

the situation for many pieces in the book. Harmonists rarely signed their work or explained the rationale behind their creations.

Harmony in Wood is the first of a proposed series of scholarly catalogues focused on groups of objects made by Harmonist artisans. If this volume is any indication of the quality of future titles in the series, then historians of decorative arts as well as scholars of history and religion are exceedingly fortunate.

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Alan C. Braddock. *Thomas Eakins and the Cultures of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009). Pp. x, 291. Illustrations, notes bibliography, index. Cloth, \$49.95.

The central concern of Alan Braddock's *Thomas Eakins and the Cultures of Modernity* is how "human difference, diffusion, and artistic nationalism" are present in the oeuvre of Thomas Eakins (2). Braddock argues that Eakins was working as an artist before modern anthropological theories of "culture" emerged, yet it is very much this nascent anthropological understanding of culture that is at the heart of this book and, Braddock argues, at the heart of Eakins's painting practice.

In his introduction, Braddock asks how Eakins may have conceived of culture, particularly in evolutionary terms and as the term applied to nineteenth-century American understandings of race. Braddock begins his discussion of Eakins with the image that is reproduced on the publication's cover, *The Dancing Lesson* (originally *The Negroes*), 1878. The author challenges the assumption of previous Eakins scholarship that the work is a sympathetic depiction of race, not by arguing that it is racist caricature but by suggesting that it is a visual iteration of Eakins's interest in American folk-life figures and an American "type." In making race and culture central concerns of his study of Eakins, Braddock moves away from the nationalistic, biographical, or psychosexual scholarship on Eakins that has defined the field since the work of Eakins's biographer Lloyd Goodrich. While the author wishes to complicate earlier modernist-nationalist scholarship, he is particularly critical of what he calls "whimsical forms of psychological interpretation" (40). With his focus on culture and anthropology, Braddock's work is more

methodologically comparable to the work on nineteenth-century cultures of skepticism of Michael Leja in *Looking Askance: Skepticism and American Art from Eakins to Duchamp* (University of California Press, 2004) than that of other recent Eakins scholars such as Beth Johns, Kathy Foster, Lillian Milroy, and William Homer.

Geographic place is a key structuring component in the book. Chapter 1, “‘Amongst Strangers’: Studies in Character Abroad,” focuses on Eakins’s time as an art student in Paris and southern Spain. Chapter 2, “‘What Kind of People Are There’: Local Color, Cosmopolitanism, and the Limits of Civic Realism,” returns the reader to Eakins’s native Philadelphia. Chapter 3, “‘To Learn Their Ways That I Might Paint Some’: Cowboys, Indians, and Evolutionary Aesthetics,” travels to the Badlands of North Dakota and then back to the newly developed anthropological Free Museum of Science and Art at the University of Pennsylvania. A final coda, “‘Distinctly American Art’: Thomas Eakins, National Genius,” returns to the question raised in the introduction, “‘This Current Confusion’: Thomas Eakins before Cultures,” of Thomas Eakins as an “American” genus, or genius, rooted in Philadelphia soil.

Chapter 1 considers Eakins’s “formative encounter with foreign people and customs as both art student and tourist” (46). In so doing, Braddock intentionally spends his time analyzing often-overlooked student works in the artist’s oeuvre such as *Man in a Turban*, 1866–67, and *Female Model (A Negress)*, ca. 1867–69, that reveal Eakins’s brush with Orientalism under the influence of his teacher Jean-Léon Gérôme. Braddock also fruitfully compares the artist’s *A Street Scene in Seville* to the aforementioned *Dancing Lesson* and argues convincingly that both works delineate folk culture and national character.

Chapter 2 will probably be of most interest to the readers of *Pennsylvania History* because in this chapter Braddock takes an anthropological approach to Eakins’s paintings and illustrations of the cultures of outdoor Philadelphia. The author argues that “by frequently depicting Philadelphia’s environs and inhabitants during the 1870s and early 1880s, Eakins broadly and consistently engaged the period aesthetic of ‘local color’” (101). The term “local color” is taken from a genre of period American literature, which captured American types much as Eakins did Orientalist types in Paris. Here Braddock argues that Eakins created an image of Philadelphia as an exemplar of national American culture for a cosmopolitan audience. It is not entirely clear what the author means by “cosmopolitan.” Does the term equate to international? Braddock’s use of the term “cosmopolitan” is more clearly defined in his work on Henry Ossawa Tanner and “Christian Cosmopolitanism,” and one longs

for this sort of clarity regarding this complicated term in this publication and as it applies to Eakins' audiences. One of the author's most convincing arguments is that with paintings of suburban Philadelphia like *Swimming*, 1885, and his series of paintings of rowers on the Schuylkill and fishing on the Delaware River, Eakins consciously constructed local color rather than just being "rooted" in the soil of America (110). Braddock convinced this reader that the Philadelphia Eakins represented as an ideal, democratic, northern, Arcadian, Republican city was a selective vision that consciously hid environmental degradation, as well as racial and class conflict, in industrial Philadelphia. Braddock's environmental critique is not only fascinating, but also provides one of his strongest arguments that Eakins was not a heroic realist rooted in Philadelphia Quaker Americanism.

Chapter 3 is in many ways the most expansive, and thus less tightly focused chapter in the book, ranging as it does from Eakins's dismissal from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1887 and his retreat to a dude ranch in the Dakotas, to his return to Philadelphia and his involvement in the culture of anthropology and the University of Pennsylvania. As in chapter 1, Braddock concentrates on a series of works overlooked by Eakins scholars: his portraits of some of the anthropologists with whom he was friends. The strongest discussion here is of Eakins's portrait of *Frank Hamilton Cushing*, 1895. Braddock reads the portrait as an embodiment of the changing understanding of culture as moving away from biological determinism and evolution toward the concept that individual societies formed "cultures," as opposed to the Arnoldian nineteenth-century idea of a singular "Culture."

In his conclusion, Braddock turns to Eakins's late portraits as representing the "life and types" in "our country" (216). He looks at Eakins's portraits of Spanish American, Italian American, and African American residents of Philadelphia, with a particular focus on comparing *Portrait of Henry O. Tanner* (ca. 1897) with the Spanish master Velazquez's portrait of his own student of mixed race, Juan de Pareja. Rather than agree wholeheartedly with Eakins's posthumous reputation as *genus Americanus*, Braddock complicates Eakins by calling attention to the artist's complex representations of race, class, environment, and character throughout his international career. This dense art historical study will be of particular interest to students of Philadelphia's environmental, artistic, and anthropological histories.

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