected his later life. Observing that “other visitors gazed at, rode through, took samples from, sketched and wrote about Iceland, . . . [but] Morris *wondered* at it” (p. 35), Bennett mines the aesthetic vocabulary of Kantian and Ruskinian notions of wonder and sublimity for insights into Morris’ diaries of the period, typified by his passing remark that “there was something eminently touching about the valley [of Halldórsstaðir] and its nearness to the waste that gave me that momentary insight into what the whole thing means that blesses us sometimes and is gone again” (p. 36), and concludes that the “topography of wonder” of vast mountain barriers, in particular, generated in him a “movement from momentary paralysis to vital action. . . . Morris recognised that a profound experience of wonder raised those energies and faculties even—and perhaps most particularly—when such personal security could not be guaranteed” (p. 40).

In “Kinetic Utopias: H. G. Wells’s *A Modern Utopia* and William Morris’s *News from Nowhere*,” Tony Pinkney responds to H. G. Wells’s indictment of *News from Nowhere* as a sentimental and “unmodern” text with the argument that *News from Nowhere* contains “principles of change and transformation within itself,” and presents “two utopias bound within the same set of book covers” (p. 50), one in which Guest learns the principles of a new society from its inhabitants, and another in which he finds the spiritual meaning of *Nowhere* in the vital but complex and elusive figure of Ellen, who “asks us [in effect] to reassess . . . its idyllic London scenes, . . . [and envision a] more energetic, fully historicised and political world” (p. 54).

In “The Story of Alcestis in William Morris and Ted Hughes,” Peter Faulkner contrasts Ted Hughes’s *Alcestis* (1999), which ends with Heracles’ allegorical redemption of Alcestis from death and a choral injunction to “[l]et this give man hope,” with Morris’ “Story of Alcestis” in *The Earthly Paradise*, based on Apollodorus, in which Alcestis’ sacrificial death brings her immortal fame. Observing that Alcestis’ redemption in Morris’ redaction was the immortality of remembrance, Faulkner correctly finds “no role in Morris’ world, now or later, for a Heracles who can overcome the power of Death” (p. 77).

In “The Music of the Mind: Structure and Substance in William Morris’s *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*,” George D. Gopen argues that Morris’ romance shares a theme-, variation-, and return-structure common to musical forms such as the minuet and trio, and interprets Birdalone’s voyages and encounters as stages in a development which concludes “when she returns eventually to each of the islands, [and] we recall the home-ness of the island that was established the first time around and are impressed by how she now ‘knows it for the first time’” (p. 96). Gopen’s interpretations clarify certain idiosyncracies of the romance’s plot, and support his conclusion that “Morris . . . combined the psychological force of the fairy tale with the inundative detail of the full extension of a novel to present the . . . maturation process of a young woman striving to find her way in a predominately male world” (p. 101).

In “William Morris’s ‘Our Country Right or Wrong’: A Critical Edition” and a companion-piece (“Dystopian Violence: William Morris and the Nineteenth-Century Peace Movement,” *JPRS* 14, Spring), I reproduced a hitherto partly unpublished anti-war essay Morris wrote in the period of his work for the Eastern Question Association, and interpreted the essay as a whole as a more than usually prescient critique of reasons of state and the elusive notion of a “just” war.

In it, for example, Morris imagined the effects of war in central London, denounced imperial interventions in Africa, Afghanistan, and the Balkans, and reminded his auditors that appeals to patriotism provide convenient pretexts for domestic repression. In anticipation of his later political views, he also contrasted such pretexts with a counterfactual social order in which

every man’s work would be pleasant to himself and helpful to his neighbor [,] . . . his leisure from bread-earning work . . . would be thoughtful and rational: . . . [S]uch a man as this . . . would never fail in self-respect [, and . . .] you may be sure he would take good care to have his due share in the government of his country and would know all about its dealings with other countries: justice to himself & all others would be no mere name to him, but the rule of all his actions, the passionate desire of his life. (p. 56)

Prompted by such passages, I construed in “Dystopian Violence”

Morris' unpublished critiques of "National Vain-glory" as anticipations of his subsequent critiques of capitalism, as well as natural consequents of the reflections of Quaker pacifists such as William Dymond and the activities of then-pioneering but now-forgotten working-class anti-war groups such as the Workman's Peace Association, the Workmen's Neutrality Committee, and the Labour Representation League, and analogues and variants of views of mutualist anarchists and communists such as Proudhon and Kropotkin.

More speculatively, I also suggested that Morris gradually edged closer to outright pacifism as he gained in wariness and political sophistication. Consider, for example, one of his last public utterances on the subject: "The doing of it [making the workers conscious of the need for change] speedily and widely is the real safeguard against acts of violence, which even when done by fanatics and not by self-seekers are still acts of violence, and therefore degrading to humanity, *as all war is*" (Morris' italics, Hammersmith Socialist Record, 1892).

In "Where Medieval Romance Meets Victorian Reality: The 'Woman Question' in William Morris' *The Wood Beyond the World*" (in Lorreta M. Holloway and Jennifer A. Palmgren, *Beyond Arthurian Romances: The Reach of Victorian Medievalism*, Palgrave), Lori Campbell argues that Morris' portrayals of egalitarian relationships in *News from Nowhere* (1890), *The Glittering Plain* (1890), and *The Water of the Wondrous Isles* (1896) evolved "as a line of inquiry, with each new story revealing new turns in his thinking" (p. 179). She interprets the period in which Walter's fate is determined in the "wood" by the actions of the "Mistress" and the "Maid" as an example of role-reversal, and construes the "Maid"'s ultimate abjuration of magical powers for conventional wifely roles as an implicit suggestion by Morris "that a system founded on a lack of equality for all, regardless of sex, offers no hope for any real social or political progress" (p. 188).

In "The Worship of Courage': William Morris's *Sigurd the Volsung* and Victorian Medievalism" (Holloway and Palmgren), finally, Richard Frith distinguishes "Pre-Raphaelite or Aesthetic medievalism," which prized subversively erotic elements of medieval art, from 'Ruskinian medievalism,' which idealized the social order of the Middle Ages, and he interprets "Sigurd the Volsung," drafted after Morris' return from Iceland, as a "combination of . . . tragic love story with . . . qualities of reticence and stoicism" (p. 120) embedded in cycles of nature.

Acknowledging that Morris made the figure of Sigurd "more altruistic and less revenge-driven than his saga counterpart" (p. 125), Frith argues that Morris' historicism nevertheless prompted him "simultaneously to universalize the tale and to retain its cultural specificity" (p. 127) rather than assimilate it to Victorian ideals of the sort embodied in Tennyson's *Idylls*, and that this decision made *Sigurd the Volsung* "in a real sense the central work of Morris's

life. . . . poised on the cusp of [his] political involvements," where "the themes of his earlier, 'Aesthetic' poetry are held uniquely in balance with those of his later, more sociopolitically oriented works" (p. 129).

Assorted "historical turns" seem to have been reflected in the year's new volume of Rossetti letters and biographical traces of lost historical figures such as Rebecca and Simeon Solomon and under-appreciated ones such as Lucy and William Michael Rossetti. Morris scholars, for their part, have focused much of their attention on his quasi-historical prose romances, long narrative poems, political essays, and evocations of "pilgrims, guests and refugees" in his time and ours.

Swinburne

YISRAEL LEVIN AND MARGOT K. LOUIS

Following last year's edition of Terry L. Meyers' *Uncollected Letters of Algernon Charles Swinburne* and Jerome McGann and Charles Sligh's *Major Poems and Selected Prose*, this year has also seen the publication of a long anticipated work in the form of Catherine Maxwell's *Swinburne*. Together with Maxwell, however, the passing year has provided an interesting variety of Swinburne material. Apart from studies that specifically focus on Swinburne, a great portion of the works discussed below present him as part of much broader contexts. More than in previous years, therefore, Swinburne's poetry and prose are regarded as representing and participating in larger cultural, literary, and aesthetic phenomena.

Catherine Maxwell's *Swinburne* (Tavistock: Northcote House, 2006), as Maxwell herself declares, is intended to provide an introductory edition that would assist general readers to "orient themselves . . . by examining a representative sample of Swinburne's work" (p. 10). This she does wonderfully by weaving together biographical facts, close readings, and references to various scholarly studies. A great deal of Maxwell's introduction is dedicated to discussing the reasons for Swinburne's scholarly neglect, which, she argues, was to a great extent the result of "the many kinds of caricature levelled at the poet throughout his career and afterwards" (pp. 4-5). In arguing so, Maxwell introduces an original view which will surely contribute to the ongoing debate about Swinburne's poetic and public image. The book's first chapter focuses on the poetry of the 1860s; Maxwell's point of departure is Swinburne's response to sensation literature conventions and the manner he manages to manipulate them for his own purposes. The poems she discusses in detail are "Before the Mirror" (in what is one of the best analyses of the poem to date), "Sapphics," and "Pasiphae"—a poem that never found its way into *Poems and*