

William Vaughan. German Romanticism and English Art. Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press. New Haven and London, 1979, 309 pp., 173 plates. \$45.00.

Scholars have long speculated that German art of the early nineteenth century exerted an influence on the stylistic and iconographic tenets of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. William Vaughan's admirable book, German Romanticism and English Art, does not completely solve the problem of the precise nature of this influence, but it does provide a fact-laden foundation for further research. Vaughan examines both the German art and art theory available to the English and specific examples of the use of German prototypes. This book will certainly become an essential work on the subject; its footnotes and bibliography make it a particularly valuable tool for students of the period.

Even the title of the first chapter, "German Art in England, 1800-1850", indicates that this topic alone could be the subject of a book, and the need to condense so much and such diverse material makes it the weakest in Vaughan's study. He discusses both the general lines of contact available in England through political, social, and commercial interactions, or literature and the book trade, in the first portion of this chapter. Vaughan's account of the English contacts with German art in Rome and Germany contains much new information. He ends this chapter with a discussion of the public response to German art in England.

Perhaps because of the encyclopedic nature of his treatment, Vaughan leaves the reader wishing for even more material on these and related subjects. For example, he includes fascinating material on the German merchant Charles Aders who settled in England in 1811 and collected Northern primitives. Vaughan does not mention that John Linnell was an intimate in Aders' circle. The influence of Aders' collection on a work such as Linnell's portrait of John Varley, now in the Yale Center for British Art, is obvious (Fig. 1). Executed in oil on board, it depicts a half-length figure of Varley, holding a book on a narrow table in front of him. Linnell transforms the architectural conventions of Netherlandish painting; three trees, seen through a large opening behind the figure, form two arches which open onto a distant landscape. It is tempting to speculate that not only the Memlings in Bruges but also such works as this Linnell and the works in Aders' collection, for example Dirk Bouts' Portrait of a Man, bought by the nation in 1844 and exhibited at the British Institution in 1848, encouraged Rossetti to adopt Netherlandish portrait-types in works like Bocca Baciata and Regina Cordium.