

Persistent Ruskin: Studies in Influence, Assimilation and Effect edited by Keith Hanley and Brian Maidment. Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. xv, 215 pp.+ 15 b/w illus. ISBN 978-1-4094-0076-9. £49.50; \$99.95.

Those who have spent time studying the formidable works of John Ruskin know that he was a man of diverse talents and interests that occupied him throughout his lengthy career. As a collection of recent thinking about Ruskin and his influence throughout the Victorian world, *Persistent Ruskin* does an excellent job of emphasizing Ruskin's varied accomplishments through its much needed attention to the more obscure areas of the critic's career. In particular, co-editors Keith Hanley and Brian Maidment focus on Ruskin's influence outside of Europe and his success in reaching the working classes of Britain. This compilation of short essays will certainly be of great interest to those studying Ruskin's work, but it also underscores Ruskin's importance for those interested in the dynamics of social history, economics, philosophy, and gender during the Victorian period.

Persistent Ruskin grew out of Hanley and Maidment's research project entitled "John Ruskin, Cultural Travel, and Popular Access," from which they organized several colloquia (funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council UK). Following the thematic structure of these colloquia, the volume is organized into three sections that explore channels of Ruskin's influence outside of his well-known connections to the Pre-Raphaelites. Each section contains four essays that delve into various aspects of Ruskin's career. As part of Ashgate's *The Nineteenth Century* series (edited by Vincent Newey and Joanne Shattock), the disciplinary emphasis in *Persistent Ruskin* is primarily literary. However, Hanley and Maidment were able to bring together a refreshingly diverse group of scholars who offer new perspectives on the interdisciplinarity of Ruskin's work.

In their introduction, Hanley and Maidment introduce us to the Ruskin of *Persistent Ruskin*. This bit of authorial maneuvering is essential because of Ruskin's mercurial persona in his own writings but also in his afterlife as a focus of scholarly analysis. The Ruskin that we meet in the introduction is defined by his liberal education and philosophical underpinning as well as his concept of cultural value, especially as it pertains to art and the act of artistic creation. Hanley and Maidment attempt to subvert a common assumption that Ruskin's critical focus gradually shifted in the 1860s away from art criticism towards eventual incoherent ramblings about social policy in the 1870s and 1880s. Instead, they emphasize the validity of Ruskin's work, in particular his concept of political economy, or the idea that wealth is determined by intrinsic value rather than by external market forces. The Ruskin of Hanley and Maidment's introduction is a man who was destined, by his early education