for the continuing relevance of tradition in the same terms, just as Latin continued to be taught in the West. However, one wonders if perhaps more complex models of language standardization through modern textbook systems are needed? For in fact, both China and Western nations have generally arrived at education systems that teach prior ages of the national literature as a quasi-foreign language in special need of institutionalized support, precisely because such literary histories constitute the national non-vernacular.

These questions ultimately reach beyond Hill’s proper scope, in what is a focused and solid work of scholarship. Although only portions of the book are directly relevant to book history, those who have particular interest in the intersection of book history with translation studies will certainly find it a valuable work.

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The “rise and fall” in its title indicates that this book offers a chronicle of the printers’ international specimen exchange. Matthew McLennan Young explains that this exchange was organized in England, through the *Paper and Printing Trades Journal*, to collect and distribute specimens among printers who subscribed to the exchange. The primary goal of the exchange was to improve the standards of jobbing printing, especially in England, where the art of printing was seen to be in decline. The foundation of such an enterprise may have been spurred on by the first international meeting of printers in Paris in 1878, but it essentially formalized an editorial practice that commented on specimens submitted without reproducing them for readers to view, and one that put printers in contact with each other for the direct exchange of specimens. The exchange initially required both letterpress and lithographic printers to submit two hundred copies of their specimens in 11 × 8” size. It attracted far more international printers than anticipated; from almost thirty countries, 4,600 specimens – some created specifically for this exchange – were collated in sixteen volumes from 1880 to 1898.
Young describes the specimen volumes and the roles of the printing houses that managed the exchange (Field & Tuer and Raithby Lawrence & Co.) before presenting eighty-one specimens. Although he admits that “this is one enthusiastic person’s selection,” (49) he does include a range of printers, most from Britain and the United States; typography (“old style” and “artistic style”); content (for example, advertisements); and especially, graphic designs and lithography. This book thus introduces these specimens for the first time to a wider audience and preserves them well. The original size of the specimens, roughly equivalent to letter-size paper today, perhaps made it easier to publish them at full size. The quality reproduction of these exquisitely coloured specimens is a highlight of this book, for which both Young and Oak Knoll Press should be commended.

Young’s analysis of the specimen volumes is brief, having grown out of an article and conference presentations. Nevertheless, it reveals the progress of print trade members in their careers through their contributions first as apprentices and later as owners. Graphs for this aspect and for international representation trace changes over the two decades of the exchange. The only Canadian printer in this exchange was the Hamilton Printing Company (represented in the first volume). Otherwise, Canadians apparently preferred to support the later American exchange: Young observes that five (unidentified) Canadian printers, including “some of the best,” contributed specimens to the latter. Perhaps this preference derived from the continental influences of the period. It is also worth remembering that earlier specimens created in Canada might not have been intended as compositions to demonstrate the printer’s art, but were rather displays of the type and ornaments available in a print shop – such as John Lovell’s 1846 specimen book reprinted in 1975 by the Bibliographical Society of Canada.

In his concluding statement Young recognizes that the late nineteenth century was a period of communication, co-operation, and learning among printers around the world. Yet, Young, a graphic designer who focuses on the specimens themselves, does not explore the wider context for this observation. As he himself shows, a specimen exchange might not always be an entirely co-operative enterprise. The most contentious aspect of this printers’ exchange immersed its managers in legal action around journals’ competing for printers. Even internationally, American printers – who were more innovative and had higher standards of printing – sought to limit submissions
to the best examples based on juried competition, whereas the British managers insisted on inclusiveness.

It is in this way that Young’s work intriguingly draws attention to the concept of an exchange itself. The exchange of materials among printers to advance technical knowledge seems to differ little from the exchange of materials among scientists to advance scientific knowledge. Young’s study can therefore be viewed as an example of an activity among trades and professions that characterized the late nineteenth century; indeed, in this period one could say that “exchange” was in the air. A comparison could be drawn to scientific journals that invited readers to exchange specimens (for example, in natural history), libraries to exchange published works, or fellow editors to exchange issues of their journals. From this perspective, the printers’ international specimen exchange becomes an even more remarkable feat for the two compiler-editors, Andrew Tuer and Robert Hilton. As Young indicates, these editors were overwhelmed by correspondence: by the fifth volume, they had received and answered 2,600 letters in one year, and for the first three volumes, they wrote reviews of each printed specimen (around 350 a year).

More importantly, it is telling that the concept of an organized printers’ exchange first originated in the United States, where printers had long been exchanging specimens of their work, for it was Americans who drove the organization of exchanges in other fields of endeavour. Federal institutions such as the Army Medical Museum, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Institution led the way as clearinghouses for exchanges, but individual professionals, like the printers in England, also attempted to establish exchanges of specimens and publications to improve their various fields. The organizational infrastructure for an exchange thus varied according to purpose, whether it was an institution, a society, or a co-operative of British and American printers who subscribed to the Printers’ International Specimen Exchange. It also varied according to place: as Young indicates, national printers’ exchanges later emerged in France, Germany, Japan, and the United States. Considering, too, that an 1889 treaty established a government-supported, international system of publication exchange, it seems clear that all this global activity paralleled the printers’ exchange. By 1898, these external developments, combined with internal legal battles provoked by its primary manager, Robert Hilton, led to the termination of the Printers’ International Specimen Exchange.

Young’s study thus successfully brings to light the work of this exchange in support of fine printing, not only in its presentation of
some of the splendid specimens produced for it and in its review of the exchange’s management, but equally in its pointing the way for further exploration.

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L’ancien recteur et gestionnaire académique de l’Université du Québec à Montréal, Claude Corbo, s’est donné comme objectif de célébrer la contribution du Québec à l’art du livre au XXe siècle en présentant des « livres originaux, des livres remarquables ou de beaux livres » (p. 1) tirés des collections patrimoniales de Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec dans cet ouvrage richement illustré. Célèbres pour leurs caractéristiques matérielles, leur caractère novateur, leur rareté ou leur destin particulier, les vingt livres décortiqués par autant de collaborateurs issus de domaines variés tracent, certes, une histoire matérielle du livre au Québec, mais surtout, mettent de l’avant une communauté de passionnés du livre qui ont su en renouveler la forme et l’esthétique.

Constitué de vingt chapitres rédigés par des spécialistes qui abordent chacun un livre, d’une préface de Guy Berthiaume et de Sophie Montreuil, et d’une postface de Jacques Michon, l’ouvrage fait figure de véritable collectif. Précédée d’une fiche de données bibliographiques, chaque contribution propose, dans un premier temps, le portrait de l’auteur et des artisans impliqués pour ensuite présenter les caractéristiques générales du livre et, enfin, préciser sa réception et son « destin ». Sous la forme d’études de trajectoires des livres, et placés en ordre chronologique, les textes contiennent des analyses riches en détails. D’entrée de jeu, Corbo pose les balises qui ont guidé ses choix de livres ; appartenant à plusieurs domaines (poésie, essai, livre d’art, dictionnaire, etc.), ils ont été sélectionnés en tant qu’objets à replacer dans un contexte précis, essentiellement pour leur apport à l’art du livre au Québec et non pour leur contenu comme tel. Bien que les caractéristiques esthétiques et matérielles originales constituent le principal critère de sélection, l’auteur précise que l’ensemble n’est pas constitué uniquement de livres d’artistes vendus.