There is a tendency – almost a commonplace – to group artists into movements, or for artists to group themselves into movements (Blauer Reiter/Brücke), and thus to engender a block response. Hence people have come to talk about the Pre-Raphaelites and the Impressionists, or Art Nouveau and Expressionism, etc. What gets lost in such judgements is that within such groups who work together, or have ideals in common, some may be individualists and some better than others. Another result of such umbrella judgements is that, for convenience’s sake, artists are included under the umbrella which, strictly speaking, should not be there at all, because they are difficult to integrate. Thus outsiders like Degas and Cézanne are conveniently, but erroneously, classed as Impressionists. In literature such a classification is not so common in this measure; here the tendency to group is less prevalent and the degree of differentiation a much greater and subtler one.

One such outsider is Ford Madox Brown. He was never officially a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and yet when some years ago the first large-scale exhibition of Pre-Raphaelite works was staged in Germany, of all available material, Ford Madox Brown’s The Last of England was chosen for the cover of the catalogue. In his early twenties Ford Madox Brown left England and went to Belgium, there to continue his studies in the tradition dictated by the Academy. After further study-tours through France, where he absorbed much of current French Romanticism, he reached Rome in September 1845. There he came into contact with the group of German artists around Friedrich Overbeck, with the result – as Holman Hunt judged – that his style underwent a total change and about-turn. By renouncing the Belgian realistic manner, he adopted (in Hunt’s words) ‘that which then flourished in Munich and faced about to the opposite of his Antwerpian mode, to the new school under Overbeck and others, who set themselves to imitate all the child-like immaturities and limitations.

* This paper was originally given at the ‘Romantic Occasion’ in October 1988. It is understood that, prior to his untimely death, the author had obtained all the necessary permissions to reproduce the illustrations which accompany this article. However, the guest editor of this issue has no precise means of checking this fact for himself. The John Rylands University Library unreservedly apologizes to any copyright owners whose interests may have been inadvertently overlooked.
of the German and Italian Quattrocentists’. What did Holman Hunt mean with this censure and criticism, and was he right? The answer to this leads us into the midst of the problems about the connections and contrasts of the two groups of artists who, at first sight, seem to have quite a lot in common.

It is a curious phenomenon that, as far as the nineteenth century is concerned, each country tends to judge its own art, as if it had been hermetically sealed within its own borders. Would the sixteenth century be thinkable with Raphael and Bellini but without Dürer, the seventeenth century with Rubens but without Pietro da Cortona? If one had asked an Englishman, even a few years ago, what happened in the arts during the first half of the nineteenth century, he would have mentioned Blake, Constable, Turner and perhaps the watercolourists and the Pre-Raphaelites; the Frenchman would have listed David, Ingres, Corot and Delacroix; the German C.D. Friedrich, Runge and perhaps the Nazarenes – but hardly anyone would have included a name from another nation, as if there was no view across the closed frontiers. Gradually, over the years, the insight has come to the fore that these frontiers are only marked on the map, and that secretly, often unrecognized, mutual influences were perceived by one nation to another. And there are changes now: the Louvre buys pictures by German and English artists; Stuttgart acquired the Perseus cycle by Burne-Jones and the C.D. Friedrich exhibition in London a few years ago was a real sensation.

As far as the two countries are concerned, whose artists we are now to examine, the connections and contradictions have their origins already in the eighteenth century. One could cite as examples the works of Runge and Koch on themes from Ossian – that great epic fake of Celtic sagas (1765), which stirred the consciousness of the whole of Europe, notably Goethe, Herder and Napoleon. Furthermore, the affecting romanticism of ruins of C.D. Friedrich – these symbols of human transience (or, as Jakob Burckhardt called them, ‘patriotic moods’) – already made their appearance in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although more particularly in literature than in the fine arts. I need only remind you of Thomas Gray’s ‘Elegy in a Country Churchyard’ (1751), whose title-vignette of a ruined entrance to a graveyard looks almost like a C.D. Friedrich ‘avant la lettre’. Further imports from England, with enormous influence, were the outline-engravings by John Flaxman. These chaste, elegant, unyieldingly black-and-white representations from Greek and Roman mythologies, or from Dante, which seem like imitations from Etruscan vases or mirror-decodations, and which Winckelmann called ‘the characteristic feature of the ancients’, were eagerly copied and imitated in Germany.

However, not only in Germany, but indeed almost everywhere else, these outline-engravings were used not so much for copies of scenes from classical antiquity, but for the almost totally forgotten and
FIG. 1.
F. and J. Riepenhausen, Engraving after Cimabue
FIG. 3.
J. E. Millais, *Lorenzo and Isabella*
Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery
Fig. 4.
J. F. Overbeck, Design for the St Luke Brotherhood
FIG. 5.
F. Pfarr, *Sulamit and Maria*, drawing
Frankfurt am Main, Städelisches Kunstinstitut

FIG. 6.
F. Pfarr, *Sulamit and Maria*
Schweinfurt, Coll. Georg Schäfer
Fig. 7.

J. F. Overbeck, *Italia and Germania*
Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Neue Pinakothek
FIG. 8.
Holman Hunt, *The Awakening Conscience*
London, Tate Gallery

FIG. 9.
Holman Hunt, *Light of the World*
Oxford, Keble College
FIG. 10.
J. F. Overbeck, *Storming of Jerusalem*, detail
Rome, Casino Massimo
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FIG. 11.
J. E. Millais, *Christ in the House of His Parents*
London, Tate Gallery

FIG. 12.
Holman Hunt, *The Scapegoat*
Port Sunlight, Lady Lever Art Gallery
FIG. 13.
W. Dyce, *Jacob and Rachel*
Hamburg, Kunsthalle

FIG. 14.
J. Führich, *Jacob and Rachel*
Vienna, Österreichische Galerie
FIG. 15.
J. F. Overbeck, *The Triumph of Religion Through the Arts*
Frankfurt am Main, Städelisches Kunstinstitut
neglected pictures by the early painters. Research into and rehabili-
tation of this nebulous world of the Middle Ages, and even earlier
periods, had already begun as scientific study in the seventeenth
century, reaching its climax in the following two centuries. Here the
English were in the forefront. One needs only mention the names of
Thomas Patch, William Young Ottley and Ignazio Hugford – the last
two particularly engaged in the rediscovery of the early Italian painters
from Giotto to Raphael. In Germany this looking back to earlier
periods was part of a general reorientation towards the past, the roots
and the sources of the people – a typical ingredient of Romanticism.
This endeavour gained a fresh impulse through the Napoleonic wars,
which enflamed the conscience of the people and especially its youth.
A key figure in this reconsideration of earlier periods, and in particular
that of the Middle Ages, was Goethe's friend, Johann Gottfried
Herder. Until then only two historical periods had been seriously
considered: classical antiquity and the Renaissance. Herder pointed to
the middle or medieval ages and especially that of Gothic, which
hitherto had been dismissed, almost unanimously, as 'barbaric'.
Friedrich Creuzer, in Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker
(1810–12), said that 'Romanticism, taking up Herder's intentions,
turns to the orient, subordinating the antique world to religious
observations'. Herder further examined the sources of the German
language and pointed to the unquarried treasure of folksongs and
folktales. It was the time when the brothers Grimm began to collect
the fairy-tales.

This interest in the earlier periods and the early masters led to a
large number of publications which presented to a wider public the
hidden treasures of a completely strange world of restrained composi-
tions with hieratic figures. The method of illustrating these publica-
tions was by means of exactly those outline-engravings which we have
mentioned. This fact is of more than incidental importance, for it was
through these prints that the early painters were able to make an
impression on those who had no opportunity to see the originals. In
Germany it was the brothers Riepenhausen, who not only illustrated
the works of contemporary poets but publicized, in outline engrav-
ings, the works of Giotto, Fra Angelico and up to Raphael (fig. 1). It
was a selection of these prints that made an indelible impression on a
young man in the North German town of Lübeck. His name was
Friedrich Overbeck. He resolved there and then that he too had to
become an artist and make this world, which spoke to him from these
prints, his own. Here lies the real source of that art which Overbeck
and his friends were to develop in later years, and however much it
was to change, it was from here that the Overbeckian conception of the
human form derived: dignified, if also at times somewhat bloodless.

Curiously enough, it was similar engravings which first intro-
duced the group of English artists to the style of the painters before
Raphael, Carlo Lasinio's engraved copies after the Campo Santo
frescoes in Pisa, which appeared in 1828 (fig. 2). These outward similarities alone (one can hardly speak of coincidences, for these things were in the air) should lead one to believe that there must have been a close connection between the St Luke Brothers (later called the Nazarenes) and the Pre-Raphaelites, although there was a gap of about forty years between the emergence of each group. A connection was only partly apparent, and was then accompanied by some signs of antipathy by the younger artists. The emphasis on the values of the art before Raphael was a presupposition for the viewpoints and the aims of the Nazarenes, and the English artists of course implied them in the collective name by which they decided to be known to the outside world. Both brotherhoods felt themselves to be successors to the medieval guilds.

Already two years after the foundation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a comparison between the Nazarenes and the Pre-Raphaelites was made in the English Art Journal, whilst the influential German historian Cornelius Gurlitt, in his History of German Art of the Nineteenth Century, did not so much underline the connections as the contrasts of the two groups: 'English and German eyes simply see differently' – which would imply that both groups were expressing the same principles and that only national differences led to a different end result. However, it would be too easy and facile to see the differences merely in contrasting national temperaments. After all, not only were there convinced admirers of the Nazarenes in England, such as the architect Pugin and the Scottish painter William Dyce, but pupils of the architect George Street planned a more or less similar brotherhood on the line of the Overbeck circle in the very year of the foundation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. It must also not be forgotten that there is a gap of more than a generation between the two groups, and that the Pre-Raphaelites were counted among the 'moderns' at the time when they criticized the Nazarenes. The differences, when they are analysed, were historical, not national, ones.

What did the so-called 'Pre-Raphaelite' element look like, which both sides had written on their banners? Was it, as Gurlitt suggested, the same only prefixed with a different accidental? In order to answer this, it has to be borne in mind that the circle of the Pre-Raphaelites knew little or nothing about their so-called German predecessors; and the little they did know came from second-hand sources, mainly through Ford Madox Brown and Dyce, both of whom had had contact with the Nazarenes in Rome.

The St Luke Brotherhood (named after St Luke the Evangelist, patron saint of painters) was founded in Vienna at the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century by Overbeck and Franz Pforr, in direct opposition to the Academies, which at that time free-wheeled along the well-worn path of classicism: and that of course meant the reign of the plaster casts! Yet – and this is a paradox – the discipline which the Academy and its curriculum imposed became so ingrained
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into these young artists that they never forgot it and followed it naturally in later life. The real illumination, and the subsequent separation from the Academy, came through the study of Dürer’s graphic works and those of his contemporaries, of the Riepenhausen outline-prints, and above all of the original pictures (the nucleus of what is now the collection of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, then open to the public in the Belvedere). Strictly speaking, it would be difficult to admit that the difference between the formal teachings of the Academies and the precepts of the Quattrocento was a very great one; it certainly embraced the pictorial values of a painter like Raphael. The impact of the paintings of the early Italian masters gave the final impulse to break with the Viennese ambience and emigrate to Italy, there to create a new art in the shadow of the venerated masters and amidst the landscape that served them too as an inspiration. They found accommodation in the monastery of S. Isidoro on the Pincio which had been abandoned by Irish monks during the Napoleonic occupation. The street still today commemorates the residence of the German artists in its name: the Via degli artisti. That this residence became in the end not just superficial assimilation but true empathy into a tradition, is shown by the fact that Overbeck received the important commission for S. Maria degli Angeli in Assisi and other fellow brothers worked in the Vatican itself. The mass conversion to the Roman Church, the almost sole choice of biblical themes and those from the Christian epics instead of classical antiquity, not only determined the attitude of the group but also the content and manner of its way of life.

The origin of the designation ‘Nazarenes’ is not clear: one theory is that it originated from the mocking of the Roman populace, another that it was the spite of one or the other of those German artists in Rome who did not subscribe to their philosophy. But it should be remembered that the Italian connotation ‘alla Nazarena’ has a perfectly harmless and quite respectable past and means nothing more than ‘those who wear their hair long’. For example, in the inventory of Leopoldo de’ Medici (died 1675), there is listed a now lost drawing, supposedly a self-portrait of Raphael, which describes him as being depicted as ‘zazzera alla Nazzarena’ (with long hair in the Nazarene manner).

The world of the English Pre-Raphaelites was a totally different one. Millais and Holman Hunt had studied at the Royal Academy without grumbling; Rossetti – perhaps the most wilful and disturbing figure of the group, remaining basically an eternal dilettante – had in fact attended the Academy irregularly for two years, but otherwise was self-taught. In any case, the tradition of the London Academy was different from that in Vienna. Reynolds, whose heritage it was attempting to continue as best it could, had represented a late Baroque, not a classical, tradition. The ‘Grand Manner’, which Reynolds had demanded, took its guidelines from the great Roman, Bolognese and Venetian masters.
When the Nazarenes demanded strictest adherence to truth to
nature, in opposition to the routine of the academies, they were
pioneers. When the Pre-Raphaelites postulated the same, they pointed
merely to a tendency which had already been translated into reality by
Constable, Gainsborough, and Turner, a tendency which Ruskin had
outlined – five years before the foundation of the Pre-Raphaelite
Brotherhood – in the first volume of *Modern Painters*. And when John
Seward in 1850 in the short-lived periodical *The Germ* called on the
academic painters to adapt their art to that of the early Italians, this
was done more from propaganda bravura than from a feeling for
historical continuity.

It is interesting to examine a little the attitude of the Pre-
Raphaelites towards the early Italian painters – those who were
implied in their name. Whilst we know from Pforr and Overbeck how
eagerly they took every opportunity to look out for the works of the
Italian primitives, the English artists did not stir when, at their front
door, in the year of the foundation of the Brotherhood, a large
exhibition took place in the British Institution, which included
important pictures from the era of Giotto and Van Eyck. Anyway,
there is not a single word about this important event in the vast
contemporary literature and in the memoirs of the Pre-Raphaelites.
Apart from that, there were the Mantegna series and the Raphael
cartoons at Hampton Court, all accessible to the public. Also about
these works there is no comment.

Hunt, in his memoirs, made up a list of ‘Immortals’, which
begins with Christ, and continues, after such poets as Homer, Dante,
Goethe, Byron, and Tennyson, with a curious hotch-potch of artists:
Phidias, Ghiberti, Leonardo (who, it is said, was dependent on Fra
Angelico!), but also including such contemporaries as Flaxman,
Hogarth and Wilkie, all of whom were supposed to be as ‘immortal’ as
Titian, Michelangelo, Giorgione, and Poussin. This list was intended
to indicate the taste of the brothers. And there is a letter by Hunt,
written from Florence, in which he states that he finds the paintings by
Francia, Perugino, Botticelli, and almost all those by Raphael, after
repeated contemplation, boring in their endless monotony! So much
for Pre-Raphaelitism! But it is a fact that the Pre-Raphaelites learned
from and adapted much less from the early Italian painters before
Raphael, than from the minute and colourful details of the early
Flemish masters. For example, Millais’ *Lorenzo and Isabella*, a
composition not unlike a ‘Last Supper’, displays the fondness for and
knowledge of the detailed accessories and glowing costumes of the
Flemish school (fig. 3). It is the picture which for the first time
displays the initials PRB.

Basically they were not out to imitate the early masters as such;
what they wanted to attempt was a return to nature and to a close
observation of nature, a faculty they imputed to the early painters, and
in which alone they saw the way to save art. For Overbeck, on the
other hand, truth to nature, or, as he called it, ‘the path of nature’, was laudable, but on its own imperfect, because truth, he believed, had to be at the service of religion. Anything else was at best an additive, at worst a poison. And this is the difference between the two groups: Truth was the motto which both used – the St Luke Brothers even had it incorporated into their sign, which Overbeck had designed, of St Luke with a W, i.e. ‘Wahrheit’, above (fig. 4). And the just-quoted John Seward maintained ‘that it is by truth alone that the Arts can ever hold the position for which they were intended, as the most powerful instruments, the most gentle guides’. For the English artists Truth had no religious connotations; for them it was, according to Ruskin’s formulation, the uncompromising attitude in everything one undertook, and, as visible evidence of this attitude, the faithful rendering of even the tiniest detail from Nature and from her alone. Seward put it thus: ‘Believe that there is that in the fact of truth, though it be only in the character of a single leaf earnestly studied, which may do its share in the great labour of the world’.

These differences also provide us with the key to the diverse attitudes and life-styles of the two groups. The St Luke Brothers were a kind of monkish association (perhaps stimulated by Wackenroder’s ‘art-loving monk’), and it can thus be seen as a kind of ‘poetic justice’ that they found their first abode in Rome in the monastery of S. Isidoro. They were a community that lived and worked together in closest proximity, proclaiming loudly the religious basis of their art. The Pre-Raphaelites, on the other hand, were rather an art-political club, with secret-society pretensions, who did everything to keep the significance of the initials PRB secret. They met once a month, and Rossetti’s brother acted as secretary and keeper of minutes. They did not live together, and Seward wrote, without calling any names but with an unmistakable dig at the Nazarenes, ‘The modern artist does not retire to monasteries, or practise discipline’. The paradox is that Hunt above all was a deeply religious person, who nevertheless denied that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had anything to do with religion, and it was he of all people who fought most violently against the use of the term ‘brotherhood’.

Both groups worked amidst a small, closed circle, yet they both craved for an echo from the wider public. For the Nazarenes, the recognition only came slowly, mainly from individuals such as the Prussian consul in Rome, Bartholdy, and from the Papal commission, and finally through the patronage of Crown Prince, later King Ludwig I of Bavaria. Though they lived in monastic seclusion, often occasions ended in high spirits, as when they congregated in the Spanish Inn on the Ripa Grande (often jokingly called ‘Raphael’s Stanze’, as some of them spent more time there than copying the Raphael frescoes in the Vatican!). Frequently visitors were entertained there, such as the Bavarian Crown Prince. The Pre-Raphaelites endeavoured to engage the public with propaganda methods, such as the periodical *The Germ*,
and they exhibited their works in public which attracted the attention of some of the newly-rich industrialists from central and northern England, who had become the main patrons in the British Isles at the time. Yet the language with which both groups communicated was one of symbols and emblems.

When Pforr, for example, attacked Classicism and the tradition of the Academy, he referred to their attitudes, forms and themes: 'subjects which are so remote that they lose all interest. Why not those which really concern us?' And what was it that concerned them? In the eyes of the St Luke Brothers there were the stories from the Bible and from medieval history; but these, after all, had also been treated by the so-much-despised history-painters. What was the real concern of Pforr and his associates were the moral values, which were the essential content of the pictures they were to paint and their symbols. If we compare the preliminary drawing (fig. 5) and the completed picture (fig. 6) of the great allegory of friendship, *Shulamite and Maria*, we shall notice how Pforr took the details and the framework mainly from the usual stock of emblems. In the drawing we find among the objects that lie strewn around in the room: the open money-purse, the keys, the winged heart surrounded by the serpent which bites its own tail, and the dog – all symbols of friendship, faithfulness, and self-sacrifice. But the inclusion of the Last Supper above the two figures has another more important significance. Pforr contrasts here the symbol of the covenant of the New Testament with that of an earthly bond of friendship, thereby emphasizing the religious and specifically Christian content of all friendship. With that he removes the symbols and the whole idea of the composition from the purely personal sphere, though the origin of the work was not even a pictorial design but a written narrative, directed quite consciously at Overbeck, the friend and neighbour in the cell in S. Isidoro. This designation is only evident in the picture, not in the drawing, for in the centre there is now no longer the Last Supper, but the figure of St John, an allusion to Overbeck's first name (Johannes). Pforr thus invested an easily-understood symbol with an intimate personal significance. Overbeck's reply, so to speak, that was to depict the imagined brides of the two friends, Shulamite from the Old Testament and the blonde Mary, resulted in the impressive painting in Munich *Italia and Germania* (fig. 7), which transferred the fable on to a wider plane, namely the contrasts and connections of the two countries of Italy and Germany, embodying the two poles of Nazarene art and ideal.

Compared, for instance, with the more developed and sophisticated symbolism of Renaissance pictures and prints or the hidden allusions in Netherlandish pictures of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Pforr and Overbeck's emblematic references might appear somewhat naive and obvious. But compared with Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* (fig. 8), they are rather restrained and subtle. The first thing that has to be said about Hunt's painting is that it was
the first representation of contemporary life, and moreover was a moral tract, such as Hogarth, a century previously, had rendered it in the series *Marriage-à-la-Mode* and *The Rake's Progress*. At first sight it might appear an example of high realism, a genre-scene which invites laughter rather than tears. But Hunt obviously intended the latter. The difference from the common Victorian genre-painting lies here also in the symbolic content. Only here are not, as in Pforr's composition, a few emblems strewn around, but each little detail is intended to be read as if in a book.

The theme of the 'fallen girl' was something which stirred the conscience of the time, and 'sin' was a piquant addition. Everything that is represented in this overcrowded living-room has its significance: under the table a cat plays with a bird; the clock is at five minutes before twelve; over the piano hangs an engraving depicting Christ and the Adulteress; the pattern of the wallpaper describes the Bible passage of the birds that steal the ripe corn; the furniture is aggressively new and overdecorated as are the bindings of the probably useless books. And Hunt even wants us to look into the future, for soon, as he explained himself, the elaborately embroidered hem of the lady's dress, on which the painter spent so much time and effort, will be spoiled by the dust and dirt of the street, and so on. Hunt confirmed in his autobiography that the soothing warbling of the seducer is awakening memories of the girl's innocent childhood, making her resolve to break out from the cage in which she is caught: 'It was my intention', Hunt wrote, 'to show here how the still small voice speaks to a human soul in the turmoil of life'. When the painting was exhibited in 1854 in the Royal Academy, it was accompanied by two quotations from the Bible: 'As of the green leaves on a thick tree some fall and some grow; so is the generation of flesh and blood, one cometh to an end and another is born', and 'Strengthen ye the weak hand, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not'. These two passages alone show that Hunt did not want to present a Victorian anecdote, but a parable in the Christian sense. A striking analogy can be found in contemporary music. For example, Franz Liszt's *Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este* is not merely a virtuoso piano piece that intends to reproduce the play of the fountains at Tivoli, but the original score carried a quotation from St John's Gospel about the life-giving water. But compared with Pforr, how great is the difference in Hunt's painting — and not just a generational or national difference. And the somewhat timidly erotic undertone, which can also be sensed in other pictures by Hunt (and above all in Rossetti), would have been totally repugnant to the St Luke Brothers.

Hunt's parable was not taken from the Bible, from legend or epic — as would have been the case with the Nazarenes — but from the midst of the social problems of the time, which was to demonstrate, in addition to everything else, how progressive the Pre-Raphaelites were.
Ruskin, the early mentor of the Pre-Raphaelites, overwhelmed by the impression of Hunt’s picture, wrote that here painting took its rightful place next to literature.

The Light of the World (fig. 9) was intended by Hunt to be a deliberate counterpart to The Awakening Conscience. Here we have pure symbolism: the Bible passage ‘I stand at the door and knock’ is clear. Hunt himself wrote:

I may say that an occult meaning in the details of my design was not based upon ecclesiastical or archaic symbolism, but derived from obvious reflections. My types were of natural figures such as language had originally employed to express transcendental ideas, and they were used by me with the confidence that they would interest any other mind than my own. The closed door was the obstinately shut mind, the weed the cumber of daily neglect, the accumulated hindrances of sloth; the orchard, the garden of delectable fruit for the dainty feet of the soul.

The music of the voice was to summon the sluggard; the bat the symbol of ignorance; the rich dress of Christ the sign of His reign over body and soul: ‘Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path’ (Psalm 119:105). Symbolism, Hunt said, was there to elucidate not to mystify truth. He had a special lantern constructed, which still exists, and it is interesting to observe how the openings of the lantern mirror the format of the whole picture. These details and exactitudes have, however, a further meaning: they were to demonstrate the absolute originality, as far as the symbolism of the objects was concerned, for Elizabeth Siddall, three years before the completion of the picture, had already pointed out to Hunt an ‘Overbeck-like’ engraving of the same subject, which apparently had anticipated the theme. After an initial shock that someone else should have forestalled him, Hunt calmed down, for he discovered that none of the ingredients which were so important to him had been incorporated into that earlier composition. It is not known to which print Elizabeth Siddall referred, but I would like to suggest that it might have been an engraving after Philipp Veit, an associate of Overbeck’s and a member of the original group in Rome, or perhaps one after Overbeck himself, for Ruskin confirmed that there were two prints that preceded Hunt’s picture. Whatever its antecedents, whatever its intentions, whatever its message, one can hardly talk of a work that had its roots in the art before Raphael.

Overbeck, however, referred clearly and consciously to the era of or before Raphael, when he tackled religious themes (Poznań: Sposalizio a la Perugino). But it is interesting to note what happened when he was asked to paint murals in the Casino Massimo in Rome from Tasso’s Gerusalemme Liberata. The early masters were not able to help here, at least not those pictures from which he and his friends adapted and evolved their religious compositions. In order to get inspiration for the Storming of Jerusalem (fig. 10), he went to Grottaferrata, to the frescoes by the seventeenth-century Domenichino on the legend of SS.
Nilius and Bartholomew of Grottaferrata; of all the artists, one who belonged to the very group in which Pforr had found 'a cold heart hidden behind flashy brushwork and fine colours'. And there is still another post-Raphaelite source, hitherto unnoticed, which Overbeck must also have known: Tempesta's engraving of the Old Testament series 'The Jews defend Jerusalem'. I need only point to the tower in the background, the man on the ladder and the boy in the right foreground chiselling a stone. Here now are (contrary to all the precepts of the St Luke Brothers and all the written, painted and drawn avowals to the period before Raphael) at once two prototypes from the seventeenth century which came, one might say, from the enemy's camp and thus make all protestations seem doubtful. In the case of the Pre-Raphaelites, had one known the sources, such a heresy would not have been so apparent, for they never established a firm and unalterable programme.

The Pre-Raphaelites proceeded from an appropriate realism, and combined this with a symbolism, through which they were able to convey to the public the deeper strata, inherent in their works, like messages. Later, however, for example in the works of Burne-Jones, realism gave way to an overwhelming symbolism. How close and how far truth to nature and symbolism can go hand in hand is shown by Millais' Christ in the House of his Parents (fig. 11), which caused a scandal in the Royal Academy exhibition of 1850. The ringleader was Charles Dickens, who not only found the realism vulgar but took exception to the fact that a biblical scene was being interpreted as a contemporary episode, at least as far as the figures were concerned. The picture has been rightly interpreted as an allegory on the nature of the sacrament. The symbols are explicit, one might say over-explicit: the tools, the wooden planks, the wound in the hand of the child, the tearful expression of the Mother – all this is to presage the Passion. The scene does not appear in the Bible, although it had been previously treated by painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Millais renders it as if it were an illustration for a children's book, an illustration which, however, only has justification and interest because of its symbolism. In the eagerness for 'truth' (truth in the Pre-Raphaelite, not in the Nazarene, sense), Millais did not rest until he had tracked down a real carpenter, from whom he copied the exact muscles and sinews.

The mania for truth after nature, to give a last example, was driven almost ad absurdum in Holman Hunt's Scapegoat (fig. 12). The theme, taken from Leviticus, shows the ram which on the feast of Yom Kippur is being driven by the High Priest into the wilderness, laden with the sins of the people of Israel. Hunt went to Palestine, not only to paint this picture, but other biblical subjects as well. He purchased a ram, waited till the Day of Atonement and installed himself on the exact day on the shores of the Dead Sea in a desolate waste of sand, salt and rock, guarded by a few Arabs, who were so impressed by his
courage and presence of mind that they wanted to elect him there and then as their Sheik. There exists a photograph that shows him sitting at his easel in the glowing heat with a rifle across his knees, to defend himself against bandits and wild animals.

Hunt intended the picture to be an analogy of Christ the Saviour of the Christian Church here on earth, the Lord who takes the sins of the world upon himself, exposed to the hate of the unconverted world. However, the critics could not see anything but a he-goat and, as one of them wrote, ‘of no greater significance than the sheep which was served for yesterday’s supper’. The discrepancy between frenzied truth to nature and high-flown symbolism becomes only too clear. The Nazarenes escaped such a conflict, not merely because of the language in which they proclaimed their message, but also because stylistically their works were cast in a tradition which made them more easily and more immediately understandable. But when all criticism has been levelled at Hunt, it is worth while to have a closer look at a detail, such as the landscape background, to see and admit what a magnificent painter he could be at his best. This landscape could be compared, as far as skill and vision are concerned, with Koch’s so-called ‘heroic’ landscapes or Rottmann’s Sikyon, painters who were trained in front of nature, yet were able to translate it into an idealized vision.

Hunt and Overbeck can be compared in so far as both were the only ones who kept strictly to the initial ideals of their respective brotherhoods, at least in their own eyes. Overbeck strove never to abandon the principles which he and his friends had established in Vienna in 1809. On the other hand, most of the other St Luke Brothers and their followers seceded and succumbed to the glamour and greater public acclaim of the once-so-despised Academies: Schadow in Düsseldorf, Cornelius in Munich, and Schnorr von Carolsfeld in Dresden. They were at the helm, and became in time just as obdurate and inflexible as those teachers from whom they had at one time defected. It is an old truth that the revolutionaries of today become the conservatives of tomorrow. Much the same occurred with Millais, probably the most gifted of the English brothers. His success went to his head, and his art declined into sentimental society sensations or even into banal promotion posters for soapflakes (Bubbles).

Schnorr, in spite of his commission to do the rather grandiose Nibelungen frescoes in the Munich Residenz, remained faithful to the precepts of the St Luke Brothers in the enormous work for The Bible in Pictures. Cornelius, always intent on the widest response, overreached himself, in competition with the greatest Renaissance masters, into megalomania. His original idea for the newly-built Ludwigskirche in Munich was to decorate the whole of the interior with a vast Christological epic. Even the benevolent King took fright, and reduced the space that was to be put at Cornelius’s disposal to the ceiling and the altar. In spite of this restriction, even The Last Judgement, over the altar, turned out even larger than Michelangelo’s.
in the Sistine Chapel. Undaunted, Cornelius stuck to his language of symbols even into his old age. This can be demonstrated by the preliminary drawings for the frescoes in the Campo Santo in Berlin, planned, but never executed. Here we find the same analogies between Old and New Testaments which were also the basis of Hunt's Scapegoat. The Doubting Thomas, with the Resurrection of Christ in the lunette above, is balanced by Jonah's miraculous rescue from the whale at the bottom, the well-known Old-Testament equivalent for immortality and resurrection.

From what has been said hitherto, it might be assumed that the Nazarenes had had no influence on the Pre-Raphaelites. As far as the original English group was concerned, this was probably true. The only perceptible direct connection can be discerned in the works of two painters who, strictly speaking, did not even belong to the inner circle: Ford Madox Brown, who has been mentioned before and to whom we shall return, and William Dyce, the painter from Aberdeen, who attached himself to the German artists when he was in Rome, and formed a lasting friendship with Overbeck, furthered by a common love of music.

The episode of the burning of the Parliament buildings in London and their rebuilding is fairly well known. When it came to decorating the interior, it was decided unanimously that the only fit method would have to be fresco. It was almost a 'moral' decision, as fresco was a kind of 'holy' art, particularly mysterious, as nobody knew much about the technique of fresco-painting. The committee, headed by Eastlake, turned to Cornelius and Schnorr in the hope that one of them might come across with some pupils and decorate the newly-built walls. Schnorr replied firmly that for such an important and centrally placed task only English artists should be used, in order to revive a truly indigenous English art; Cornelius replied with the short, pithy words: 'You have Mr Dyce, what do you need me for?' Dyce because of his connection with the German artists in Rome, was called before the commission in order to advise on the problems of technique and the paths to be followed. He was also among those who were asked to submit designs, among others, for the Departure of the Knights of the Round Table in Search of the Holy Grail. As it happened, the subject was never executed, mainly on the advice of Prince Albert, and was changed for another one. But the resemblance of Dyce's drawing to Schnorr's Battle of Lampedusa is striking, and it is clear that he must have known Schnorr's Ariosto frescoes in the Casino Massimo in Rome. That this approximation to a contemporary German work is not just a coincidence is shown by a comparison of Dyce's Jacob and Rachel (Leicester and Hamburg, fig. 13) with Führich's rendering of the same theme (fig. 14). The Dyce was hardly possible without the earlier work, although it is more concentrated in composition, and the landscape background and the group of sheep seem to be dependent on Holman Hunt.
Bible illustrations were in great vogue in England and Germany. Schnorr's *Bible in Pictures*, the work that occupied him on and off for thirty years, became fashionable in England too, where in 1860 a translation was published. Soon afterwards the brothers Dalziel contemplated a similar venture and approached various English artists, among them Watts, Madox Brown and Burne-Jones. But the most brilliant was undoubtedly the young Frederick Leighton, who at the age of seventeen had gone to Frankfurt to study under Edward von Steinle, Overbeck's main pupil, and it is from him that he acquired his superb technical skill. For the scene of *Rahab and the Spies* (Josh. ii: the woman who lets Joshua's spies escape from her house high up on the city wall), it is clear that he was inspired by Schnorr's design for the same scene – one of his best. In the later period, the dependence of British artists (for instance, Noel Paton) on the Munich School and on Moritz von Schwind goes beyond the subject of this article.

We are nearly at the end of our considerations. We have noticed many points of comparison between the older German group and the younger British artists, yet on the whole we have found more contrasts. However precariously the scales balance, both groups stood for the view that art was above all to have a moral effect. This was especially close to the hearts of Overbeck and Hunt. But the German artists always looked backwards and did not merely profess Pre-Raphaelitism (though they never used such a term), but practised it in almost all their early works. The climax of this didactic attitude was without doubt Overbeck's *Magnificat of the Arts*, or as he renamed it later *The Triumph of Religion through the Arts* (fig. 15), a work that took him ten years to complete. It had been commissioned by the Städel Art Institute at Frankfurt, and was specially designed for the instruction and edification of the art students, who were to be told that religion was the only true and worthwhile content of art, and its only salvation. As Overbeck did not expect that anyone would be able to extract this message by looking at the picture, he composed a pamphlet in which he explained his ideas. The endless pictorial quotations from Raphael (*Disputà*) and the rows of artists' portraits have often been censured and the picture despised exactly because of this rearward glance, not because of the content, which was for the Nazarenes as well as for the Pre-Raphaelites always the main concern. The outward form was often of secondary importance. Borrowing from and imitation of the older masters was considered by the cognoscenti to be a learned and reputable exercise.

In Overbeck's painting we see at the top the Virgin and Christ Child representing at the same time the central theme of Christian art and the core of the whole composition. On either side are the chief figures of the Old and New Covenants. Below, around a fountain, are gathered the artists and patrons who, according to Overbeck, furthered the arts as a glorification of God and are thereby immortalized. Most of them are readily identifiable. Their grouping is not
just the best decorative solution, nor are the figures merely divided into those of the sculptors, architects, painters and patrons. Everything is planned strictly according to the thesis which Overbeck was putting forward, and which implied at the same time the attraction of opposites and the bridging of apparently contrary poles. In the background to the right is Dürer, joining the hands of Lucas van Leyden and Mantegna; the next group, nearer to the spectator, combines Van Eyck and Memling with Fra Angelico and Gozzoli, signifying a mutual recognition of the effect of Christianity on both monastic and secular life. In the foreground there is an illustration of a story from Vasari: how Nicola Pisano discovered an antique sarcophagus and thus regenerated the art of sculpture (but there is no glorification of antique art, hence the smashed idol!) Even the colours of the costumes have symbolic character: Raphael in white, representing the universality of his genius. The composition is a fusion of Raphael’s Disputà and The School of Athens.

The majority of the Pre-Raphaelites looked forward, and though the language of symbols was also the basis of their work, many of the themes were taken from their immediate surroundings and daily life — something unthinkable with the Nazarenes. This applies equally to the landscapes of Holman Hunt and Dyce, and to the portraits by Rossetti which, in spite of some of the esoteric titles (Beata Beatrix), were essentially portraits of people from Rossetti’s immediate circle. Even those compositions in which allegorical, symbolical, and emblematic details are the chief components of the work’s content are also clad in contemporary guise.

Probably the most important and intricate example of this kind is Ford Madox Brown’s Work (fig. 16), on which — like Overbeck — he worked for ten years. And exactly like Overbeck, he wrote an elaborate description, to aid the spectator to ‘read’ the picture correctly. The various workers who are building the street in Hampstead were to personify ‘honest toil’. But there are not only those who work with their hands; there are also the brain-workers: Carlyle, on whose Past and Present the picture is partly based, and F.D. Maurice, a Christian Socialist and one of the founders of the Working Men’s College at which Ruskin, and Brown himself, taught. On the wall on the left is a poster for the college. In spite of the subject being so obviously concerned with day-to-day things, the frame at the first exhibition carried no fewer than three Bible quotations, which celebrated the need for and the nobility of work. One can also understand what Hunt meant when he accused Brown of Overbeckian manners (as we quoted at the beginning of this article). The style is of course quite different, but, as in some of Overbeck’s larger compositions, Brown’s painting seems like a tableau of variously posed models, each one conceived separately and then built into the design.

We began with Brown and have returned to him again at the end. He was an artist, who in conception and treatment of his themes came
nearest to the German artists, and he built a kind of bridge – much to
the annoyance of Holman Hunt. At first sight Overbeck’s *Triumph of
Religion* and Brown’s *Work* do not seem to have anything whatever in
common. But if we stand back and reflect for a moment, we will have
to admit that both works are really tracts, ‘painted words’. Further­
more, there is a common Christian basis and the idea that art was to
educate.

In generalizing, one might say that the Nazarenes were *epic* artists
in what they attempted, whereas the Pre-Raphaelites were *aphoristic*
artists, who only wanted to visualize immediate actualities. The
Nazarenes had the advantage that they were able to count on the
knowledge of biblical and historical events, whereas one often needs a
key to the understanding of Pre-Raphaelite pictures, otherwise one
stands in front of them like someone who only enjoys a strange
language for the sake of its sound. On the English side, the conse­
quency of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was to be found in the
practical ideas and decorative works of William Morris, side by side
with the esoteric symbolism of Burne-Jones and the aesthetic wave,
out of which emerged Art Nouveau. The Nazarenes, on the other
hand, did not have any real pupils and followers. Their language was
becoming petrified, their art choked in its own airlessness. But,
without the example of their discipline and pedagogical genius, an
educational institution like the Bauhaus would not have been possible,
and without the astringency and incorruptibility of Overbeck and
Cornelius, a figure like Max Beckmann seems unthinkable.