

Nineteenth-century British perspectives on early German paintings: the case of the Krüger collection at the National Gallery and beyond

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Abstract

This study examines the British reception of early German painting in the nineteenth century through the case study of the Krüger acquisition for the National Gallery in 1854. It provides new information about why this collection of predominantly religious fifteenth- and sixteenth-century paintings from Cologne and Westphalia was acquired and how it was evaluated, displayed and distributed in British public and private collections, against a backdrop of midcentury developments in British public displays of art, art-historical literature, private collecting and the art market. In light of long-held perceptions that the acquisition was a mistake and that the paintings were inferior to early works from Italy and the Netherlands, this study offers an alternative perspective that it was an enterprising attempt to implement new models of historical display in national collections, and to rationalise how supposedly inferior paintings could have value in public and private collections. By looking at the way these rediscovered German paintings were evaluated, this study advances understanding of how Romantic, scholarly and formal models for reexamining early paintings overlapped, conflicted and changed in the nineteenth century. The Krüger acquisition and distribution successfully established a place for early German painting in the core collections of the National Galleries in London, Dublin and Edinburgh at early stages in their development, but it did little to redress established prejudice against the school in Britain. Decisions taken about how these pictures were presented to the public shed new light on the significance of key individuals for shaping long-term perceptions of early German paintings in Britain. Beyond the question of German art, those decisions reveal how practical and tactical considerations could be just as important as art-historical ones in choosing what belonged in a national collection of paintings.

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which involved painting thin glazes of pigment onto a wet white ground. This gave Pre-Raphaelite painting a distinctive luminous quality. © Wikimedia Commons. Realist painters of the 19th Century. The most important and famous painter in the Realist style was Gustave Courbet (French, 1819-1877) who was entirely committed to painting exactly what he could see. Courbet believed that the only possible source for art was the experience of the artist, and amongst his oeuvre he painted figurative compositions, landscapes and still life paintings. Nineteenth Century Collections Online is transforming the teaching, learning, and research landscape. Heralding a new wave of discovery into the nineteenth century, NCCO includes collections from across the globe with content in multiple languages, richly representing Africa, Europe, Australia, Asia, Latin America, Middle East, and North America. Author, Publisher, &c.: Admiralty (No. 2558) London." The National Archives: Selected Maps Representing the Long 19th Century. Primary Source Media, 1882. Transform the study of nineteenth century history, literature, and culture at your institution. During the early 19th century, British painters began to carve an increasingly distinctive niche within the broader landscape project. Crucial to this were two painters from southeast England who would eventually become synonymous with the genre, despite their highly different approaches to the British landscape. These painters were J.M.W. Turner and John Constable, (1776-1837). Constable, was in many ways a 'Realist' whose reassuringly honest paintings of the idyllic English countryside emphasized the idea of 'truth' in natural scenes, untouched by human influence. Unlike his contemporaries, the beginning of the nineteenth century was remarkable for Great Britain for its union with Ireland. In Ireland, some of the Irish united under the and began to demand independence, being affected by the French Revolution. They formed the organization known as the United Irishmen. The final victory over Napoleon after his defeat at Waterloo in 1815 laid the foundations for a great extension of the British Empire. As one of the members of anti-Napoleonic coalition, Britain got a number of strategic key points, such as Malta, Mauritius, Ceylon, Heligoland and the Cape. Yet the first result of the peace was a severe political and economic crisis. The British had assumed that the ending of war would open a vast market for their goods and had piled up stocks accordingly. See what's new with book lending at the Internet Archive. England in the nineteenth century. Item Preview. [HTML/00000044-1.jpg](#). [HTML/00000051-1.jpg](#). [remove-circle](#). [Share](#) or [Embed This Item](#). [EMBED](#).