

Lawrence Alma-Tadema & Rome: Projecting Victorian Values?

要旨

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Lawrence Alma-Tadema was one of the most remarkable artists in Victorian Britain. Although born in the Netherlands, he settled in London and saw a parallel between ancient Roman and Britain at the time. He thus became obsessed with painting Victorian ideas as those of ancient Rome, putting them in Roman architecture where domestic settings were depicted in fascinating details. However, different from traditional ways of depiction, ancient Rome under Alma-Tadema's brushes is dominated by glamorously dressed women. This paper, *Alma-Tadema & Rome: Projecting Victorian Values?* aims to step into this distinctive world of female life, viewing his depiction of ladies through the lens of Victorian society and fashion details.

The first part of this paper provides a short biography of Lawrence Alma-Tadema and his journey to becoming an Academic artist. It then looks into the social background of his era – Victorian London, when the industrial revolution transformed the British Empire. It also examines the types of study the artist has inspired amongst critics and intellectuals. The second part points out Europeans' particular forte of painting Romans in history, with power, ruins, and heroism as their most common themes viewed under the male gaze. The third part focuses on Alma-Tadema's world of women, examines the vision of female life through Victorian values and Roman fashion. This paper concludes that Alma-Tadema was not trying to project Victorian values nor reproduce accurate Roman life. Instead, he painted the perfect version of Rome in his imagination, which is a fantasy land that all Victorians desired.