

moralizing took place. The most intriguing of these was the notorious Mecca incident of 1511 when the city superintendent observed shadowy figures lurking in the precincts of the mosque and drinking coffee. Following a staged trial, coffee was declared illegal and burned in the city's streets.

The current commercial nurturing of congenial atmospheres in coffeehouses as places to provide customers with more than just a quick beverage brings us back five hundred years to the beginning of the coffee habit. We benefit, then, indirectly from the fact that in order for us to understand the reasons for the legal wrangling, we are taken back to the origins of coffee drinking and the growing popularization of the coffeehouse culture. For some, this may be the most interesting aspect of the book.

The habit began with groups of mystics in Yemen who, around the mid-fifteenth century, used its stimulating properties to enhance their devotional exercises. As Hattox explains from a digest of Arabic literary traditions, the coffee bush itself was brought to Yemen from Ethiopia. Strangely, coffee found little favour with the Ethiopians at this time. Indeed, southwest Ethiopia is the world's original source of what we call "coffea arabica." But Hattox's association of that name with the region of Kaffa, via the Arabic kahwa-coffee connection, is erroneous

because this regional term was only coined in the eighteenth century. This is a rare lapse, however, and Hattox's presentation of the various theories and interpretations concerning the origin and spread of coffee has stood the test of time (since 1985) very well.

He speculates about the possibility that the spread of coffee may have been prompted in part by merchants who, following the loss of their monopolies in the spice trade after 1492, needed new products to peddle. He takes us on a wonderful tour from the houses of mystics in fifteenth-century Yemen, to the enclaves of expatriate Yemeni merchants in early sixteenth-century Cairo, and thence to Ottoman Istanbul by the middle of the century, all of which happened before the emergence of coffeehouses in eighteenth-century Europe and the Americas besides.

This is not a light read. It is the kind of book one dips into, to explore one facet of the story or another. There is a chapter that deals with the medical effects, or at least reputed effects, of coffee on an assortment of ailments like dropsy, gout and scurvy. For those of us addicted to the caffeine habit, it is useful to be reminded that it was known to be a diuretic. But it was also thought to cure insomnia and melancholy as well. To find out more, read the book and enjoy.

Paul Mitchell and Lynn Roberts, *A History of European Picture Frames*

BARBARA KLEMPAN

Mitchell, Paul and Lynn Roberts. *A History of European Picture Frames*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997. 136 pp., 94 illus., cloth US\$29.95, ISBN 1-85894-036-2.

Picture frames are of increasing interest to conservators, art historians, curators and collectors. No longer considered merely an accompaniment to a work of art, picture frames have taken a prestigious and distinct place within the realm of decorative art. Professionals in the art world now strive to study each frame in great detail and view it in both an historical and cultural context. Within the past few decades the picture frame has been highlighted in several exhibits on frames such as *The Art of the Frame: An Exhibition Focusing on American Frames of the Arts and Crafts*

Movement, 1870-1920, held at Eli Wilner & Company, Inc., in New York in 1988, and the exhibit, *Italian Renaissance Frames*, held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1990. Frames are today considered worthy of study and admiration, and it is not surprising that scholarly publications such as the book under review are being produced as resource material for this emerging area of study.

A History of European Picture Frames is a comprehensive survey. It consists of written and visual information on frames gathered by the authors for over twenty years. This information was originally intended for inclusion into a thirty-four-volume *Dictionary of Art* by Macmillan, but, once the magnitude of information collected by the authors was reviewed, it resulted in this independent

publication. It explores the development of frames, from early decorative border designs on tomb paintings dating to 2000 B.C., to contemporary frame design. It examines and illustrates the most modest designs, such as the early Italian Cassetta frame, to the highly ornate and flamboyant Baroque and Rococo designs, and links the relationship between picture and frame. This book gives the reader a fascinating insight into the history, design and construction of European picture frames.

The book is divided into eight chapters: Introduction, Frames in Italy, France, Britain, The Netherlands and Belgium, Germany and central Europe, Scandinavia, and Spain. These chapters are again divided into subsections that break information into comprehensible and digestible sections. For example, the chapter on the frame in Britain is further divided into Medieval, Tudor and early Stuart, Early Baroque, Auricular, Late Baroque, Palladian, Rococo, Neo-classical, Regency and early Victorian, Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic Movement, and late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

What makes this book so useful is that it is written in a reference style and is thus divided into the concise, aforementioned chapters and then sections. Each chapter is illustrated with remarkable and delightful drawings of frames and frame profiles and is sometimes augmented by black-and-white photographs. It is a shame that the photographs are so small (as is the text) and that the photographs are not always well produced. Each chapter is followed by a short bibliography, rather than compiling it at the end of the book, and I believe, considering the vast amount of information presented in the text, that this was a very useful approach.

The reader of this book will have historical, technical and stylistic information available to them that could influence the study,

interpretation and conservation of picture frames. For example, the Introduction broadly defines the types of frames as Ecclesiastical frames, Court frames and Secular frames, and the reader can then proceed within the text in the Introduction to review the sections on the Form and Function of frames, Stylistic Overview, Purpose, Framemakers and Reframing, and finally Historiography. Once through this Introduction, the book can be used as a reference text whereby certain regions or countries can be selected from the contents page and consulted.

Within the chapters of this book the reader has access to copious amounts of information on the history and development of frames, techniques and examples of frames from each period. With this information at hand, readers can make informed decisions regarding the history and construction of a particular picture frame, identify frame components, using standard terminology found in the text, interpret the originality of a frame to a work of art, using historical and stylistic information from the text, determine appropriate conservation treatments, and design and reconstruct new period frames, using the detailed drawings in the text. There are not many books available on frames that offer so much to the reader.

Another important function of this book is that it draws attention to aspects of picture frames in a format that was not previously undertaken. The comprehensive and well-edited nature of this book and its availability make it an invaluable tool to professionals working with picture frames of all types, and it encourages a new perspective on the preservation of frames as important decorative objects. I would highly recommend this book as a primary text for anyone interested in the history of European picture frames.

Katherine Jellison, *Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913–1963*

FRANZ KLINGENDER

Jellison, Katherine. *Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913–1963*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993. 217 pp., 26 illus., cloth, US\$45, ISBN 0-8078-2088-1; paper, US\$15.95, ISBN 0-8078-4415-2.

There has been much written and a number of exhibits mounted dealing with the interaction between urban women and the newly available tools of domestic technology, and the outcomes of that relationship in the period after 1900. One of the major themes to emerge focusses on