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EDITED BY
JAMES ELKINS AND
RACHEL DELUE

Landscape Theory

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Artistic representations of landscape are studied in a half-dozen disciplines (art history, geography, literature, philosophy, politics, sociology), and there is no master narrative or historiographic genealogy to frame interpretations. Geographers are interested in political formations (and geography, as a discipline, is increasingly non-visual). Art historians have written extensively on landscape, but there have not been any recent synthetic attempts or theoretical overviews. At the same time, painters and other artists often feel they “possess” the landscape of the region in which they live; that ownership takes place at a non-verbal level, and seems incommensurate with the discourses of art history or geography. *Landscape Theory*, volume 6 in The Art Seminar series, is the first book to bring together different disciplines and practices, in order to understand how best to conceptualize landscape in art.

The volume includes an introduction by Rachael Ziady DeLue and two final, synoptic essays, as well as contributions from some of the most prominent thinkers on landscape and art including Yvonne Scott, Minna Törmä, Denis Cosgrove, Rebecca Solnit, Anne Whiston Spirn, David Hays, Michael Gaudio, Jacob Wamberg, Michael Newman, and Jessica Dubow.

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VOLUME 6
LANDSCAPE THEORY

VOLUME 7
RE-ENCHANTMENT

Sponsored by the University College Cork, Ireland; the Burren College of Art, Ballyvaughan, Ireland; and the School of the Art Institute, Chicago.

Landscape Theory

EDITED BY
**RACHAEL ZIADY DeLUKE and
JAMES ELKINS**



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Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

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SERIES PREFACE

James Elkins

It has been said and said that there is too much theorizing in the visual arts. Contemporary writing seems like a trackless thicket, tangled with unanswered questions. Yet it is not a wilderness; in fact it is well posted with signs and directions. Want to find Lacan? Read him through Macey, Silverman, Borch-Jakobsen, Žižek, Nancy, Leclaire, Derrida, Laplanche, Lecercle, or even Klossowski, but not—so it might be said—through Abraham, Miller, Pontalis, Rosaloto, Safouan, Roudinesco, Schneiderman, or Mounin, and of course never through Dalí.

People who would rather avoid problems of interpretation, at least in their more difficult forms, have sometimes hoped that “theory” would prove to be a passing fad. A simple test shows that is not the case. Figure 1 shows the number of art historical essays that have terms like “psychoanalysis” as keywords, according to the *Bibliography of the History of Art*. The increase is steep after 1980, and in three cases—the gaze, psychoanalysis, and feminism—the rise is exponential.

Figure 2 shows that citations of some of the more influential art historians of the mid-twentieth century, writers who came before the current proliferation of theories, are waning. In this second graph there is a slight rise in the number of references to Warburg and Riegl, reflecting the interest they have had for the current generation of art historians: but the graph’s surprise is the precipitous decline in citations of Panofsky and Gombrich.

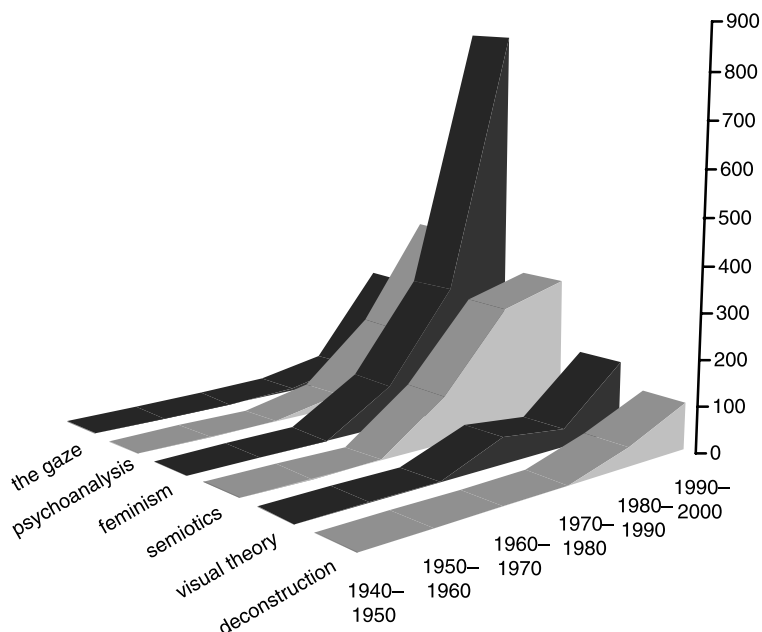


Figure 1 Theory in art history, 1940–2000.

Most of art history is not driven by named theories or individual historians, and these graphs are also limited by the terms that can be meaningfully searched in the *Bibliography of the History of Art*. Even so, the graphs suggest that the landscape of interpretive strategies is changing rapidly. Many subjects crucial to the interpretation of art are too new, ill theorized, or unfocused to be addressed in monographs or textbooks. The purpose of *The Art Seminar* is to address some of the most challenging subjects in current writing on art: those that are not unencompassably large (such as the state of painting), or not yet adequately posed (such as the space between the aesthetic and the anti-aesthetic), or so well known that they can be written up in critical dictionaries (the theory of deconstruction). The subjects chosen for *The Art Seminar* are poised, ready to be articulated and argued.

Each volume in the series began as a roundtable conversation, held in front of an audience at one of the three sponsoring

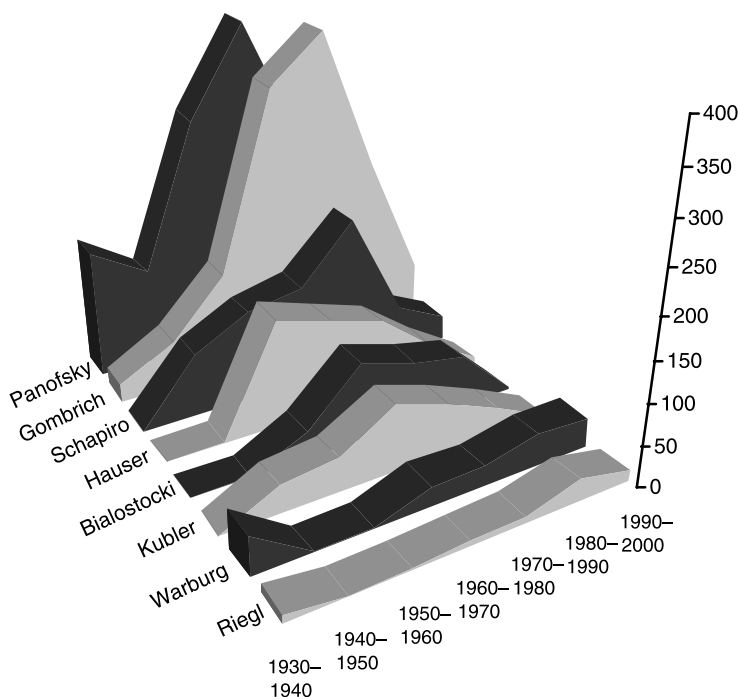


Figure 2 Rise and fall of an older art history, 1930–2000: Citations of selected writers.

institutions—the University College Cork, the Burren College of Art (both in Ireland), and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The conversations were then transcribed, and edited by the participants. The idea was to edit in such a way as to minimize the correctable faults of grammar, repetitions, and lapses that mark any conversation, while preserving the momentary disagreements, confusions, and dead-ends that could be attributed to the articulation of the subject itself.

In each volume of *The Art Seminar*, the conversation itself is preceded by a general introduction to the subject and one or more “Starting Points,” previously published essays that were distributed to participants before the roundtable. Together the “Introductions” and “Starting Points” are meant to provide the essential background for

the conversation. A number of scholars who did not attend the events were then asked to write "Assessments"; their brief was to consider the conversation from a distance, noting its strengths and its blind spots. The "Assessments" vary widely in style and length: some are highly structured, and others are impressionistic; some are under a page, and others the length of a commissioned essay. Contributors were just asked to let their form fit their content, with no limitations. Each volume then concludes with one or more "Afterwords," longer critical essays written by scholars who had access to all the material including the "Assessments."

In that way *The Art Seminar* attempts to cast as wide, as fine, and as strong a net as possible, to capture the limit of theorizing on each subject at the particular moment represented by each book. Perhaps in the future the subjects treated here will be colonized, and become part of the standard pedagogy of art: but by that time they may be on the downward slide, away from the centers of conversation and into the history of disciplines.

INTRODUCTION

ELUSIVE LANDSCAPES AND SHIFTING GROUNDS

Rachael Ziady DeLue

For the landscape tourist in the antebellum United States bent on setting eyes on the most beautiful and sublime of scenic sights, Niagara Falls promised the biggest bang for the buck. To see Niagara was to take in the grandest, loudest, most stunning and magnificent landscape in America, and perhaps the world. “NIAGARA!” wrote one enraptured visitor. “Who has not heard of this peerless cataract, which is among the water-falls what the Himalayas are among mountain-ranges, not only the grandest, but so greatly preeminent as to be without rivalry?” A visit to Niagara promised heights of visual ecstasy, and countless Americans flocked to the falls (as they do today) in order see it, ecstatically, for themselves.¹

Yet not a few nineteenth-century writers reported a difficulty, even a failure, of looking and seeing when confronted with Niagara. Nathaniel Hawthorne’s account is exemplary. “Never did a pilgrim approach Niagara,” he wrote in 1835, “with deeper enthusiasm than mine.” But his eager anticipation coexisted with something like an anxiety of consummation. “My treasury of anticipated enjoyments, comprising all the wonders of the world,” he continued, “had nothing else so magnificent, and I was loath to exchange the pleasures of hope for those of memory so soon.” In a stagecoach on his way to the cataract, Hawthorne “trembled with a sensation like dread” as he

waited for the first sounds of the falls to reach his ears; when one of his coach-mates stretched to see Niagara from the window and responded with a loud declaration of admiration, Hawthorne prevented himself from seeing the sight: "I threw myself back and closed my eyes." On arriving at the village bordering the falls, Hawthorne further delayed his encounter; he pattered about in his hotel room, and had a long dinner followed by a cigar and a stroll through town. His mind, he reported, had grown "strangely benumbed," and his spirits apathetic, "with a slight depression," a state that persisted as he undertook to seek out the falls later that evening. Apathy turned to despair when, having had an hour's long look at the thing, Hawthorne asked himself, "Were my long desires fulfilled? And had I seen Niagara?" The answer: not exactly. "Oh that I had never heard of Niagara till I beheld it!" Hawthorne lamented, realizing that he had been made as if blind to the falls by previous and countless encounters with representations of Niagara, from poems and travel narratives to paintings and the decorative scenery that adorned dinner plates—the very words and images that had made him so eager to see this most sublime of sights in the first place. It was only after a retreat from the falls, and after days spent purging previous conceptions of it from his mind and eyes—days of *not looking* at the cataract—that he could see it as he felt he should, as if he were a traveler of old who had stumbled upon an "unknown wonder," facing it with eyes utterly fresh.²

Writing in 1844, Margaret Fuller reported a similar experience. She, too, arrived at the neighborhood of the falls prepared for "lofty emotions to be experienced" but instead, as did Hawthorne, felt a "strange indifference" toward it and dilly-dallied at her hotel before dragging herself into the landscape to see the sight. The rapids of the Niagara river moved her, but the falls did not:

When I arrived in sight of them I merely felt, "ah, yes, here is the fall, just as I have seen it in picture." . . . I thought only of comparing the effect on my mind with what I had read and heard. I looked for a short time, and then with almost a feeling of disappointment, turned to go to the other points of view. . . . Happy were the first discoverers of Niagara, those who could come

unawares upon this view and upon that, whose feelings were entirely their own.

As with Hawthorne, Fuller required a period of several days to feel as if she had seen Niagara properly, and she departed not wholly convinced that she'd taken in the "full wonder of the scene."³

Difficulty in seeing what were supposed to be the nation's most breathtaking or quintessential natural features (or nature more generally, be it sublime, picturesque, beautiful, or none of the above) was a not uncommon theme of literary accounts of nature and travel in the first half of the nineteenth century in the United States (literary as opposed to touristic: more popular travel writing—what had colored the perceptions of Hawthorne and Fuller—manifested no such trouble). Instances of this sort of failed vision or obstructed seeing populate the texts of such writers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Ward Beecher, and Henry David Thoreau. For example, a string of visual failures precipitates the signature moment on the slopes of Mount Ktaadn in Thoreau's *The Maine Woods* (1864):

I stand in awe of my body, this matter to which I am bound has become so strange to me. . . . Think of our life in nature,— daily to be shown matter, to come in contact with it,— rocks, trees, wind on our cheeks! the *solid* earth! the *actual* world! the *common sense*! *Contact! Contact! Who are we? where are we?*⁴

In the passages leading up to this climactic point, Thoreau describes the approach to Ktaadn and his sustained attempt to catch a glimpse of the peak as a series of views half seen; the mountain, cloaked in clouds and mist or occluded by trees, gives the impression of being ever in retreat, such that, when the moment of "contact!" arrives, it seems as much the product of not seeing something as the outcome of confronting a sought-after sight.

Vision is similarly at stake in Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849).⁵ Here, however, Thoreau narrates multiple forms or instantiations of perception, as if his account of travel in the landscape is equally an account of the manifold forms of seeing that arise within that landscape space. In the chapter entitled "Sunday," he describes his encounter with a group of men on a bridge

in Chelmsford under which he and his traveling companion, his brother John, sailed. These men, he writes, “leaned impudently over the rails to pry into our concerns, but we caught the eye of the most forward, and looked at him till he was visibly discomfited.” Thoreau then associates this looking with violence, describing the gaze as penetrating as a knife, even as he disarms said gaze, characterizing it as indirect or ineffective:

Not that there was any peculiar efficacy in our look, but rather a sense of shame left in him which disarmed him. It is a very true and expressive phrase, “He looked daggers at me,” for the first pattern and prototype of all daggers must have been a glance of the eye. . . . It is wonderful how we get about the streets without being wounded by these delicate and glancing weapons, a man can so nimbly whip out his rapier, or without being noticed carry it unsheathed. Yet after all, it is rare that one gets seriously looked at.

Conversely, when Thoreau looks into the eyes of Rice, the “rude and uncivil man” who offered him lodgings in the hills of Connecticut, the exchange strikes Thoreau as intimate and direct, a visual bond between men that occurred despite Rice’s compromised vision:

I detected a gleam of true hospitality and ancient civility, a beam of pure and even gentle humanity from his bleared and moist eyes. It was a look more intimate with me, and more explanatory, than any words of his could have been if he had tried to his dying day.

For Thoreau, then, seeing can be simultaneously wounding and inept, or so intimate that it transcends any need for speech. It can also be sidelong, as it is in “Saturday,” where Thoreau presents the reader with this third model of the activity of sight. A fisherman comes into view as Thoreau and his brother sail:

Late in the afternoon we passed a man on the shore fishing with a long birch pole, its silvery bark left on, and a dog at his side . . . and when we had rowed a mile as straight as an arrow, with our faces turned towards him, and the bubbles in our wake still visible on the tranquil surface, there stood the fisher still with his dog, like statues under the other side of the heavens, the only objects to relieve the eye in the extended meadow; and there would he stand abiding his

luck, till he took his way home through the fields at evening with his fish.

Looking here is not face to face, but occurs at an angle; a length of river and its tranquil surface occupy the space between those who look and their objects of vision, such that a distance between seer and seen allows the latter (fisherman and dog) to come into view, to stand out in relief against the meadow. Distance assumes responsibility for visibility; the manufacture of a lateral or oblique view, complete with foreground (the space between Thoreau and the man and dog) and background (the meadow) provides for this visual exchange.⁶

Yet another formulation of looking manifests in "Wednesday," when Thoreau encounters a bittern "moping" at the river's edge near Bedford, "with ever an eye on us." Thoreau's description of this encounter renders unclear who is seeing whom, and through whose eyes bird or man looks. One wonders, he writes, if the bittern

by its patient study by rocks and sandy capes . . . has wrested the whole of her secret from Nature yet. What a rich experience it must have gained, standing on one leg and looking out from its dull eye so long on sunshine and rain, moon and stars! What could it tell of stagnant pools and reeds and dank night-fogs? It would be worth the while to look closely into the eye which has been open and seeing at such hours, and in such solitudes, its dull, yellowish, greenish eye. Methinks my own soul must be a bright invisible green. I have seen these birds stand by the half dozen together in the shallower water along the shore, with their bills thrust into the mud at the bottom, probing for food, the whole head being concealed, while the neck and body formed an arch above the water.

Here, Thoreau reflects on what he seems to understand to be the multiple loci of vision. At first, the bird has "ever an eye" on him, then it looks out on nature with a dull eye, and then Thoreau looks closely into this same eye, which he characterizes as open and seeing as well as deadened and yellowish. At one point, he incorporates the bittern's eye, envisioning it as his own soul, both bright green and invisible. He closes his description with an image of the bird made utterly blind, his head buried in mud. In this passage, subject and object

positions are muddled, and Thoreau locates the act of seeing in many places and has it operating in a variety of different ways (it is close, dull, open, incorporated, dual-bodied, and entombed). He affirms this multiplicity in "Sunday" when he notices that "a separate intention of the eye" is required to see both the river's bottom and that which is reflected on its surface, concluding "and so are there manifold visions in the direction of every object, and even the most opaque reflect the heavens from their surface."⁷

"Tuesday" offers still another account of landscape and vision, one resonant with the moments of blindness in Hawthorne, Fuller, and Thoreau's own *The Maine Woods* that I have heretofore described. Given that *A Week* begins with Saturday and ends with Friday, the "Tuesday" chapter, which describes Thoreau's ascent of Saddleback Mountain, stands as the midpoint of both his journey and his text. In reality, the ascent took place just prior to his setting sail in 1839, and this convoluting or undoing of chronology and geography, of time and space, emblemizes the visual and spatial convolutions that constitute and drive Thoreau's narrative in the chapter, one that begins with a fog-laden, pre-dawn river landscape and that spins out into a series of encounters with things seen. Rather than being continuous and progressive, as one might expect a travel narrative to be, Thoreau's tale thus comprises a collection of fragments; littered with penultimate moments, it constantly and continually halts, heaping before its reader a collection of sights and stops.⁸ While Thoreau traverses the valley below Saddleback prior to his ascent, the uneven terrain reminds him of another excursion, so he pauses his train of thought and transports himself and his reader to Staten Island:

When walking in the interior there, in the midst of rural scenery, where there was as little to remind me of the ocean as amid the New Hampshire hills, I have suddenly, through a gap, a cleft or "clove road," as the Dutch settlers called it, caught sight of a ship under full sail, over a field of corn, twenty or thirty miles at sea. The effect was similar, since I had no means of measuring distances, to seeing a painted ship passed backwards and forwards through a magic lantern.

Here, Thoreau presents seeing as triply obscured: by land, by distance, and by a pictorial effect (akin to that produced by a magic lantern; as was the case with Hawthorne and Fuller at Niagara, Thoreau's seeing is mediated by a memory of images once seen). The sentence that immediately follows this passage—"But to return to the mountain"—pitches Thoreau, and the reader, back onto the path to Saddleback, which he reaches and summits only after several more digressions, and this just as the sun sets, so nothing of the prospect surround may be seen. Thoreau never does see this landscape panorama, what we expect him to set eyes on when the sun rises and lays the aimed-for sweeping prospect bare, for when he awakes in the mountain-top observatory where he has taken refuge for the night he finds the mountain cloaked to its neck in clouds. This cloud cover, he writes,

shut out every vestige of the earth, while I was left floating on this fragment of the wreck of a world. . . . The earth beneath had become such a fitting thing of lights and shadows as the clouds had been before. It was not merely veiled to me, but it had passed away like the phantom of a shadow . . . and this new platform was gained.

Thoreau descended Saddleback shortly after awakening to this cloud-world, but not before realizing that his new platform—his perch above the disfigured and vanquished earth—constituted an exalted perspective, an angle of vision that vectored his gaze away from the darkness and shadows of terra firma and toward the light of something more heavenly or true.⁹ As was the case in Hawthorne, looking at the landscape—seeing it intimately, subjectively, and deeply, even transcendently—winds up being a matter of not seeing it at all (initially, for Hawthorne, or ever, for Thoreau).

It is for a reason that I draw attention to and spend time with the dramas of seeing and not seeing the landscape that unfold in Hawthorne, Fuller, and Thoreau in the introduction to a volume that takes as its subject landscape theory. It strikes me that landscape, what my co-editor James Elkins has characterized as perhaps the most "desperately confused" of all the subjects in *The Art Seminar* series, is confused (vexed, difficult, hard to get one's head around)

precisely because we, ourselves, cannot properly see it (whatever “it” is), and this in part because we do not know exactly what we are looking for (witness the struggle to define the term manifest throughout the present volume), because, as with Hawthorne and Fuller, we have seen way too much of it already (a theme that surfaces at several points in the volume, with regard to present-day landscape tourism especially) or because landscape (as both Jim and I say in the roundtable discussion) is both our subject and the thing within which we exist. The drama of vision characteristic of certain landscape writing in the first half of the nineteenth century in the United States, then, might serve as an allegory for the task of talking about landscape and theoretical conceptualizations of it now, for the reasons articulated and also because it is well nigh impossible to see anything as *not* landscape, given that we cannot detach our looking from the culturally constructed lenses and frames that make what we see look like what we expect to perceive and, also, given our wish to provide ever more inclusive definitions of the term “landscape” such that it attends to everything from the land itself to the economies and networks of goods and people that circulate throughout and across the globe.¹⁰ Put another way: What to do when landscape theory winds up, necessarily, as the theory that must account for everything?

The present volume represents one manner of addressing this question. As Jim explains in the opening remarks to the roundtable, he and I have assembled a group of scholars and practitioners from a diversity of disciplines to aid us in articulating and assessing the state of thinking and theorizing about landscape. One might say that the prolonged duration of the ensuing conversation—from the roundtable conversation held in Ballyvaughan, Ireland, to the remarks by Alan Wallach and Elizabeth Helsinger that close this volume, a dialogue that transpired over the course of nearly a year—is analogous to the time spent by Hawthorne and Fuller clearing their heads, willing themselves free of preconceived notions, pat definitions, and habits of mind and eye where landscape or landscapes are concerned (or at least making the attempt). This is not to say that we aimed for cohesiveness or definitiveness (something like a “final word”), or even for clarity—that we labored under the illusion that we could engineer a move from theoretical muddle and murk into theoretical lucidity

and light (or that we privileged light over murk to begin with)—but to suggest that the points of view or angles of vision offered up by thinkers from a variety of fields might collectively approximate the ever-shifting perspectives and grounds of Thoreau's vision, what in the end added up not to synthesis but to a platform from which to look deeply and well.

And why look at all? What necessitates or compels consideration of landscape and its theorizations, now or at any other time? To my mind, the intellectual and socio-political stakes of landscape theory are high. Jay Appleton has called landscape "a kind of backcloth to the whole stage of human activity."¹¹ Although I would amend this statement so as to reflect the apositionality of landscape (it is neither foreground nor background, center nor periphery, etc.), I agree with its basic claim: that landscape is part and parcel of human activity, experience, and discourse. I agree also with W. J. T. Mitchell's thesis that "landscape is not a genre of art but a medium," which I take as evoking the manner in which humans use landscapes of all sorts (natural, pictorial, symbolic, mythic, imagined, built, and so forth, if such distinctions can be drawn) as means to artistic, social, economic, and political ends (some nefarious, some not), as well as the manner in which landscapes of all sorts act on and shape *us*, as if agents in their own right.¹² Given all of this, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of understanding what and how landscape is and does, especially since our sense of landscape (natural and otherwise) has direct bearing on the sustenance and survival of the environment in which we live and of which we are a part (here I signal the ecological strain that, only implicit in the roundtable, emerged explicitly in a number of the assessments) and also on the present and future constitution and negotiation of social, economic, and political geographies (homeland, territory, transit, exchange, border, and border-crossing are relevant terms and concepts here).

So, because "landscape" is difficult to see and, consequently, to theorize, and also because both of these things are important and necessary tasks, the multidisciplinary dialogue presented here aims to defamiliarize two sorts of terrains: the terrain of landscape itself and the terrain, as constituted by particular objects and methods of inquiry, specific to each discipline or practice that engages things

landscape. Rendering the regularly and familiarly seen and studied (whatever this is within a particular disciplinary arena, be it urban planning or art history) to a certain degree unrecognizable by way of the introduction of the outlooks of other fields (yes, I recognize that this is itself a landscape metaphor, as is what follows) introduces sidelong and oblique perspectives and causes the grounds of inquiry to shift and squirm such that, one hopes, our views of and onto landscape(s) shift and squirm as well. To return to Thoreau, whose circuitous traversal of terrain constituted just this sort of reorientation—"We thus worked our way up this river, gradually adjusting our thoughts to novelties"—and whose language play (in *A Week* and elsewhere) approximates what I have been describing as a shifting and substituting among disciplinary terms, concepts, and points of view: "The Concord had rarely been a river or *rivus*, but barely *fluvius*, or between *fluvius* and *lacus*. This Merrimack was neither *rivus* nor *fluvius* nor *lacus*, but rather *amnis* here, a gently swelling and stately rolling flood approaching the sea."¹³ It is as if Thoreau realized that a whole other language, here Latin, was necessary to come to terms with and characterize the nature and operations of the river landscape through which he traveled, or, put another way, as if he imagined that by tipping the letters of his text away from their normal vertical axis—by rendering oblique the very words he used to signify his surround (a style requirement, yes, but the use of Latin, what necessitated italicization in the first place, here an authorial choice)—a new perspective on this landscape might be gained, its complexities and character set into revelatory relief. The conversation about landscape theory contained in this volume of course constitutes more than language play, but the desired outcome stands analogous to the impulse here attributed to Thoreau.

Notes

1. R. E. Garczynski, "Niagara," in *Picturesque America, or The Land We Live In*, vol. 1 (New York: Appleton and Company, 1874), reprinted in *The American Landscape: Literary Sources and Documents*, edited by Graham Clarke (East Sussex, UK: Helm Information, 1993), 273. Capitalization in original. For histories of Niagara, see William Irwin, *The New Niagara: Tourism, Technology, and the Landscape of Niagara Falls, 1776–1917* (University Park PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); Patricia

- Jasen, "Romanticism, Modernity, and the Evolution of Tourism on the Niagara Frontier, 1790–1850," *Canadian Historical Review* 72 (June 1991): 283–318; Elizabeth McKinsey, *Niagara Falls: Icon of the American Sublime* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and John F. Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (Amherst MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998).
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 6. Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) (Orleans MA: Parnassus Imprints, 1987), 71–72, 251, 257, 21.
 7. Thoreau, *A Week*, 293, 294–95, 53.
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11. Jay Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape* (London and New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975), 2.
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2

STARTING POINTS

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL FORMATION AND SYMBOLIC LANDSCAPE¹

Denis E. Cosgrove

In late 1996, during the discussions which led to the republication of *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, the deaths were reported of the American landscape essayist J. Brinckerhoff Jackson and the British landscape architect and writer Geoffrey Jellicoe. Both Jackson and Jellicoe were figures of huge significance in twentieth-century English-language landscape writing. They have deeply influenced my own thinking about landscape, and I count myself fortunate in having met and heard each of them speaking on landscape. In their different ways, both were acutely sensitive to the complexities and ambiguities, as well as to the expressive power, that actual landscapes embody. Each recognized and honored in his writings and designs a desire to sustain what I refer to in this book as an unalienated, insider's apprehension of the land: of nature and the sense of place, together with a more critical, socially conscious, outsider's perspective: what I call in the book the landscape "way of seeing." Reading *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* today, it is obvious to me how far it draws upon J. B. Jackson's unique capacity to interpret landscapes iconographically and intelligently while remaining true to the everyday experience of landscape as the setting for life and work. Jackson's essays deepened my own love and understanding, particularly of American landscapes, although I cannot claim to

match Jackson's evocations of mood, texture and color in specific landscapes.² More evident perhaps is the influence of his consistent demonstration that landscapes emerge from specific geographical, social and cultural circumstances, that landscape is embedded in the practical uses of the physical world as nature and territory, while its intellectual shaping in America (where his work was concentrated) has drawn upon deep resources of myth and memory offered by both Western Classical and Judeo-Christian cultural traditions.

Myth and memory were perhaps even more central to Geoffrey Jellicoe's landscape writings, which similarly concentrated in Europe and the United States, although he drew also, and with marvelous syncretism, on the varied landscape traditions of Asia. His designs incorporate his sensitivities to myth and memory alongside an uncompromising faith in modernism. A few months after the death of President John F. Kennedy in 1963, for example, Jellicoe was commissioned to landscape an acre of land beside the River Thames at Runnymede that had been donated by Parliament on the part of the British nation to the United States as a commemorative monument to the late president.³ This now matured landscape is less than a mile from where I now work. Jellicoe's design incorporates a serpentine path of uneven stone sets climbing away from the river terrace, forming a Pilgrim's Progress which leads uphill through a tangle of second-growth woodland to end at a great block of white limestone inscribed with the dead president's name, his dates and words taken from his inauguration speech. Each November a North American sumac sheds its red leaves over the monument, recalling both Kennedy's native Massachusetts and the date of his blood sacrifice. To the west of the stone, the acre of ground opens into English meadowland, marked only by a path, with a ha-ha along its border. A key structural feature in the English garden tradition, the ha-ha allows uninterrupted vision over landscape, occluding the boundaries of property and land use. At Runnymede the view is across the watermeadow site of Magna Carta's signing: iconic landscape of English liberties and the rule of law. The geographical, historical, and ideological references woven into Jellicoe's design are multiple and layered. In speaking and writing about this design, as about his other work, Jellicoe himself always stressed the appeal to "archetypal"

forms and rhythms shared between human consciousness and the natural world, a *mythos* that he believed true landscape contained and expressed. When I take students to visit the site, I tend to downplay ideas of archetypes, but rather, drawing upon the approach developed in this book, I try to connect the Kennedy site with immediately adjacent ones: a memorial to lost Royal Air Force pilots whose final resting place is unknown, which stands on the top of Cooper's Hill, itself the subject of one of the earliest "prospect" or "landskip" poems written in seventeenth-century England.⁴ The classic landscape view from Cooper's Hill is toward Windsor Castle with its Great Park, itself one of the most complex, contested and symbolic landscapes in England. My approach is not to ignore or to deny Jellicoe's emphasis on the phenomenology of landscape and on those visceral experiences of natural forms, at once individual and yet widely shared and communicated, that he sought to draw down in his design. But I do emphasize that myth and memory in Jellicoe's landscape work relate to complex historical and social discourses, even if Jellicoe himself was unconscious of them. Both J. B. Jackson's contextual and democratic, and Jellicoe's mythological and Classicist, insights into landscape aesthetics and memory remain vital features of my own landscape readings, but I recognize more clearly now how uncomfortably they sit alongside the dominantly historicist tenor of my argument in *Social Formation*. Thus I acknowledge more readily today their need to be incorporated into any genuinely convincing interpretation of specific landscapes.

Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape is not principally about the interpretation of specific landscapes; it is rather an historical sketch of *ideas* about landscape as they have evolved and changed in Europe and North America since the fifteenth century. Nonetheless, if the historical explanations the book offers are to be convincing they should speak to specific landscapes such as those that Jackson and Jellicoe discussed and designed. Reading the book in preparation for writing this introduction, I was surprised how little reference I made in it fifteen years ago to Jackson's and Jellicoe's work. They would be much more present were I to be writing it today. This signals perhaps as eloquently as anything else the contingencies of the moment when the book was initially conceived and written. Reprinting it now

allows me an opportunity to reflect on those contingencies, and to highlight the ways in which my own thinking about landscape has evolved since the book was published. Many of these changes in my own thinking are responses to others whose own work was stimulated by reading *Social Formation*. It also allows me to acknowledge much more openly than I felt possible in the early 1980s those dimensions of landscape that Jackson and Jellicoe emphasized, and that infect the book's thesis so strongly that, despite the powerful insights social theory brings to understanding landscape, they render that thesis in some respects overly partial.

My primary intention in 1984 was to press landscape studies, especially in geography, toward what seemed to me specific new directions: to locate landscape interpretation within a critical historiography, to theorize the *idea* of landscape within a broadly marxian understanding of culture and society, and thus to extend the treatment of landscape beyond what seemed to me a prevailing narrow focus on design and taste. This *idea of landscape* I developed is summarized in a statement that has been more widely quoted than any other in the book:

landscape represents a way of seeing—a way in which some Europeans have represented to themselves and to others the world about them and their relationships with it, and through which they have commented on social relations. Landscape is a way of seeing that has its own history, but a history that can be understood only as part of a wider history of economy and society; that has its own assumptions and consequences, but assumptions and consequences whose origins and implications extend well beyond the use and perception of land; that has its own techniques of expression, but techniques which it shares with other areas of cultural practice.

This thesis, that landscape constitutes a discourse through which identifiable social groups historically have framed themselves and their relations both with the land and with other human groups, and that this discourse is closely related epistemically and technically to ways of seeing, remains both the book's strength and, from today's perspective, also its principal weakness. It is the foundation upon which a subsequent critical literature has built substantively and

theoretically, widening and deepening our historical understanding of landscape meanings. Subsequent developments in landscape thought and interpretation have equally disclosed the weaknesses, partiality and limitations of the thesis. Nonetheless, the basic argument of *Social Formation* is so clear and the organization of the text so tightly woven around it that tinkering with it for a second edition would obscure rather than enhance both its clarity and the book's coherence. To present all the modifications and subsequent insights with which I myself would now wish to embroider the argument would mean a new and different book. I have therefore decided to leave the main text unaltered, to stand or fall on its original merits. In the space allowed by a single prefatory chapter, I cannot do justice to the range and quality of writing about landscape that has appeared since 1984, nor even to the many ways that the thesis offered here has been both extended and criticized. I am naturally delighted that it has attracted such attention, both within my own discipline and beyond, in anthropology, archaeology, art history and landscape architecture, and also that, through the book's translation into Italian with a thoughtful commentary by Clara Copeta, it has engaged with traditions of landscape design and interpretation very different from those of the anglophone world. But progress comes more from criticism than from praise, so I shall restrict myself here to the issues and writings that have most effectively challenged and extended the original text and have most influenced my own thinking about landscape since this book was first written. I structure my comments around the two phrases that make up the book's title. "Social formation" allows me to comment upon the social and historical theories that structure my approach to landscape. "Symbolic landscape" gives me an opportunity to comment upon the methods by which actual landscapes and their representations are approached in the book, and to return finally to those issues of myth, memory and meaning that invade landscapes' material existence and that I have associated with the work of Jackson and Jellicoe.

Social formation

In parochially disciplinary terms, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* was a contribution to a late 1970s and early 1980s debate within anglophone human geography, at that time negotiating the early stages of what we can see with hindsight was a profound collapse of long-established scholarly assumptions about disciplinary coherence, scientific method and verification, objectivity and the politics of knowledge. Of course, the collapse of confidence in the grand theories or “master narratives” that have driven the Western scientific project since the Enlightenment has by no means been confined to the discipline of geography, and it has progressed considerably since 1984. In all fields of learning, the past fifteen years have forced us to recognize that no single, coherent set of theories, concepts and methods—regardless of their moral or political appeal—can hope to provide a certain and progressive path toward truth. This insight offers challenges to a thesis that relies upon a dominant narrative, in this case marxian, while liberating thought, allowing historical insights to remain while embracing other motivations for action and other sources of meaning in human relations with the material world.

The title *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* immediately positions the book theoretically. “Social formation” is a Marxist formulation, discussed in detail early in the book and promoted as a conceptual escape from the tendency within Marxism to subordinate both material and imaginative cultural expressions to the imperatives of political economy, itself conceived largely in terms of production. Much of the historical discussion in the book turns upon a historiographic debate that was engaging the attention of British Marxist historians at the time it was written: the issue of a “transition from feudalism to capitalism.” Conceptually, feudalism and capitalism are intended to denote types of social organization whose legal, political and cultural expressions are rooted in the collective organization of material production. In the book, it is to the different ways in which *land* has been socially appropriated, primarily for use values under feudalism and for exchange values under capitalism, that I attempt to connect the appearance, expressions and meanings associated with

the landscape idea in the West. Today, I am much more conscious of the frailties of this formulation. The focus on “social formation” rather than “mode of production,” as I argue in the text, was of course intended as an escape clause from economic determinism. But, as Marxism’s critics have not failed to point out, once the chains of causality anchoring consciousness and value to collective production of material goods are broken, as they are in a “humanist” Marxism, the theory loses much of its effective explanatory edge. Furthermore, a number of historical and theoretical insights, from psychoanalysis, feminism, and postcolonial studies for example, have reconfigured the emphasis on class as the foundation of social action within strictly marxian historiography, while sharing its critical and progressive intent of examining the nature and origins of contemporary social worlds and seeking to ameliorate their injustices. I shall comment briefly on those criticisms of the social formation model that seem most relevant to the treatment of landscape in the book.

Historiographically, debate over “the transition to capitalism” has largely been superseded by a concern to understand the evolution of “modern” societies more broadly conceived, societies that share certain socioeconomic, demographic, political, cultural and spatial features, but that are also historically and geographically varied. Their emergence is regarded as much more than a simple outcome of the world-historical evolution of market capitalism. In the aftermath of a self-consciously twentieth-century “modernism” with its particular forms of Fordist industry and mass production and its avant-garde cultural expressions and ideological “master narratives,” it is possible to rethink the history of European societies since the fifteenth century. Since the Renaissance, and with increasing velocity since the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the societies discussed in this book have experienced their present and narrated their past as an interconnected nexus of material (demographic, technological, socioeconomic, environmental) and cultural (intellectual, scientific, political, legal, artistic) changes, transforming them internally and projecting their influence with growing external effects across the globe. Thus, for example, Peter Burke’s comparative sets of “biases” in Renaissance culture, which I claim in the text reflect the “capitalist transition” in the Italian city states, may with perhaps less violence to

their complexity and historical specificity be regarded as evidence of a much less overdetermined movement of social modernization. A crucial aspect of such modernization is the historical consciousness of "being modern." This itself is a characteristic strand of European humanist thought as it developed through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and influenced progressive values in the years that followed. "Being modern" altered relations with the land in more complex ways than merely through changing forms of ownership: for example, a growing secularism and a Protestant belief in personal salvation through works may have played as significant a role in altering attitudes to the exploitation of land or mineral resources as capitalist ownership.⁵

Humanist values were promoted by Europeans until very recently as a universal and progressive achievement, to be adopted with time and "development" by all peoples, an element in the construction of a modern global identity. Central to this progressive narrative of human achievement has been the figure of the individual European male, conceived as a universal subject, exercising rational self-consciousness within a largely disembodied mind, and endowed with a will to power: thus the sovereign subject of history. Effectively, if invisibly, that subject is the hero (or anti-hero) of *Social Formation*. I attribute the origins of landscape idea to the experience of bourgeois citizens in the Italian city states in relation to land, and to the humanist culture generated out of their experience, paying specific attention to the spatialities connected to new technologies of vision and representation (linear perspective). The account pays little technical attention to the significance of alternative perspective constructions shown by Svetlana Alpers, Walter Gibson and others to have been so significant in seventeenth-century Flemish and Dutch landscape representation.⁶ Important contributions to the history of seeing in the West have emphasized the complexities of its evolution since Alberti and Brunelleschi. Martin Jay for example has identified a number of "scopic regimes" in the development of modernity with complex connections to social and technical change, while Timothy Mitchell has elaborated Martin Heidegger's insight that modern societies characteristically represent the world to themselves as a picture and related this to the West's "picturing" of other societies

and their landscapes.⁷ Such work offers fertile extensions and elaborations of the land and landscape thesis offered here.

An obvious consequence of exploring more fully than in *Social Formation* the culture-historical and political implications of the disembodied eye and its subject centeredness is to highlight the almost complete absence in the text of gender and of desire as aspects of an embodied viewing subject and of landscape discourse more generally. Not only are the viewers of landscape in *Social Formation*, from Leon Battista Alberti, through Palladio and his patrons, the Venetian, Flemish, Dutch and English landscape artists, Thomas Jefferson and Hector St Jean de Crèvecoeur, William Kent, John Ruskin and Richard Long, uniformly male, but they appear and communicate to us as *eyes*, largely disconnected from any other corporeal or sensual aspects of their being and existence. The detachment from the land entailed by the landscape way of seeing is the critical focus of the work, to be sure, but detachment from their own bodies tends to be a consequence of the proffered reading here. Yet we know that sensuality and desire are powerful motivating aspects of imagination, mobilized in complex ways in relation to the vision that they often direct, and cannot be ignored in responses to landscapes. Such complexities of vision are often explicit in Ruskin's writing, and they are readily apparent in many of the landscape images painted by Giorgione, Titian, Claude, Nicholas Poussin or Turner. Although it has been largely through gender theory that the importance of subject embodiment for shaping human spatialities and environmental experience has been signaled, the significance of its occlusion in this book goes beyond issues of gender politics. It has the effect of at once inflating the significance of individuals' statements on landscape by rendering those who made them ciphers for a universalized experience, while silencing whole aspects of their personal, unavoidably embodied, experience of the material world. By the same token, the text is silent on the gendering of the landscape itself as the object of seeing, or as some writers would have it, of "the gaze." Gendering the object of study is a recurrent feature of landscape representation and, it has been claimed, of attitudes toward nature and environment more generally in modernity.⁸ While I would resist the claim made in some feminist studies that the landscape idea inevitably constructs

gendered landscapes as the passive, feminized objects of a rapacious and voyeuristic male gaze,⁹ the absence of any recognition in my discussion of *villaggiatura* and *poesia*, for example, of the sexual desires and power relations involved in the associated landscape representations, significantly narrows the interpretation. By pursuing the metaphorical associations of body and landscape—briefly touched upon here in my discussion of Renaissance metaphysics, but not explored in the sensuous and gendered terms that have been exposed by more recent writing¹⁰—not only has the history of landscape representation been enriched, but critical questions about the relationships between landscape, environmental exploitation and modernity have been addressed.

A similarly significant absence in the book, connected to my emphasis on class relations and their connections to property, has been revealed through the postcolonial decentering of the European subject that has been so carefully examined in the years since 1984. Although relatively little attention is paid in my own narrative to landscapes beyond Europe, we have come increasingly to recognize that the implications of Columbian and post-Columbian contacts have shaped culture and landscape as profoundly in Europe as they have in the regions beyond it. Seeking to apply the ideas developed in *Social Formation* to a monographic study of the sixteenth-century Venetian landscape in *The Palladian Landscape*,¹¹ I was unable to avoid the significance of “the New World” on the changing landscape and its representations, even in a region not directly involved in exploration or colonization: ideologically in terms of utopian landscape visions, and practically in terms of newly introduced crops such as sweetcorn. The same Venetian nobles who were designing new landscapes on their expanding *terraferma* estates and penning Neoplatonic celebrations of natural beauty in their villas were also collecting, classifying, cultivating, and disseminating exotic plants brought back from newly discovered, transoceanic worlds of colonial conquest.¹² Simon Schama and Adams have revealed similar processes operating on seventeenth-century Dutch landscapes, and Seymour et al. in eighteenth-century England.¹³ Changes in the working landscape and in landscape painting and gardening were consistently connected into the cultural and economic circuits of the

European colonial project, and may often be read as a cipher for the complex interchanges it entailed. A chapter in this book is devoted to European colonization of American land and, while it may be an exaggeration to claim, as does W. J. T. Mitchell, that landscape was "the dreamwork of imperialism,"¹⁴ my discussion of the Jeffersonian landscape would have benefited from the insights of later writers on landscape and colonialism into the colonizing aspects of the landscape way of seeing. This would have suggested greater emphasis on the imperial power relations implicit in the US land survey system, and on the complex and hybrid consequences of the growing global commerce in plants and species introduced for domestication in the European designed landscape from the seventeenth century.

A positive, although perhaps not always intended, consequence of decentering and embodying the universal subject who, in *Social Formation*, produces and consumes property as landscape is to refocus attention on aesthetics. While the book betrays a proper caution when applying the class-based interpretation arising from the concept of social formation, and acknowledges the significance of individual imagination and pleasure in landscape, it never seriously grapples with the aesthetic and emotional qualities of landscapes. Landscape's sensuous appeal, which is often much more than merely visual, dominated philosophical aesthetic debates in the English eighteenth century. It accounts for the popularity of Jay Appleton's thesis in *The Experience of Landscape*, also recently republished.¹⁵ Stephen Daniels, who has closely examined the ways that literary and philosophical debates on landscape mediated individual appreciation and highly politicized class discourse in Georgian England, has written persuasively of "the duplicity of landscape," offering a carefully nuanced account of its simultaneous appeal as subjective experience and pleasure and its role as social expression of authority and ownership.¹⁶ Much of the strength of Daniels's interpretations of English landscape designs and debates in the Georgian and Regency decades comes from his refusal to universalize the subject, granting individual aesthetic sensibilities, while grounding his studies of specific landscapes in detailed knowledge of the historical and geographical circumstances in which they were created.

The final problem worth commenting upon that arises from the

"transition to capitalism" model of *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* is one of historical narrative. In the book I claim that, after the last flourish of romanticism, landscape as an active concern for progressive art died in the second half of the nineteenth century, and that its ideological function of harmonizing social-environmental relations through visual pleasure was appropriated by the discipline of geography. Rereading these claims, it seems that they derive more from theoretical imperatives associated with the book's thesis than from historical actualities: capitalist modes of productive organization had come so completely to dominate European societies that the moral power of landscape had to be exhausted. My interpretation of the impacts of photography on landscape representation seemed, when writing the book, to offer convenient technical support for this claim. I do not now believe that much of this stands up to either theoretical or historical scrutiny. My claim that romanticism was itself little more than an ideological expression of capitalist social relations and urban industrialism exemplifies the constraints that the book's theoretical model tends to impose on a much more richly textured feature of modernizing European societies. To interpret the intense Enlightenment debates over human nature and origins, the "rights of Man," liberty and constitutional organization, that accompanied the collapse of Europe's *anciens régimes* as little more than ideological legitimations designed to ease the final stages of transition to capitalist market economies is to oversimplify matters dangerously. If nothing else, it ignores the active role played by the imaginative creation of new identities, often drawing upon landscape images such as the oak tree, in shaping the territorial and political structures such as the nation state, in which capitalist production has been obliged to operate for much of the past two centuries.¹⁷ Relations between landscape and romantic nationalism have a complex history that extends over most of that period and has been a focus of some of the most exciting work by students of landscape since 1984, especially among cultural geographers. The emergence of geography as a scholarly discipline in many European countries was itself very much an expression of romantic nationalism,¹⁸ and geography's iconic elevation of specific national landscape may be read as an extension of the moral discourse to which landscape art

had already been coupled during the eighteenth century.¹⁹ Contrary to the claim that geography replaced landscape art, however, romantic nationalism found intense artistic expression through landscape representations in precisely those *fin de siècle* years of the nineteenth century when the text requires that landscape art lose its appeal.

I shall return below to the matter of landscape and identity. At this point I am more concerned with the historical claims made in the final pages of *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. The book effectively closes its history of landscape precisely at the moment when "modernism" emerges as a self-conscious cultural and artistic project. It is true that among the consistent and declared intentions of the twentieth-century avant-garde were the challenge to mimetic representation and the divorce of artwork from any dependence on literary and iconographic allusion, or figurative expression. But to claim that therefore landscape lost its ability to articulate progressive thought about social and environmental relations is to take the Modern Movement's own claims at face value. It neglects, for example, the influence that J. M. W. Turner's artistic experiments with color and light, which grew out of an intense concern with landscape (as Ruskin recognized), had upon Impressionist and post-Impressionist work in the closing years of the nineteenth century. The art of the final years of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth centuries includes some of the most enduring of Europe's landscape images, many of them exploring the spatialities and environmental relations of modern life.²⁰ Further, a great cultural insight of the years since this book was written has been that, far from signaling the end of history and creating a timeless, universal artistic formalism, modernism itself was but a passing moment in cultural evolution, its claims and modes of expression as historically contingent as any other. As the late Peter Fuller recognized, one aspect of postmodern culture has been a strong revival in recent years of landscape as a vital subject of artistic exploration.²¹ This reflects in part a revival of interest in the referential capacities of art, but now with a much freer attitude toward references and iconographic meanings. It is apparent too that the Modern Movement's attitudes to landscape were themselves ambiguous rather than consistently

hostile.²² This is not to deny that there have been contextual shifts in the technologies and structures of production and consumption that are intimately connected to the emergence of postmodern cultural expressions,²³ but these are insufficient in themselves to support the claim of necessary links between landscape representation and capitalist alienation from the land.

Our understanding of twentieth-century modernism itself as a broad cultural movement and of the discourses of landscape within it has thus been greatly expanded since *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* was published. Alongside their well-recorded embrace of functionalism, of mechanistic metaphors and images, and of abstract form, many modernist enthusiasts also had a deep concern for the visible landscape. Geoffrey Jellicoe himself is a fine example of this, but he was by no means alone.²⁴ Studies of British, German, Italian and Soviet culture during the twentieth century reveal the insistent appeal of a landscape aesthetics, often placing the new experiences and visual perspectives produced by modern technology, such as speed and the aerial view, in quite explicit dialogue with the picturesque tradition inherited from eighteenth-century theory and practice. To give just two examples: British debates over planning and controlling the impacts of a modern industrial state and postwar reconstruction at mid-century turned in very considerable measure on maintaining continuity in the appearance of the land, not merely for aesthetic ends but out of a sustained and widely held belief that orderly landscape was both cause and consequence of a morally ordered, civic society seeking to negotiate the changes wrought by modern living.²⁵ In these debates, eighteenth-century English parkland often acted as a template for a resolutely progressive landscape design code. And Stalinist Russia, despite a triumphalist rhetoric of the onward march of modern socialism to communist victory over a subordinated nature, and the inscription of technological reason across a waywardly picturesque landscape, actively encouraged conventional landscape representations by Socialist Realist painters as the official image of Russian countryside.²⁶ German National Socialism and Italian Futurism negotiated in similar but diverse ways equally complex paths between modernist aesthetics and appeals to the spiritual power of landscape.²⁷

The place of technology within modernity is central, practically, mythically and rhetorically. But only a superficial reading of cultural history would suggest that the mechanistic and inorganic aspects of technology have actually resulted in a lessened appeal of landscape. Photography, which I deal with in these pages only in its impacts on nineteenth-century landscape, has been central to the promotion and recording of landscape during the twentieth century. The appeal and aesthetics of the American West as landscape, for example,²⁸ owes as much to photography as to the paintings of Thomas Cole, Asher Durand and Albert Bierstadt (in one of whose most sublime landscape paintings a tripod camera plays the role of the traditional eyewitness). And this is due not merely to the work of art photographers such as Ansel Adams²⁹ or Alex MacLean³⁰ but to the much more demotic medium of film. In Hollywood movies—not only Westerns—and more recently television, advertising and video, landscapes have played a vital role, not merely as the setting for human action, but often as a main protagonist. Twentieth-century technologies of vision and representation have been coupled with other technical achievements, transforming, but not extinguishing, the appeal of landscape and its power to articulate moral and social concerns. Among the most obvious is the internal combustion engine, allowing high-speed movement across smooth, uninterrupted ribbons of road and producing new ways of entering, experiencing and seeing landscape. The builders of Germany's system of *Autobahnen* in the 1930s recognized this potential, planning routes and designing the curves of their roads in order to open new vistas across German landscapes and offer novel ways of experiencing them.³¹ With powered flight the kinetics of speed were complemented by a qualitatively different order of distance perspective over land. The dream of the bird's-eye view, pictured imaginatively in the "world landscapes" of the sixteenth century,³² was thus realized in practice. It not only opened new relations of distanciated viewing—reaching an apogee in the 1968 photograph of the earth rising over the lunar surface in a parody of one of the picturesque landscape's most recurrent compositions³³—but revealed a new temporality in landscape, through the archaeological marks of past occupancy visible on its surface only from the air.

The landscapes produced and experienced through the interaction of technology and land in the twentieth century have become the subject of intense interest in the years since the first appearance of *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. The continued relevance of terms such as the "Sublime," inherited from the landscape discourse of earlier centuries and applied for example to the landscapes of hydroelectric power generation³⁴ or nuclear weapons testing, suggests that the strong claim in the book for a break in the late nineteenth century in the discourse of landscape cannot really be sustained.

Symbolic landscape

A feature of this twentieth-century landscape interaction of land, technology and vision is the ever more seamless elision of experience and representation. Introducing *The Iconography of Landscape*, Stephen Daniels and I claimed that from today's perspective landscape resembles "a flickering text displayed on a screen whose meaning can be created, extended, altered, elaborated and finally obliterated by the merest touch of a button."³⁵ Such "virtual landscapes" represent the furthest extension so far of the idea of landscape as a distanced way of seeing developed in this book: moving beyond even symbolic landscape, in some representations to landscape *simulacra*.³⁶ This further extension and elaboration of the symbolic qualities of landscape, apparent in so much postmodern commentary, demands some reflection of the meanings given to "symbolic landscape" in this book.

If an entire chapter is devoted to exegesis of the phrase "social formation," "symbolic landscape" is nowhere precisely defined. I was astonished to find that it does not even appear in the index, and the theory of symbolism underlying the work is left unclear. No reference is made to semiotic or other communicative theories of symbolism, to iconographic or other methods of symbolic hermeneutics of interpretation, or to the relations between symbol and myth, or forms of symbolic interaction. References to "ideology" and "hegemony" indicate attention to the social constitution and uses of symbolic discourse and in fact the symbolic is generally treated theoretically as

a veneer or veil, drawn with greater or lesser effect across material and social relations. A subordinate discourse is also evident in my brief discussion of animistic myth connected to the natural world and seasonal rhythms. Methodologically, the symbolic here, and in my subsequent work on landscape,³⁷ is treated iconically, through a Warburgian approach that emphasizes the contextual interpretation of pictorial symbols. This seems particularly suitable to the idea of landscape as a way of seeing, interpreted largely through the medium of visual images, and emerging in the same Renaissance historic and cultural context as the Renaissance artistic culture that concerned those who developed this approach in art history: Aby Warburg, Erwin Panofsky, and Ernst Gombrich. I found it a particularly effective approach in my detailed examination of changing material landscapes and their representation in sixteenth-century northern Italy: the "Palladian landscape," in which "vision" acted as a powerful *Leitmotif* of landscape interpretation.³⁸

This approach stands in some distinction to the more literary-based methodology adopted by some other recent writers of critical landscape interpretation. James and Nancy Duncan for example have revealed the theoretical resilience of "text" as a metaphor for landscape, drawing upon the insights of literary theory and criticism.³⁹ This has had the effect of moving attention away from the purely visible landscape, in order to emphasize relations of power and subordination that are effected in and through the organization of space but that are often deliberately obscured to the eye. In a historical analysis of the royal landscapes of the Kingdom of Kandy in Sri Lanka before European colonial rule, James Duncan⁴⁰ extends and applies the insight that the various tropes used in rhetoric and recognized in literary hermeneutics, such as metaphor, metonym and simile, are significant not only in understanding literary representations of landscape⁴¹ but in their material construction and their communication of social meanings. Relations between landscape and text have been fundamental to understanding the inscription of meaning on newly discovered lands during the course of European colonial expansion, in large measure itself a process of naming, as work on Australia and South Africa has revealed.⁴² I have found particularly stimulating the idea of combining the text metaphor for

landscape with the visual and iconographic emphasis developed in *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. This yields the idea of treating landscape as theater,⁴³ a connection historically warranted perhaps in the European cultural tradition by the close connection between many significant landscape artists and theater design. Canaletto, Bernini, Inigo Jones, Philippe de Loutheburg and Henri Daguerre were all engaged in designing stage sets for theatrical performance. Such conceptual elaborations of the relation between landscape and symbolic discourse that have followed the publication of this book indicate the theoretical fertility, while perhaps highlighting the initial imprecision, of the idea of symbolic landscape.

The disconnection of landscape from productive social relations with the material earth implied by treating landscape symbolically—as image, text or theater for example—and taken to its extreme in the idea of “virtual landscape” has attracted criticism from a number of writers since the publication of this book.⁴⁴ A dominant concern among them has been to sustain the sense of landscape as a material geographical object, encompassing both human agency and the material environment, acknowledging its symbolic attributes without reducing it to a mere social construction. The environmental and communitarian foundations of landscape were of course central to the geographical concepts of landscape discussed early in the text. Recent recovery of Carl Sauer’s work and thought by late-twentieth-century American environmentalists, some of whom, like Barry Lopez,⁴⁵ have written brilliantly evocative landscape interpretations, and the continued fertility of cultural geography as an environmental discourse within the American academy have led to a lively debate on landscape within cultural geography in recent years, in which the etymology and meanings of landscape have been intensely re-examined.⁴⁶ Kenneth Olwig for example has challenged the argument developed in *Social Formation* that landscape as a way of seeing, a symbolic construction, largely replaced landscape as a direct human experience and expression of collective social order within a specific geographical and environmental context.⁴⁷ “It is not enough,” he claims, “to study landscape as a scenic text. A more *substantive* understanding of the landscape is required . . . [recognizing] the historical and contemporary importance of community, culture, law and

custom in shaping human geographical existence—in both idea and practice.”⁴⁸ He emphasizes the continued significance of landscape as a context for socio-political identity and community action across much of contemporary northern Europe.

Such a claim is undoubtedly a welcome caveat against the wilder excesses of a poststructuralist treatment of landscapes as little more than simulacra, disconnected from any link with the material earth and actual social practice, and it is properly urged by those concerned with the implications of current landscape study for practical environmental intervention. But such semantic studies tend themselves to become caught in purely linguistic circuits, and it may be that the argument for the continued social relevance of landscape as an expression of environmental relations beyond the purely visual is more effectively made by such landscape studies as Simon Schama’s “excavation below our conventional sight-level to recover the veins of myth and memory that lie beneath the surface.”⁴⁹ This too is conducted largely via the interpretation of expressive media through which relations with the material world have been imagined and represented: texts, paintings, designed gardens and parks, city plans, sculptures and photographs. The intention is not to construct a unitary historical structure of meanings and environmental relations through landscape, but, as Schama’s title implies, to reveal the power of social memory—mythic unreason—in shaping individual and social identities through its treatment of an inescapable human presence in the natural world.

Structuring his approach to landscape around the elemental themes of wood, water, and rock, Schama seeks to reveal how human communities have drawn imaginatively upon dominant features of their living environment to shape distinct identities. Recognizing the thrust of the anthropological insight that identity is constructed more through the experience of others than through autonomous self-consciousness, Schama acknowledges the exotic appeal of imaginative landscapes located beyond the known and the everyday: the insiders’ world. Thus, for example, he describes the complex evolution of Roman experiences and images of the wooded and impermanently farmed territories beyond the imperial *limes* defined by the Rhine and Danube, the landscape described by Cornelius

Tacitus in his *Germania*. Savage and uncouth peoples who failed to cultivate the land, the inhabitants of these forests who had conspired to defeat the might of Rome through their strategic use of the landscape of the Teutoburger Wald, were regarded simultaneously as upholders of liberty, leading an exemplary life of egalitarian collectivity close to nature. Their life and landscape offered an implicit rebuke to imperial urban decadence and overexploited *latifundiae* of Mediterranean Italy. Tacitus' text later provided an ideological justification for the significance of a landscape of *Wald und Fels* within German romantic nationalism. So powerfully was the myth activated in fascist Germany that Schama relates the story of an SS detachment in the closing days of World War II devoting precious time and resources to a fruitless search for the earliest manuscript of *Germania*, supposedly secreted in an Italian villa near Ancona.

In Schama's account water flows in rivers of myth rather than standing deep and luminous or reflecting from the surfaces of lakes or the sea. It is a natural element, drawn upon and wonderfully elaborated historically to irrigate landscapes of social power and authority: for example by Bernini in the Piazza Navona at Rome, signaling papal claims over universal space by bringing the continental rivers of the globe—Danube, Nile, Amazon and Ganges—to a confluence at the heart of the Eternal City, or by Le Nôtre at Versailles, where the principal axis strikes west to end in the great fountain of Apollo's chariot disappearing into the lake of Ocean. Schama's third landscape element is rock, the most resistant to change and flow, and in this sense imaginatively the most enduring. Carving bodily form in stone is the closest we can come to giving material immortality to a human life, and Schama's account takes us from gender wars over the faces to be carved at Mount Rushmore to the conquest of the mountains as a way of gaining simultaneously the grand perspective of the "world landscape" and the contemplative depths of the world's soul.

I emphasize Schama's book because it deals so effectively with the mythic dimensions of landscape that have increasingly dominated my own attention since writing *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. It does so without losing touch with either the materiality or the social and historical specificities of landscape. In this sense

Schama echoes J. B. Jackson's landscape voice. Jackson too wrote one of his most evocative landscape essays on the sacred power of stone. He emphasized the significance of the long-held belief that, like other natural elements, stone is not dead and inert, but rather "a concentration of power and life."⁵⁰ He points to the frequency with which stone has been connected not merely with the telluric depths of earth, but with the crystalline cosmos and the stars, whence it owes its origins. He finds therefore a power in "mythic lithology" expressed in stone's use in memorial and monumental landscapes.⁵¹ He would have approved, I think, of Geoffrey Jellicoe's great stone slab at Runnymede, servicing alongside the sumac and the meadowland "the essential function of landscape . . . to combine the monumental, the landmark, with the transitory," evidence of what John Ruskin once called "man's acquiescence in the statutes of the land that gave him birth." It is this rather than the narrow focus on human dominance over other people and over nature, or on human destruction of natural environments, that I believe the best landscape writing discloses. In their different ways Jellicoe, Jackson and Schama all acknowledge the still active power of myth as a shaping force of meaning in landscape.⁵²

Environmentalism criticism of modern social formations is an obvious absence in *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. The social theory upon which the text draws in large measure failed to evolve a coherent theory of the natural world or of social relations with it.⁵³ But I am not sure I would even today give great prominence to environmentalism. Any sensitivity to the history of landscape and its representations in the Western tradition forces the recognition that human history is one of constant environmental modification, manipulation, destruction and creation, both material and imaginative. And guiding, if rarely driving, this process is the belief—deposited deep in myth and memory—that the good, the true and the beautiful, as well as the threatening, the awesome and the disgusting, are inscribed in the contours of the land.

In *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, land, especially cultivated, productive land, is the principal material foundation of the idea of landscape. It is also the great absence in Simon Schama's treatment of landscape. The forest, water and rock that structure his

text are of course resources for production as much as for myth, but historically in the regions both books discuss they have been, and remain, much less important in sustaining collective human existence than cultivated land. Whether as use value or as exchange value it is the cultivated earth that provides food for the overwhelming majority of individuals and communities, and it is thus in land that perhaps the most deeply rooted myths are to be discovered. Indeed, the most powerful of them concern *rootedness*, ideas of home and belonging, of locality and identity, and of the social and environmental dangers of change and modernization. For this reason, and despite the many ways that I might change this account with the benefit of a decade's hindsight, I still believe that the thesis presented in this book has something to say about the relations between land and human life as they are expressed in landscape.

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“ONE WITH NATURE”: LANDSCAPE, LANGUAGE, EMPATHY, AND IMAGINATION¹

Anne Whiston Spirn

(A note to readers: my illustrations, in color, are posted on the web on my home page, <http://web.mit.edu/spirn>, at: <http://web.mit.edu/spirn/www/newfront/book/text/theory.htm>. The numbers in the text correspond to the numbers of the illustrations, as listed at the end of this essay.)

Human survival depends upon adapting ourselves and our landscapes—cities, buildings, gardens, roadways, rivers, fields, forests—in new, life-sustaining ways, shaping contexts that reflect the interconnections of air, earth, water, life, and culture, and that help us feel and understand these connections: landscapes that are functional, sustainable, meaningful, and artful.

My career as landscape architect and planner, teacher, scholar, author, and photographer has been dedicated to advancing this goal. I once thought that the obstacle to achieving it was lack of knowledge, and I wrote my first book, *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design*, to fill that void. After its publication in 1984, I was surprised by how many people, including scientists and naturalists, resisted or ignored the evidence that human settlements, including cities, are part of the natural world. I have come to realize that ideas of nature and what is natural stem from strongly held feelings and

beliefs. These views are highly personal and varied, and changing them is not simply a matter of marshaling compelling verbal arguments, but of reaching both mind and heart. Photography and landscape architecture are powerful aids for helping people to feel, as well as reflect upon, the place of humans in nature. (1)

I now believe that promoting the harmonious coexistence of nature and humankind depends upon more than knowledge alone. Equally important are a sense of empathy—the projection of one’s own consciousness into another being, thing, or place—and the power of imagination. My book *The Language of Landscape* and the one I am currently working on, *The Eye Is a Door*, aim to help people read landscapes as products of both nature and culture and to inspire them to envision new landscapes that restore nature and honor culture.²

Basho, the Japanese poet, said the first lesson for the artist is to be one with nature throughout the seasons of the year. This lesson is important not just for the artist, but for everyone, especially those who live in cities. In city, as in countryside, look east after sunset and see the twilight arch, the shadow cast by the Earth, a reminder of the eternal processes of nature, which encompass all life, and imagine the Earth as a turning sphere: Earth’s shadow rising, blue into rose, tide turning—October twilight. (2) Along the Ridgeway, a prehistoric trade route across southern England: See cloud’s path in ancient track—earth, sky, a mirrored flowing. (3) To see clouds as paths of flowing dust and air, like paths made by people strolling, is to sense motion as a fundamental process, to feel the kinship between the animate and inanimate.

Basho and the tradition of Japanese linked poetry, *renku* or *haikai*, offers insights for shaping human settlements in accord with natural processes. Haruo Shirane, in *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Basho*, describes *haikai* as a chain of many short poems or *haiku*, usually written by two or more different poets, where “each poem takes up the suggestion of the preceding poem and yet opens up a new world of its own.”³ This open-ended, collective, creative process is like that of shaping landscape. All landscapes, whether gardens, farms, or towns, have co-authors, in dialogue with one another and with nature. They embody their

builders’ responses both to the cultural traditions of a region and to its natural conditions. The high plains of the western United States, for example, are dry and open; trees are rare, a sign of water or human settlement. (4) Each farmhouse is planted round with trees, source of shelter and fuel: Trees hug a homestead, mark its place on open plains—sound of winter wind. (5)

In every landscape are ongoing dialogues; there is no “blank slate”; the task is to join the conversation. Every act of making landscape, like each verse in the *haikai* that Basho wrote with his fellow poets, should be an expression that respects and extends the dialogues and inspires the next act. Like each short *haiku* in a chain of poems, it should seek to reinforce the particular of time and place and make connections among seemingly disparate things. All can learn to read landscape, to understand those readings, and to speak new wisdom into life in city, suburb, and countryside, to cultivate the power of landscape expression as if life depends upon it. For it does.

1

Nature is ubiquitous and cities are part of nature. Nature in cities should be cultivated, like a garden, not dismissed or subdued. The garden is a powerful, instructive metaphor for reimagining cities and metropolitan areas. This metaphor infused my first book, *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design*.⁴ Successful gardens are expressions of harmonious relationships between human culture and the natural world. In the garden, there is both an attitude of beneficial management and an acknowledgment of natural phenomena that are beyond human control. Gardens are never entirely predictable; one cultivates a garden expecting that there will be unforeseen circumstances. *The Granite Garden* presents, synthesizes, and applies knowledge from many disciplines to show how cities are part of nature and to demonstrate how they can be planned and designed in concert with natural processes rather than in conflict. Organized by sections on air, earth, water, life, and ecosystems, the book contains successful cases from scales of house and garden to city and region.

Take the example of Denver, Colorado. Denver’s urban storm drainage and flood control system, a landscape infrastructure created

in response to a series of disastrous floods, is a model for how stormwater management could be managed in every city. Natural systems retain stormwater in soil, plants, and streams; rivers overflow onto floodplains, which, if unbuilt, protect adjacent areas from flooding. As Denver grew, the ground became covered by more and more buildings and pavement, and it was less able to soak up rainfall, so stormwater flowed more and more rapidly through the watershed into the South Platte River. In June, when snow is melting in the Rocky Mountains and stream flow is already high, rains can produce devastating floods. In the 1960s, a flood destroyed all the city's bridges and convinced everyone it was time to do something. Denver responded by building a network of greenways along the South Platte River and its many tributaries and drainage channels. (6) These are both public open space and part of the region's stormwater and flood control system. The stormwater channels look like little streams with berms on either side to keep the water from flooding adjoining streets and houses. Plazas, like Skyline Plaza in downtown Denver, are also stormwater detention basins that collect rainfall from surrounding roofs and pavement. (7) This system slows down the stormwater runoff; instead of reaching the South Platte within a few hours after a rainfall, it takes several days or more to reach the river. By then, floodwaters have receded. The stormwater system is a series of parks and plazas that are assets to the city around them. Attending to natural processes in urban planning and design is not just a matter of avoiding hazards or problems; it creates opportunities for community development, urban restoration, and art.

2

Since 1984, I have continued to explore the approach advocated in *The Granite Garden*. I have organized my research and teaching around experimental, demonstration projects in inner-city neighborhoods to address issues of environmental quality, poverty, and race. For twenty years, West Philadelphia has been my laboratory for testing ideas about transforming the urban landscape in life-sustaining ways.

Although my work draws from diverse fields, it is rooted in the

knowledge and methods of landscape architecture and the insights they provide. Landscape architects design and plan landscapes to serve human purposes at scales from garden to region. This range in scope is fundamental to the discipline, and my proposals include designs for small urban parks and plans for vast urban watersheds. My work aims to understand how natural and cultural processes, interacting, shape landscapes and how to intervene in and shape those processes to achieve desired goals. While the methods and means of designing and planning landscapes at the scales of garden, neighborhood, city, and region may differ, the processes that shape those landscapes—natural, social, economic, and political—are the same. Understanding landscape as the product of interacting processes provides a way of seeing relationships among actions and phenomena that may appear unconnected, but are, in fact, closely related.

Consider the example of several serious issues that are usually addressed individually with narrowly defined, single-purpose solutions that compete for limited resources: the flooding of homes and businesses; pollution of rivers and harbors; and the deterioration of low-income, inner-city communities.

Large portions of many American cities contain extensive tracts of vacant land, once covered by buildings. These are commonly regarded as problems, but they also afford opportunities to restore the city's natural environment while rebuilding inner-city neighborhoods. What is rarely recognized is that much of this vacant land is concentrated in valley bottoms on buried floodplains. (8) I first discovered this correlation between floodplains and vacant land in Boston in 1985, when I visited low-income neighborhoods and noticed that hilltops and hillsides had very few vacant lots, while valley bottoms were largely open. Old maps showed that streams had once flowed through the valleys. I traced the successive settlement and abandonment of these neighborhoods by comparing maps from 1876 to 1984 and found that homes were built first on hill tops and upper slopes, while floodplains and streams were filled in and developed last with cheaper housing. Some of these buildings were abandoned as early as 1910; by 1964 large areas in the bottomlands were vacant. (9) Water flowing underground, flooding basements and

undermining foundations, contributed to the abandonment. It was also fueled by political processes and social discrimination that discouraged investment in old urban neighborhoods while encouraging the development of new suburban communities, and by socioeconomic phenomena like population migration and arson. In the 1970s many landlords burned down their decaying buildings to collect fire insurance, and by 1985 even more land was vacant. Local people and city officials believed the only causes were socioeconomic. They did not see the connection to the natural processes of poor drainage and subsidence in the buried floodplains and, tragically, they rebuilt on low-lying vacant land.

Similar conditions exist in many other American cities. In the Mill Creek neighborhood in West Philadelphia, where I have worked since 1987, there is a broad band of vacant land and buildings that follows the course of an old stream. (10) In the late nineteenth century, the stream was encased in a sewer, the floodplain was filled in, and buildings were built on top. (11) Periodically, since the 1930s, buildings constructed along the sewer have caved in. (12)

Burying streams like those in Boston and Philadelphia, and turning them into huge conduits carrying both stormwater and sewage, created another problem besides flooding and subsidence: combined sewer overflows. (13) After heavy rains, urban rivers like the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia often take on a brown color with a surface glaze, like the wastewater in a sewage treatment plant. So much stormwater comes off the streets and flows into the sewer—mixing with all the wastewater from homes and businesses—that there is too much volume for the sewage treatment plant to handle. (14) Then untreated sewage overflows directly into the river, which is the source of the city's drinking water. This is a big problem in Philadelphia and in many old cities, which were built when it was standard practice for sanitary and storm sewers to be combined.

In the 1970s, many cities separated the sanitary and storm sewers, so that stormwater flows directly into rivers and does not overload treatment plants. Then scientists discovered that this change did not improve the quality of river water as much as they had expected, because urban stormwater is also polluted. The current wisdom is that cities should probably treat stormwater runoff as well

as sanitary sewage. It actually may be an advantage to have a combined system, but the problem, then, is how to deal with massive volumes of water that need to be treated after a rainstorm? Do you build enormous new sewage treatment plants, as some cities have done?

An understanding of natural processes suggests another way to prevent combined sewer overflows: detain the stormwater above ground in order to extend the time it takes the water to get to the sewage treatment plant. Look again at the buried floodplains in urban neighborhoods. (10) They should be recognized as an important structural part of the landscape, a special zone where new buildings should not be built. Imagine if they were reconstructed as greenways, parks, and plazas like those in Denver. A landscape infrastructure designed to detain and filter stormwater would prevent floods and combined sewer overflows downstream, improve regional water quality, and improve living conditions in inner-city neighborhoods.

I first proposed these ideas in Boston in 1985. Then, in Philadelphia, I worked for years to convince the City Planning Commission and the Philadelphia Water Department that the buried creek was both a force to be reckoned with and a resource to be exploited, but the planners and engineers could not see what was right before their eyes. I began to understand that the underlying problem was a kind of illiteracy. They could not read and respond to the stories landscapes tell. I wrote my next book, *The Language of Landscape*, to help people relearn this fundamental skill.

3

Literacy in landscape language enables people to read environmental, social, economic, and political stories embedded in their local landscape and empowers them to think about how to tell new stories. *The Language of Landscape* begins with a prologue, “The Yellowwood and the Forgotten Creek.” The text, adapted here, conveys some of my reasons for writing the book:

Once a yellowwood stood by an old library—leafing, flowering,
fruiting, setting seed; roots grabbed hold, sucked air and water

from beneath a plaza of brick. Students sat each spring under the yellowwood, listening to their names named, glad for green shade, walked under it to the library, breathed musky June flowers, kicked yellow leaves of October across red bricks.

For many years the yellowwood grew; while red stone blackened, the building decayed. Then men came to fix the library, piled stacks of tools, tiles, and sacks around the tree, sealing soil under bricks. Two years later, the library reopened, leaded glass gleaming, blackened stone brightened. "How elegant," people said. That fall the tree lost its leaves early, in September.

In May, the yellowwood flowered, also early, and profusely. Thousands of fragrant white blooms hung in long clusters; petals covered bricks, blew across grass. "How beautiful," people said. How sad, though. Several years' bud scars bunched against each twig's growing tip. Abundant flowers signaled a dying, and seeds found no purchase in the plaza. People admired the tree and walked on; they had lost the language that gives tongue to its tale. Once a yellowwood stood. No more. And few knew why.

One day a street caved in. Sidewalks collapsed into a block-long chasm. People looked down, shocked to see a strong, brown, rushing river. "A truck fell into a hole like that years back," someone said. "A whole block of homes collapsed into a hole one night a long time ago," said someone else. They weren't sure where. Six months later, the hole was filled, street patched, sidewalks rebuilt. Years went by, new folks moved in, water seeped, streets dipped, walls cracked.

Once a creek flowed—long before there was anyone to give it a name—coursing down, carving, plunging, pooling, thousands of years before dams harnessed its power and people buried it in a sewer and built houses on top. Now, swollen with rain and sewage, the buried creek bursts pipes, soaks soil, floods basements, undermines buildings. During storms, brown water gushes from inlets and manholes into streets and, downstream, overwhelms the treatment plant, overflowing into the river from which the city draws its water.

Vacant lots overgrown by meadows and shrubby thickets near boarded-up homes and community gardens filled with flowers and

vegetables follow a meandering line no one seems to see. In a school that stands on this unseen line, the gym floods every time it rains. Once a year, teachers take students on buses to a place outside the city to see and study "nature."

On a once vacant lot, brand new houses—red brick, yellow siding, green sliver of lawn out front, gates open—rise in contrast to nearby older, shattered houses and land laid waste: "First Time Buyers own this home for less than you pay in rent," a sign urges. The houses have been built by churches from coins and foundation funds, the land a gift from the city. "How beautiful," people say. No one wonders why the land was free, why water puddles there, why the name of the place is Mill Creek.

Signs of hope, signs of warning are all around, unseen, unheard, undetected. Most people can no longer read the signs: whether they live in a floodplain, whether they are rebuilding an urban neighborhood or planting the seeds of its destruction, whether they are protecting or polluting the water they drink, caring for or killing a tree. Most have forgotten the language and cannot read the stories the wildflowers and saplings on vacant lots tell of life's regenerative power; many do not understand the beauty of a community garden's messy order. They cannot hear or see the language of landscape.

Architects' drawings show no roots, no growing, just green lollipops and buildings floating on a page, as if ground were flat and blank, the tree an object not a life. Planners' maps show no buried rivers, no flowing, just streets, lines of ownership, and proposals for future use, as if past were not present, as if the city were merely a human construct not a living, changing landscape. Children's textbooks, from science to history, show no nearby scenes, suggest or demand no first-hand knowing, just formulas and far-off people and places, as if numbers and language had no local meaning, as if their present had no past, no future, the student a vessel not an actor.

The yellowwood was the first yellowwood I ever saw, its perfumed flowers an amazing surprise my first year as a graduate student, the same year the hole and the river emerged near my apartment. The yellowwood, gone, is still on my daily path; the

forgotten creek is now the heart of my work. Back then I knew nothing of dying trees or buried rivers. Now I have learned to read what sloping valleys and sinking streets tell, what bud scars say. Landscapes are rich with complex language, spoken and written in land, air, and water. Humans are story-telling animals, thinking in metaphors steeped in landscape: putting down roots means commitment; an uprooting is a traumatic event. Like a living tree rooted in place, language is rooted in landscape.

The meanings landscapes hold are not just metaphorical and metaphysical, but real, their messages practical; understanding may mean survival instead of extinction. Losing, or failing to hear and read, the language of landscape threatens body and spirit, for the pragmatic and the imaginative aspects of landscape language have always coexisted. Relearning the language that holds life in place is an urgent task.

The Yellowwood and the Forgotten Creek are not just parables, but true stories of failure. Those who first built houses over the buried creek in West Philadelphia and those who rebuilt in the same place were illiterate in the language of landscape and so could not read the creek's presence. Those who admired the yellowwood's excessive, early flowering on the campus in Philadelphia were blind to what the bud scars told. They failed to read the flowers' poignant message, were unable to imagine the tree's connection to soil, plaza, and contractor. I tried, but failed, to convince the dean of the school, himself an architect, to find another site for the contractors' trailer and tools. He refused, unconvinced or not caring that the yellowwood would die as a consequence.

4

I believe that the language of landscape is our native language. (15) Landscape was the original dwelling; humans evolved among plants and animals, under the sky, upon the earth, near water. (16) Everyone, in every culture, carries that legacy in body and mind. Humans touched, saw, heard, smelled, tasted, lived in, and shaped landscapes before the species had words to describe all that it did. Landscapes

were the first human texts, read before the invention of other signs and symbols. (17) Clouds, wind, and sun were recognized as clues to weather; ripples and eddies were read as signs of rocks and life under water, caves and ledges as promise of shelter, trees as guides to food and water, bird calls as warnings of predators.

The language of landscape can be spoken, written, read, and imagined. (18) Inscribing and reading landscape is a byproduct of living and a strategy of survival—creating refuge, providing prospect, growing food. To read and shape landscape is to learn and teach: to know the world, to express ideas and to influence others. Landscape, as language, makes thought tangible. (19) Through it humans share experience with future generations, just as ancestors inscribed their values and beliefs in the landscapes they left as a legacy, a rich lode of literature: natural and cultural histories, landscapes of purpose, poetry, power, and prayer.

Landscape has all the features of language. It contains the equivalent of words and parts of speech—patterns of shape, structure, material, formation, and function. All landscapes are combinations of these. Like words, the meanings of landscape elements—water, for example—are only potential until context shapes them. Rules of combination govern the creation of leaf, tree, and forest, snowflake and snowdrift, gate and garden, street and town. Principles of grammar govern and guide how landscapes are formed, some specific to places and their local dialects, others universal. Landscape is pragmatic, poetic, rhetorical, polemical. Landscape is the scene of life, cultivated construction, carrier of meaning. It is language.

Landscape is loud with dialogues, with storylines that connect a place and those who live there. The shape and structure of a tree record an evolutionary dialogue between species and environment: eucalypt leaves that turn their edge to bright sun, deciduous leaves that fall off during seasonal heat or cold. And they record dialogues between a tree and its habitat. Forests are structured by light. Straight trunks of the tallest trees carry their leafy canopy toward the sun. Smaller trees reach long slim branches through shade of canopy toward light. Forests are finely layered, leaf upon leaf, life upon life. Each part of a forest—from fern to shrub to canopy tree, from air and

water to soil and life—is linked to other parts and to the whole, united by light and water. Forest covers most of Japan and inspires traditional forms of house and garden. Like the canopy of a tree, the roof extends well beyond the walls; the dripline on the ground below the eaves is like the dripline at the edge of a tree's canopy. (20) Beneath a tree, you are sheltered, but you are still outside; in a traditional Japanese house and garden, inside and outside merge in a similar way. In garden, as in forest, each detail has its place within the whole, all deliberately linked.

A Japanese tea whisk is crafted from a single, four-inch segment of bamboo, spilt into long, slender filaments. (21) The filaments are similar, but not identical; each stands out as a separate unit, yet together they shape the outer form of the whisk. Tea whisk and landscape are related. The whisk is made from unadorned bamboo, each filament straight and light, like a single trunk of bamboo; together they form a grove. It is linked to landscape, also, through the greenness of the tea that it blends from teapowder and water. And it recalls the garden, the traditional setting for the tea ceremony. (22) Such dialogues form the context of individual, group, and landscape over time.

Landscape associates people and place. Danish *landskab*, German *landschaft*, and Old English *landscipe* combine two roots. "Land" means both a place and the people living there. "Skabe" and "schaffen" mean "to shape"; suffixes "-skab" and "-schaft," as in the English "-ship," also mean association, partnership.⁵ Still strong in Scandinavian and German languages, these original meanings have all but disappeared from English. *Webster's Dictionary* defines landscape as static, "a picture representing a section of natural, inland scenery, as of prairie, woodland, mountains . . . an expanse of natural scenery seen by the eye in one view"; the *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the word to a Dutch painting term ("landskip").⁶ But landscape is not a mere visible surface, static composition, or passive backdrop to human theater. A coherence in vernacular landscapes emerges from dialogues between builders and place, fine-tuned over time. (23) They tell of an agreement between stone of cottage and rock of earth, snowfall and roof pitch, between seasonal sun angles and roof overhang, wind direction and alignment of hedgerows,

cultivation practices and dimensions of fields, family structure and patterns of settlement.

Landscape has meaning. Rivers reflect, clouds conceal. Water and fire purify and destroy. Circles have centers; paths have direction. These meanings are inherent in the qualities of landscape elements; they are grasped by humans, and by others, as bodies and minds permit. Meanings of a landscape feature—a tree, for example—depend upon what it is in itself, its seed, its root, its growth and decaying, its networks of relationships, its setting, whether standing alone on a heath or surrounded by forest. (24) They depend also on what it has come to mean in a human culture—a person, refuge from a storm, or the Tree of Knowledge. (25) Trees, in some cultures, stand for humans, as long-lived individuals that grow from roots, stand upright, bear fruit, and die. Or a tree represents a family descended from a single ancestral pair, each branch a new pair or generation. A Tree of Knowledge may derive from trees' long lifespan and the association of age with wisdom. Landscapes are the world itself and may also be metaphors of the world. A path can be both a path and The Path, a tree both a tree and The Tree. When a path represents the Path of Enlightenment of Buddhism or the Stations of the Cross of Christianity it is no longer a mere path, but The Path.

Landscape meaning is complex, layered, ambiguous, never simple or linear. Fire consumes, transforms, and renews. A river flows, provides, creates, destroys, simultaneously a path and a boundary, even a gateway. A circle is hierarchical—it has a center—yet nonhierarchical—all points along the circumference are equidistant from the center. Put two or more elements together and potential meanings and associations grow. In sacred landscapes, movement, path, and portal often overlap, with spiritual transformation at the threshold where they meet. (26) The wide path up the Hill of Remembrance in Stockholm's Forest Cemetery, designed by architects Asplund and Lewerentz, is steep at first—climbing eased by low stone steps, deep, stone-dust treads, landings every dozen steps—and then the slope tapers, steps pass between trees through an open gateway atop the hill, coming to rest just inside low walls. At the beginning of the ascent, steps are set into the hillside, so the slopes enfold the climber; at the end, frames of trees and wall enclose.

Form and material shape the experience of path and refuge; all modify processes of movement and grieving, in agreement with the meaning its designer-teller intended: Ascent, enfolded—"giving form to a sorrow that cannot be told."

Context structures landscape and language. Context comes from the Latin word *contexere*, to weave, an active root that belies its static common meaning. Context weaves patterns of events, materials, forms, and spaces. A tree, growing, is context—a weaving together—of leaf, branch, trunk, and root; decaying and transpiring, a tree shapes larger weavings of soil and atmosphere. A river, flowing, is context for water, sand, fish, and fishermen; flooding and ebbing, it shapes bars, banks, and valley. A gate is context for passage, its form determining how things flow through it: narrow gates constrict. Context is a place where processes happen, a setting of dynamic relationships, not a collection of static features.

Anomalies are clues to what the wider context is. A "wolf" tree is a tree within a woods; its size and form, the large trunk and horizontal branches, are anomalous to the environs of slim-trunked trees with upright branches. (24) It is a clue to the open field in which it once grew alone, branches reaching laterally to the light and up. With that field unmowed, unplowed, or ungrazed, younger woodland trees grew thickly together around the older tree, their branches finding light by reaching up. The older tree, engulfed by a dense woodland of younger trees, no longer able to find light horizontally, sends new branches upward. Landscape is dynamic; present context includes the past; the story of the "wolf" tree is part of the human story.

Context structures meaning. An identical form or material has different significance in different settings. A meadow in the countryside is a lovely field of wildflowers; a meadow in West Philadelphia is an ugly patch of weeds. Stone is heavy; moved over long distances—taken out of context—it reflects force, power, or wealth. The pyramids of Egypt are impressive not only for their size, but for the enormous blocks of stone, cut, moved, and stacked by thousands of laborers. So, too, are the "sarsen" or "foreign" stones of Stonehenge and Avebury on the chalky Salisbury Plain, and the travertine marble from Italy transplanted to modern corporate offices in New York and Los

Angeles. (27) A grove on the prairie, a clearing in the forest, an oasis in the desert, an island in the sea—these all derive significance from contrast with context. The more homogeneous and extensive the context, the more powerful the potential contrast to an emphasized element. Freestanding elements on a broad, horizontal plain become landmarks, even icons: the windmills and hedgerows of Holland; groves of trees around homes and grain elevators on the High Plains of the American West; stone pillars at Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain. Uluru (Ayers Rock) in Australia's Red Center, reputedly the oldest continuously revered place in the world, is read in many ways: landmark, refuge, source of water and food in a dry land. Gathering rare rains, island in a desert sea—red rock, sacred place. (17)

While Australia's Red Center is a vast desert, now a refuge for aboriginal culture, its cities hug the continent's coast. These two aspects of the country—red center and blue-green coast—are in tension in the minds of individuals, in Australian culture, part of the enduring, deep structure of the continent. Landscape's deep structure is the context within which the human community builds and lives, within which cultures and languages evolve.

Cultural contexts may also be enduring. The influence of Roman language, law, and literature on landscape extends way beyond the Mediterranean region and the territory Romans once occupied. The pastoral landscape, celebrated at least as early as in Roman literature, has been working itself out over millennia, further strengthened by the biblical tradition of pastoralism: "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters." It becomes "deep," not permanent, not universally cross-cultural, but enduring, persistent, over time and place in Western cultures despite great differences of climate and terrain. Rolling lawns with groves of trees—in estates and suburban tracts, office parks and cemeteries—are evidence of the pastoral landscape's deep cultural context. (28) In a similar fashion, allusions to classical architecture have also been employed, for hundreds of years, to create associations between ancient Rome and, for example, the British Empire or the new American Republic.

Built landscapes may be rhetorical. Hill and street may be emphasized or embellished for effect, slope steepened to make the

climb difficult, street broadened and lined with trees to impress the viewer. Exaggeration in religious and political landscapes diminishes the individual and heightens a god, ruler, hero, country, or State. The vast scale of the seventeenth-century gardens of the Île-de-France, like Versailles and Sceaux—the time it takes to walk from one end to another, the broad avenues, the long staircases, the canals that stretch into the distance—underscore the power of their builders.

Sacred landscapes address the supernatural, like the Vale of the White Horse where the horse, its outline scraped into the chalky bedrock, faces the sky above, not the valley below. Mussolini built a monument in 1938 to those who died in a World War I battle near Redipuglia. More than 100,000 soldiers are buried there in twenty-two terraces of tombs, in alphabetical order from bottom to top; 60,000 are buried at the top of the hill in a common grave surmounted by three crosses, like Calvary. Words in the pavement inform the visitor: the soldiers died for the glory of Italy; they are immortal in memory. At the bottom, facing the hill of tombs, is the grave of the general, calling the roll of his entombed soldiers, whose inscriptions answer “Presente,” “I am here.” Redipuglia and the Vale of the White Horse employ the rhetorical device of address. Address announces, appeals, or prays to someone or something not present or unable to answer: a place, an idea, a supernatural being, a dead person.

Fundamental to poetry, metaphor involves a transfer of meaning from one thing or phenomenon to another, an “imaginative, often unexpected comparison between basically dissimilar things.” A part that stands for the whole—a synecdoche—is often a landmark, a clue that points to an entire landscape, city, or nation: Half Dome for Yosemite, the Eiffel Tower for Paris, The Mall in Washington, DC, for the nation. Fountains built by American cities in the nineteenth century symbolized and celebrated new public water systems—on Boston’s Common, in New York’s Central Park. Today’s windmill fields and powerlines, parts of the networks of power on which modern culture depends, render that network visible.

Martha Schwartz’s Splice Garden, on the roof of the Whitehead Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, employs two forms of paradox—antithesis and oxymoron. Japanese and French garden

motifs are juxtaposed; all the plants are plastic. (29) Antithesis emphasizes the opposition of antithetical elements by placing them in a balanced, parallel structure; an oxymoron fuses contradictory elements in a single expression. Antithesis, where opposed elements make each other more striking and significant, is the easier to achieve. A plastic flower is an oxymoron, a condensed paradox that owes its effectiveness to synthesis not juxtaposition of contrasts; so is a roof garden, for gardens embody a sense of groundedness and a garden absorbs water while the purpose of a roof is to shed it.

People have long created gardens to assert power, express ideas, and reflect on the human place in nature. At Parc de Sceaux, a seventeenth-century garden outside Paris, yews are sheared into cones that dot a tilted plane. (30) Pruning modifies the yew's growth and introduces a tension between outer form and internal, branching structure. Beyond the yews, large trees are clipped into a solid green wall that frames the park and, beyond the green wall, woodland trees grow freely. Anthony Hecht describes such juxtapositions of clipped and freely growing in his poem on the gardens of the Villa d'Este in Italy:

For thus it was designed:
Controlled disorder at the heart
Of everything, the paradox, the old
Oxymoronic itch to set the formal strictures
Within a natural context, where the tension lectures
Us on our mortal state, and by controlled
Disorder, labors to keep art
From being too refined.⁷

Landscapes are a vast library of literature. The myths of Japan's Fuji and Australia's Uluru, the folksy tales of trolls and pink flamingos on American lawns, the "high" art of Sceaux and Splice Garden, and countless other places, ordinary and extraordinary, record the language of landscape. The library ranges from wild and vernacular landscape, tales shaped by everyday phenomena, to classic landscapes of artful expression, like the relationship of ordinary spoken language to great works of literature. Worship, memory, play, movement, meeting, exchange, power, production, home, and

community are pervasive landscape genre. To be fully felt and known, landscape literature must be experienced *in situ*; words, drawings, paintings, or photographs cannot replace the experience of the place itself, though they may enhance and intensify it.

The idea that landscape is a form of language has startled some people and outraged others, but it seems natural to many landscape architects, for it is derived from the core activity of landscape architecture: artful shaping, from garden to region, to fulfill function and express meaning. The language of landscape is the principal language in which I think and act; my conviction that there is such a language arises first from that fact. It is also the language used skillfully by designers whose work I most admire. My own work has been a laboratory, theirs a library, in exploring and defining the language of landscape.

5

To recover and renew the language of landscape is to extend and refresh tradition. It is also to discover and imagine new metaphors, to tell new stories, and to create new landscapes. John Berger describes a language of lived experience with which to interpret the common and the particular across the gulf of different cultures. Ecologist Aldo Leopold writes of the need for humans to “think like a mountain,” to escape the short-sightedness that threatens the larger habitats of which humans are part. Anthropologist Gregory Bateson says that humans must learn to speak the language “in terms of which living things are organized,” in order to read the world not as discrete things but as dynamic relations, and to practice the art of managing complex, living systems. The language of landscape is such a language: in terms of it the world is organized and living things behave. Humans can think like a mountain, can shape landscapes that sustain human lives and the lives of other creatures as well. Now is a time for telling new tales, for retelling old dilemmas: how to live in the world and preserve it; how to sustain tradition and foster invention; how to promote freedom and cultivate order; how to appreciate the parts and grasp the whole.

The language of landscape prompts me to perceive and shape the

landscape whole. Reading and speaking it fluently is a way to recognize the dialogues ongoing in a place, to appreciate other speakers' stories, to distinguish enduring dialogues from ephemeral ones, and to join the conversation. The language of landscape reminds me that nothing stays the same, that catastrophic shifts and cumulative changes shape the present. It permits me to perceive pasts I cannot otherwise experience, to anticipate the possible, to envision, choose, and shape the future. I can "see" what is not immediate, a future forest in today's meadow, the yellowwood dying of starved and suffocated roots. Or I can see water underground in the tree along a dry creekbed, in the cracks of a building's foundation, the slumps in pavement in a city; or see the connections between the buried, sewerred stream, the vacant land, and the polluted river, and imagine rebuilding a community while purifying its water. And I can imagine poetry.

Look, for example, at a house designed by Australian architect Glenn Murcutt, a Pritzker Prize winner, who studies his clients' patterns of living as closely as he studies the processes of sun shining, plants growing, water flowing, and wind blowing. (31) This home at Binjie, along the coast of Australia, expresses the daily and seasonal rhythms of the place and the people who live there. The roofline echoes the silhouette of a gull in flight, with wings spread; the gutter is in the middle of the inward-sloping roof, instead of at the edge, and two downspouts are columns at either end. (32) The shape of the ceiling inside the house and the corridor along which people move reflect the path along which the water flows. (33) Rain drums on the roof, streams into the gutter, swirls down the columnar downspouts, visible through glass doors at either end of the hall, and falls into an underground tank—the water supply for the house. Water is linked from its source in the sky to a reservoir in the ground. Necessary dialogues are made poetic, everyday experience made aesthetic. Elegant sparseness—a hallmark of Murcutt's work—expresses his environmental ethics.

Murcutt's skill in the language of landscape brings his clients in dialogue with processes that sustain their lives, but are often taken for granted. People adjust windows and walls to admit light and air flow, or to intensify or block them, as one adjusts the sails on a boat to

catch or avoid the wind; in the process, they learn. For those who live in such houses, light changing, wind blowing, rain falling, and reservoir filling become visible, audible, and tangible. Imagine an entire neighborhood or town—buildings, streets, sewers, parks—that engage residents in such dialogues with natural processes.

Living in such places one learns to read and tell landscape, to understand connections among seemingly unrelated phenomena, to phrase an appropriate response. Such dwelling invokes a sense of empathy, prompts reflection on the continuity of human lives with other living things and with the places all inhabit. Empathy—the imaginative projection of one's own consciousness into another being, especially the sympathetic understanding of other human beings and other life forms—is surely one of the most important human abilities. Fluency in landscape is an aid not only to survival, but also to the empathetic imagination.

Few people, even if they have seen both Murcutt's design for the house in Binjie, Australia, and my proposals for West Philadelphia, would at first regard the two as analogues, but they are, even though one is the home of a single family, the other a plan for a neighborhood of thousands of families. The design for Binjie and the plan for West Philadelphia are connected by the designers' kindred ways of thinking and working.

Since 1987, my students and I have worked with residents of the Mill Creek neighborhood. We have taught, and we have learned. We have designed small projects, like community gardens, which were built, and sustained over time. And we have made plans for transforming the larger urban landscape. The collaboration is tied together by the Internet: a digital database, activities, and proposals can all be seen on the West Philadelphia Landscape Project website (<http://web.mit.edu/wplp>). Students in my classes at the University of Pennsylvania and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have created designs for wetlands, water gardens, and environmental study areas on vacant land in the Mill Creek neighborhood. They have analyzed the urban watershed and have demonstrated how stormwater can be collected in landscape projects that are also stormwater detention facilities. And they have worked with teachers and students at Sulzberger Middle School to design and implement an urban

environmental curriculum, a program that has transformed the school, which is located on the buried floodplain of Mill Creek, near many vacant blocks. (34–39)

The West Philadelphia Landscape Project employs landscape literacy as a cornerstone of community development. Every child in Sulzberger's Mill Creek Program knew the story and could read the landscape of Mill Creek: where it once flowed on the land, where its shore was the site of a prehistoric settlement, where it powered mills to weave cotton and wool, where it was buried and built upon, where the land above the sewer became open once again, a gash of vacant land. Every child in the program created a vision of what the future of Mill Creek could be: how the neighborhood could be rebuilt and the water restored, how stormwater running off rooftops, streets, and sidewalks could drain into ponds that slow its passage to the sewer, the treatment plant, and the river.

The goal was to place schools at the heart of the community's reconstruction, for children to learn the arts of citizenship: how to know a place, how to envision and build its future, how to care for it. An outdoor classroom with a pond, butterfly garden, and compost bin was built at a nearby community garden as a living laboratory for the school; children in a summer program helped to design, build, and maintain it. They also learned how to make websites and published their proposals, designs, and accomplishments on the Internet. The high-tech aspect of the program received the recognition of public officials, like the governor of the state of Pennsylvania and President Bill Clinton, who visited Sulzberger. (40) Finally, in 1999, the Philadelphia Water Department decided to plan, design, and build a demonstration project on vacant land near Sulzberger Middle School, which would combine a stormwater detention facility to reduce combined sewer overflows with an environmental study area for the school. The project was to be a collective vision, designed by stormwater engineers, landscape architects, teachers and students at the middle school, and community residents. It didn't quite turn out that way, but that is another story.⁸

6

Seamus Heaney compares the poet's role to that of the diviner who perceives through empathy and predicts the presence of something that to others is hidden: the diviner of water, for example, who senses water underground, which can then be tapped by a well. Heaney calls this "a gift for being in touch with what is there, hidden and real, a gift for mediating between the latent resource and the community that wants it current and released." Like poetry, both photography and design are powerful means of divining what lies latent in landscape. "Words themselves are doors," says Heaney.⁹ And so are photographs and designs. The photographer frames a view, bringing certain features into dialogue, excluding others. Through this act of framing, one creates a doorway for others to enter mentally. Through empathetic design—architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and planning—one can imagine a world, yet inchoate, with the potential for fusing the traditional and the new, nonhuman and human, nature and culture. This is what Tadao Ando's Chapel at Mount Rokko in Kobe suggests: Glowing, shadows show what is there, hidden and real—eternal threshold. (41)

Imagine if every act of making landscape, like each verse in *renku*, sought to reinforce the particular of time and place, make connections among seemingly disparate things, extend ongoing dialogues, and inspire the next act. Imagine if every act of shaping landscape were judged, as contributions to *renku* are, not just by individual brilliance, but by the subtlety, intelligence, and art of the response. Imagine if each environmental change were approached with the care and frame of mind of the poet who considers what is there and seeks both to respond and to open up a new world.

Designers are storytellers. Design is a way of imagining and telling new stories and reviving old ones, a process of spinning out visions of landscapes, alternatives from which to choose, describing the shape of a possible future. The products of design—gardens, homes, road and water systems, neighborhoods, and cities—are settings for living that convey meaning, express their builders' values. We extend these meanings further through processes of construction and cultivation, use and neglect, as we dwell in what began as dreams.

Illustrations

1. Boston, Massachusetts, seen from Boston Harbor Islands.
2. Earth's shadow rising, blue into rose, tide turning—October twilight. Nahant, Massachusetts.
3. See cloud's path in ancient track—earth, sky, a mirrored flowing. Ridgeway, Avebury, England.
4. High Plains, Colorado.
5. Trees hug a homestead, mark its place on open plains—sound of winter wind. High Plains, Colorado.
6. Harvard Gulch. Denver, Colorado.
7. Skyline Plaza. Denver, Colorado.
8. Vacant land on buried floodplain. Boston, Massachusetts.
9. Aerial photograph of vacant land on buried floodplain. Boston, Massachusetts.
10. Vacant land on buried floodplain. West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
11. Mill Creek sewer construction, 1880s. West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
12. Cave-in on buried floodplain, 1980s.
13. Schuylkill River.
14. Mill Creek watershed and Mill Creek sewer. West Philadelphia Landscape Project digital database.
15. The Red Center: Uluru seen across the desert. Australia.
16. Pool at the base of Uluru. Australia.
17. Gathering rare rains, island in a desert sea—red rock, sacred place. Uluru, Australia.
18. Heath Memorial. Kongenshus Mindepark, Denmark.
19. Heath Memorial. Kongenshus Mindepark, Denmark.
20. Dripline. Katsura. Kyoto, Japan.
21. Japanese tea whisk.
22. Shisendo. Kyoto, Japan.
23. Isle of Doagh, Inishowen, Ireland.
24. Wolf tree. Amherst, Massachusetts.
25. Tree. Katsura. Kyoto, Japan.

26. Ascent, enfolded—"giving form to a sorrow that cannot be told." Forest Cemetery. Stockholm, Sweden.
27. The Avenue. Avebury, England.
28. Hill of Remembrance, Forest Cemetery. Stockholm, Sweden.
29. Splice Garden. Whitehead Institute. Cambridge, Massachusetts.
30. Clipped cone. Parc de Sceaux. Paris, France.
31. House at Binjie, Australia.
32. Detail of gutter, house at Binjie, Australia.
33. Interior, house at Binjie, Australia.
34. Two students presenting their design for Aspen Farms Community Garden.
35. Before. Aspen Farms Community Garden, West Philadelphia.
36. After. Aspen Farms Community Garden, West Philadelphia.
37. Vacant lot with Sulzberger Middle School in distance. West Philadelphia.
38. The Mill Creek Project. Sulzberger Middle School, West Philadelphia.
39. Garden construction. Middle school students' webpage.
40. President Bill Clinton and Mill Creek Project. Sulzberger Middle School.
41. Glowing, shadows show what is there, hidden and real—eternal threshold. Chapel at Mount Rokko, Kobe, Japan.

Notes

1. This text is a revised and expanded version of my 2001 International Cosmos Prize Address (published in Japanese and English in a limited-edition book). Portions were adapted from *The Language of Landscape*.
2. Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Language of Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1998). "But where's the art?" I was startled by this reaction, by some readers, to *The Granite Garden*. If the book was about sustaining health, safety, and welfare, was it, therefore, not about aesthetics? The impulse to see the pragmatic and poetic as separate, or even contradictory, troubled me greatly, for it was a motivation to connect the two that had inspired and driven me to write the book. In response, I was determined to write an entire book about the poetics of city and nature, one that would fuse function, feeling, and meaning; "The Poetics of City and

Nature," an initial formulation, was published in *Landscape Journal* in 1988. I planned to derive this theory from places that exemplified it. But, in the process of looking, thinking, and writing the book on poetics, I came to realize that the poetics applies to all landscapes, not urban landscapes alone, and to buildings, too, and that defining such an aesthetic theory demanded first the description and codification of a language of landscape. Two decades later, the pragmatic and poetic are no longer seen as so separate; the work of Herbert Dreiseitl at Potsdamer Platz is a good example (see www.dreiseitl.de).

3. Haruo Shirane, *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Basho* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).
4. Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).
5. Verner Dahlerup, *Ordbog over det Danske Sprog* (Nordisk, 1931); Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1885), Arther R. Borden Jr., *A Comprehensive Old English Dictionary* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1982). For a review of the histories of the words "landscape," "nature," "land," and "country" in English, German, and Scandinavian languages, see Kenneth Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86 no. 4 (December 1996): 630–53. See also J. B. Jackson, "The Word Itself," in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 3–8.
6. *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983) and *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
7. Anthony Hecht, "The Gardens of the Villa d'Este," *The Hard Hours* (New York: Atheneum, 1967).
8. Anne Whiston Spirn, "Restoring Mill Creek: Landscape Literacy, Environmental Justice, and City Planning and Design," *Landscape Research* 30 no. 3 (July 2005): 395–413.
9. Seamus Heaney, "Feelings into Words," *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968–1978* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1980), 47–48, 52.

WRITING MOODS¹

James Elkins

A Garden . . . is naturally apt to fill the Mind with Calmness and Tranquillity, and to lay all its turbulent Passions to rest.²

I'm interested, in this book, in the ways people write and talk about landscape. It seems to me just possible that landscape, perhaps along with the body and its representations, is an intractable subject for scholarship, in the specific sense that it resists the illusion of an observing subject, situated well outside the object of study and contemplating it with the protection and support of a historically grounded series of protocols and methods. Like the body, landscape is something we inhabit without being different from it: we are in it, and we *are* it. That might be a fundamental, phenomenological reason why some writing on landscape, like some writing on the body, seems unusually free of scholarly protocols and signposts. Philosophy melts into impressionism; logic deliquesces into reverie. The object isn't bound by our attention: it binds us.³

Garden history is an opportune place to inquire about the on-again, off-again relation between scholarly work and the conceptual imprecisions that follow from embodiment, because, unlike the history of painting, sculpture, and architecture, it has no conceptual foundations. It lacks the elements of scholarly and critical consensus:

a conventional set of interpretive methods, agreed-upon leading terms, “ruling metaphors,” and descriptive protocols. Painting, for example, has a recurring set of critical problems, including fictive space, the picture plane, the position and nature of the beholder, and notions of realism and representation. In art history, even the most abstract theoretical accounts of painting dwell on these same topics. Even accounts that are specialized in accord with some theoretical regimen return to these issues as if to a kind of home.

Garden history, on the other hand, inspires a kind of wide-ranging freedom of criticism. It seems to me—though there is no easy way to substantiate this—that writing on gardens is more heterogeneous, and its heterogeneity more central to a coherent account of its nature, than other branches of the fine arts. To some degree this makes sense, since gardens have a breadth of references that, it may be argued, paintings do not. A garden is “between” nature and culture, it changes through time in a way that painting does not, it is partly random (since the growth of plants is partly unpredictable), it has to do with the history of sacred places, and it is experienced as a sequence rather than all at once. Gardens are involved in the histories of leisure (the *viridarium*), of social classes (the *locus amœnus*), of religious symbolism (the *hortus conclusus*), of utopia and paradise, of jokes and festivals, of journeys and exploration, and of theater; and they touch on the theories of sculpture, painting, perspective, geology, botany, medicine, and hydraulics, to name a few.⁴ Cultures, genres, philosophies and centuries all sometimes gather under the rubric of gardens.

Gardens, perhaps more than paintings or sculptures, are intentionally vague or ambiguous in reference. Only a minority of gardens have readable iconographic programs, and even those are frequently meant to be evocative or polysemic rather than programmatic. Eighteenth-century “hermits’ retreats” fall into this category, as do evocations of paintings, natural scenes, and even other gardens.⁵ It is probably time to enroll the garden at Stourhead in our roster of intentionally ambiguous artworks alongside painters such as Watteau and Giorgione. Especially if Henry Hoare’s program involved autobiography, his results appear to have been intended to be ambiguous. One recent scholar has opted for a simpler program, which could be

“chiefly unconscious in impact.”⁶ It may be that the next generation of scholarship will find the adjudication of various theories, and the investigation of conscious and unconscious ambiguities, to be a profitable focus.

Yet I would claim that scholarship on gardens ranges more freely than even this diversity of subjects and meanings might warrant: that it is, in short, often more like reverie than analysis. The exceptions are essays that set out to prove a single hypothesis, such as a garden’s iconographic program, or its state at a given time. But wherever the writing addresses a wider range of topics and narrative modes, including criticism and descriptive appreciation, a curious drifting sets in. It is that liminal state that is my subject here and, even though I will be concentrating on gardens, I want to imply that what happens there is true in a more subtle way of the project of art history in general.

The conceptual analysis of gardens is strange, I think, for at least these three reasons: (1) interpretations of gardens range more widely than discourse on other kinds of art; (2) they do so with less adherence to conventional forms of interpretation than histories of other arts; and (3) writing on gardens does not, by and large, address these issues. In each of these, writing on gardens is only more extreme than the remainder of art history, and not different in kind. The last point, however, is a subtle matter, because it may depend on the nature of gardens themselves. If writers on gardens go along with the reverie that gardens induce in all of us, do they do so intentionally, with their eyes open, or are they led unwittingly down the garden path? It appears that gardens have the power to soften our accustomed ways of thinking about visual art, and I will be speculating on whether or not they can do that without our knowledge. If I step into a bath, I am going to warm up: and perhaps gardens have that kind of control over our responses. On the other hand, it might be better to say that the reverie of gardens is only an inducement to a kind of thought that is often dormant in our professional prose.

Some ways of thinking about gardens

I want to take these three claims one at a time, and begin by looking briefly at a sample of the range of conceptual schemata that have

been applied to gardens. This list can scarcely be complete, and it may be a property of gardens that it never can appear to be. But I am mostly concerned to demonstrate the unusual diversity of responses to gardens, as a prelude to inquiring about the coherence of essays that try to put several schemata together at once.

1. *Gardens are representations of history.* A garden always has the potential for commemorative meaning; this was especially well developed in the eighteenth century, in which gardens were often fanciful ways of recalling or retelling ancient history. The *Ideenmagazin* and similar publications in England and France provided engravings of a wide range of ornaments, from ruined monasteries to horses' tombs, Laugier-style *cabanes*, and "sunken" pyramids à la Boullée. Occasionally the historical representations became the principal focus of gardens, and they sometimes attained remarkable complexity. Kew and Shugborough are examples of this kind of historical condensation, as is the Prince de Ligne's gardens of Beloeil, in which each garden folly had double (or triple) meanings: an "Indian temple" where the visitor could eat cream, a "Chinese temple" that was also a dovecote, and an "archi-Ostrogothic" temple doubling as a Temple to Mars. This phenomenon, in its wider implications, has been called "the Western matrix of the learned garden": a garden that is a text, replete with cultural and historical information.⁷
2. *Gardens are representations of nature.* The very words "landscape" and its relatives "prospect" and "countryside" refer to representations of what is taken to be nature.⁸ Ermenonville, for example, is an encyclopedia of landscape types, including an Arcady, an Elysium, and a wilderness (*le désert*), a farm, and a forest, as well as a castle, a dolmen, and a château, each with its appropriate landscape setting. An allegorical function could be assigned to each representation, from the melancholy Arcady with its famous suicide, to Rousseau's cabin with its air of natural simplicity and *lucubrations*. In essays where this reading is privileged, one often finds its

opposite correlate: that gardens are places that represent nature by declining to represent society, and in particular the injustices of labor that went into their creation.⁹

3. *Gardens are representations of painting and fiction.* The picturesque is a kind of “pictured vision,”¹⁰ and in English gardens the pictorial is sometimes imagined as a substitute for the French perspectival: instead of views down straight *allées*, there are sudden “pictures.” Most representations are not simple equalities between paintings and pictured views. The triple parallels between scenes at Stourhead, the *Aeneid*, and paintings by Claude and Salvator Rosa, first suggested by Kenneth Woodbridge, have been developed in a series of essays.¹¹ But gardens are often the third term in a comparison between poetry and painting, a kind of *ut hortus picturasque poesis*.
4. *Gardens are the meeting place of various disciplines.* This is the thesis of the introductory essay in *The Meaning of Gardens*, which posits they are either ideas, places, or actions.¹² The authors assign the garden as idea to “philosophers and design theorists,” the garden as place to “historians, landscape architects, and occasionally geographers,” and gardens as actions to “medical researchers, psychologists, and sociologists.” On the other hand, the garden in its general aspect is defined as “a way of thinking about nature.” A recent book on gardens, *Reading the French Garden*, mixes history with fiction, presumably in order to capture this multidisciplinary sense.¹³ The authors do not provide an explanation for their oscillation between history and epistolary and novelistic fiction, though the reader assumes that the mix of genres represents the mix of experiences of the garden.
5. *Gardens are sets of polarities.* The introductory essay in *The Meaning of Gardens* also describes gardens as a “battle of seeming oppositions: male versus female, good versus evil, reaction versus revolution, self versus community, consumerism versus self-reliance, connectedness versus segregation, rich versus poor, real versus surreal, bigness versus smallness, sacred versus profane, science versus intuition, high versus

folk art.”¹⁴ Garden history has also been organized around constancy and change, control and randomness, intuitive and logical thinking, right brain and left brain.¹⁵ This essay itself might be read as a polarity, since I am interested in emphasizing the disparity between critical thinking in its most general sense and discursive thought of all sorts.¹⁶

6. *Gardens are narratives of human life.* This is perhaps the most general way of putting a theme that occurs in a great many forms. When an author says “the garden is also experience, a place to meditate, reflect, escape from conflict, or prepare for death,”¹⁷ or that all gardens are metaphors of “Eden and Shambhala,”¹⁸ the central image is life’s course and the ways gardens reflect or facilitate it. One aspect of the journey of life, the domestication and enculturation of the “beast” in all of us, is one of the “primary narrative structures which frame the garden’s meaning” according to Simon Pugh.¹⁹
7. *Gardens are open-ended sites of desire.* The same author has also said that perhaps we cannot understand gardens because, like the incest taboo, they are so deeply rooted in our psyche that we can only experience them as social rules.²⁰ In that case, according to Pugh, gardens elicit what the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan describes as “desire”: a kind of longing that operates without a specific object in mind and without relation to other people.²¹ The garden, in this account, does not represent anything; rather it embodies a psychic need.

This last schema approaches the kind of conclusion I would like to draw regarding the quality of thought that gardens induce, and so at this point I would like to leave the list and proceed to the next stage of the argument. The fact that this list could readily be expanded suggests the open-endedness of thinking about gardens: even though the other arts could easily produce such a list (and often do, especially where it seems possible to speak freely and widely about meaning), I would contend that in normal art historical writing the range of references is narrower and the interpretive regimens more constrained by conventional paths of inquiry. One effect of the

license that garden writing enjoys is that these meanings can be presented as open-ended and intercommunicating, and that in turn fosters the frame of mind I am calling reverie.

The coherence of garden writing

Much of what is appealing about gardens has to do with a gentle, spidery mixture of these and other notions about meaning. Here I will only consider a single example, which I hope will be sufficiently evocative to stand for a large number of other kinds of mixture. An article by N. B. Johnson describing the Tenryū-ji temple near Kyoto mentions a wide range of sources, among them *Gilgamesh*, the golden section, Japanese geomancy, *zazen* meditation, and Matila Ghyka's number mysticism. The essay lacks certain features that could provide greater conceptual stability: there is no historical assessment of the compatibility of these sources—no question that Western and Japanese concepts, or concepts from different centuries, can be relevant to Tenryū-ji—and, on a more analytic level, there is no analysis of the reasons why the author assumes they fit together.²²

Western and Eastern concepts meet at the *shinji chi* pond, where three *shichigosan* (7:5:3) triangles are said to connect the traditional fifteen pond stones. Since the triangles are not actually in the ratio 7:5:3, and since the other mathematical principles that the author applies are rooted in twentieth-century Western traditions of number mysticism, it may be that a Western geometrical order is here superimposed on an Eastern, nongeometrical order. The former may provide an interpretive frame, a paradigm, for expositing the latter. As the author says, Zen Buddhism has a concept of the interrelation of humans and the environment (*fūdōsei*), but it is visualized and quantified in the article using Western plans, elevations, and perspective views. The *zazen* meditation posture ("lotus position") is analyzed into golden rectangles and musical harmonies, following a problematic Western tradition that is traceable only to the mid-nineteenth century.²³ These juxtapositions—some modern Western mathematics on some sixteenth-century Zen concepts—may have conceptual as well as historical merit, but, in order to develop and

defend them, the essay would require an historiographic framework relating Japanese to Western concepts of order.

Such a critique might find purchase in the precise interaction of geometries. Chinese and Japanese are rich in apposite geometric concepts. There is a reason in Chinese garden theory for the organic disorder of the pond: swirling banks help conserve *ch'i*, "the substance and flow of life as life itself."²⁴ And Heian and Kamakura Japanese gardens are demonstrably influenced by Southern Song Chinese landscape paintings, which have known compositional forms and formats.²⁵ Chinese geomancy (*feng shui*) also dictates auspicious compass directions (North is "least favored," associated with the female *yin*, "cold, and death"²⁶). And there is the Japanese sequence of *shin*, *gyo*, and *so* that denotes a progression from richly varied gardens through intermediate forms to the most austere abstract dry gardens.²⁷ Certainly this sense of "abstract" is not the same as our current senses of that word, though the way this difference is usually addressed is to speak of Western abstractions, either in concepts or in monuments.²⁸

The description of Tenryu-ji is successful in evoking the peculiar beauty of the place, and Johnson's cultural and interpretive eclecticism seems apposite. Because the description works, the points I have been raising are not faults in his argument. Here, as in the examples I will consider later, the text is successful and at the same time conceptually scattered. Something about the garden calls—"naturally"—for this treatment. But it is strange to bring *Gilgamesh*, Ghyka, and Zen together without a theoretical justification, whether traditional (for example, an historical defense of the relevance of *Gilgamesh*) or postmodern (the essay could be presented as a "new historicist" experiment in the juxtaposition of disparate sources).

In this respect Johnson's essay is similar to David Hockney's photocollage of Ryoan-ji. Hockney's photograph is a visual palimpsest of European sources, including Picasso's cubism (which is the acknowledged forerunner of all pictorial strategies that draw on the collage, the grid, and the "facet"), the Western assimilation of Japanese prints (especially in its flat field and high horizon), and some Western conventions of cartography (visible in the "mapping"

of footsteps and the rectangular ground). It is the juxtapositions themselves, and the confluence of disparate sources, that constitute a large part of our pleasure in the essay and the photograph. A similar thing happens in photographic analyses of Ryoan-ji by the historian David Slawson. In Slawson's account, Zen gardens such as Ryoan-ji are energized by triangular configurations that create dynamic patterns when they are seen from certain vantage points.²⁹ From a point out in the gravel rain gutter beyond the walkway, Ryoan-ji presents an "arrow effect" in which several rock groups are forcefully aligned. This is certainly the case, but Slawson's theory is built almost entirely on a reading of Rudolf Arnheim, who proposes such dynamic compositional patterns in books such as *Art and Visual Perception*.³⁰ Arnheim's approach is grounded in a particularly German critical formalism that first flourished as a response to International Abstraction, and it makes a strange—and intriguing—contrast with fifteenth-century Japanese aesthetics.

It is important to note that this is not a problem of achieving something approaching homogeneity or purity in the sources that are brought to bear on historical explanation or pictorial reproduction. The question of how Japanese gardens such as Ryoan-ji should be pictured in order to best represent their fifteenth-century makers cannot be answered, among other reasons because we do not have fifteenth-century views to consult. Since Ryoan-ji is meant to be seen by a monk seated along one of the long sides of the garden, it might seem reasonable to photograph the garden from that viewpoint. But the result would be a perspective view—since cameras normally obey the Western conventions of linear perspective—and it is not at all clear that a perspectival view is relevant to the intentions of the garden's designer. Indeed, several things suggest that it is not. Since monks are enjoined to meditate on the garden as a whole, and to hold its forms in mind, there is no particular reason to suppose that the accidental convergence of lines need be part of the experience. And the indigenous Japanese tradition of painting, which involves what is known in the West as "oblique projection," eliminates or softens perspectival effects. For that specific reason *every* photograph of Ryoan-ji is a distortion. Hockney's photograph is taken from the correct position for meditation, and it severely truncates the long side

in order to efface perspective convergence and let the garden look more quadrangular. But does that make it closer to the traditions of Japanese painting? Would it be better to represent the garden in plan? Since Ryoan-ji may be the culmination of the art of tabletop dry-rock gardens (*bon seki*), a plan may be closer to the way Ryoan-ji might have been first worked out.³¹ But even a plan has its conventions of lines and shading that belong more to architecture (whether Japanese or Western) than to the practice of Zen.

Purity in our strategies of interpretation and representation is not only unattainable: strictly speaking, it is meaningless. Mixtures of sources create meaning and, when they are unacknowledged, the result is the kind of conceptual mingling and conflation that we value in visual art—for example, in Hockney's photocollage—and attempt to analyze in historical and critical writing. What is strange here is the degree to which historical writing on gardens allows that mingling to proceed unchecked. Even though they are historical essays rather than independent works of art, Johnson's and Slawson's texts do their work through an unacknowledged conceptual blending analogous to Hockney's. For a photograph and for some historical writing on gardens, that reticence is normal; for historical essays on painting or architecture, it would be less so.

Cartesian exceptions

One way to make the case that gardens provoke an unusual degree of conceptual incoherence is to look at the exceptions that prove the rule. In the case of French formal gardens, it may be that commentators tend to think more than normally in a monothematic fashion: partly because the gardens' expressive content centers on terms of power, and partly by analogy with the gardens' straight *perspectives* and *allées*.

From this point of view, it is not surprising that the exceptions to geometric rule occupy our attention as much as they did Le Nôtre's—the flower parterres at the Trianon, the irregular Bosquet des Sources near the Trianon, and above all the seductive transition to countryside beyond the Pièce des Suisses to the south, the Neptune fountain to the north, and the gardens within the destroyed

bosquets. The *rustica* enchants, and even today visitors oppressed by the long walks explore these byways. The same might be said of the ideas of the sublime and the picturesque, which may be understood as alternates to the *conceptual* rigidity of French formal gardens, as well as to their formal and iconological programs. In recent years the sublime has become a central concern in literary theory and aesthetics as well as in garden history, and part of its allure is precisely its conceptually intractable quality.³² But for the most part the French formal garden is an exception to the discussion in the majority of garden literature, and an important counterpoint to the theme of conceptual diversity that we are exploring here.

Writing that wanders down the garden path

So far I have suggested that gardens provoke an unusually wide array of ideas, and that a certain conceptual blurring often seems to be the best way of dealing with that diversity. These are the first two points I wanted to address, and they are mainly preliminary to the third and central point, which I want to consider now: the reasons why the literature tends not to address these points.

Here I again restrict myself to a single example, this time the introductory chapter of *The Poetics of Gardens*, arguably the most critically informed and carefully written recent work on gardens.³³ The chapter "The Genius of the Place" begins with a religious theme, as a kind of invocation. A garden, according to the authors, is a special place, like those loci that the Ancients sanctified on account of their "living inner spirit."³⁴ The text then describes the "simple fact . . . underlying all these metaphors and mythic constructions," and that is the arrangement of land and sky. The next pages note the forms of mountains, valleys, and water, and the ways they play against one another. The authors list brooks, rivers, lakes, "hills, hillocks, swells, mounds, and bumps . . . canyons, gulches, swales, hollows, dells, and dingles . . . holes, caverns, and grottoes."³⁵ This is another open-ended list, like the one I made in the first part of this essay. Lists are particular dialectic tools: they have no special organization, though they often begin with the announced intention of completeness.³⁶ This list of landforms is organized in terms of simple

polarities (here, *yin* and *yang*, hollow and hill, earth and water), so it can trail off whenever it becomes exhausted. And that is what happens: when the landforms are all named, the authors spend a paragraph on "Poseidon and Neptune, Nereus and the fifty Nereides," and then abruptly begin a new section, titled "God and Cain," which is about the interaction of man and nature. The section opens with the idea that God made the first garden, and Cain made the first city, and the authors gloss: "So garden possibilities are further shaped and suggested by the balance (or tension) found at a site between natural growth and the artifices of man."³⁷ In a different work we might ask: Why mention Eden now, at the end of a survey of landforms? Why is a certain collection of landforms—which are after all named and classified by men, according to historical conventions—treated as if it is timeless, as if it existed prior to "the artifices of man"? What is the meaning of "further" in the transitional sentence? But this is not a text that responds to such questions, and that itself is characteristic of gardens.

It may seem that I am quibbling, or reading too closely, but the same kind of transition occurs in various places throughout *The Poetics of Gardens*. Let us follow some of the later motions of the argument in the first chapters. The next section is "Sunlight and Shadow," and after that "Memory and Expectation," which briefly evokes historical references in gardens, from Proust to National Socialism. With that the opening chapter ends. The second chapter, "The Designer's Place," begins with the claim that "there are just two *Ur*-gardens," the "foursquare" *chahar bagh* or Paradisal garden, and the asymmetric Japanese garden.³⁸ Each is described, and sample plans are given. Then the text changes direction once more, this time to "offer . . . a catalogue of compositional strategies and moves—incomplete, but we hope suggestive."³⁹ This sentence is one of the few acknowledgments of the way that the narrative keeps trailing off, and it seems the only time that the authors are aware of their impressionistic method. I say "seems" because I take it that the writers know exactly what they have made—but why, then, produce only this one passing reference to the expository disorder? The "strategies and moves" include merging, "enfronting," and "enclosing," and, when they have been listed, yet another section begins, introducing the idea

of a game: "Many of the pleasures of gardens come . . . from playing a game. . . . There is a collector's game, a painter's, a cinematographer's, a storyteller's, and a philosopher's, and of course there are many others, too."⁴⁰ In this case there is no sign that this is a strange transition, that "enfronting" might have some interesting relation to games, or that it should come before or after games. The successive schemata, lists, polarities and catalogues would seem to imply the authors are trying to put some order into their experiences of gardens—but they are not trying too hard. They are trying *gently*, putting only a little emphasis on chained propositions. Why, we might ask, does the text decline to mention its disorganization? If gardens induce a reverie that the authors want to mimic, then that in itself is interesting, and could be mentioned. But if gardens induce reverie without the full awareness of the spectator, then it might not occur to the spectator that something is awry.

We do not need to go much farther into this text, but one more illustration is relevant. The section on games ends a few pages later, and a long new section, "Shaping spaces," begins. The gaming section ends with this comment about the choice of games: "But it is worth keeping in mind a maxim of Sir Edwin Lutyens . . . a garden should have one clear, central idea."⁴¹ This maxim is not applied, either here or in the following pages. It is almost a mnemonic, like a string tied around a finger, providing an insistent and gentle reminder of something that, in the end, will probably be forgotten anyway.

Reverie, dream, hypnosis

I have been heading toward the conclusion that gardens are like mild soporifics, inducing a certain frame of mind or habit of thought, over which their observers have limited control. Gardens do not induce true hypnosis, and they do not normally put us to sleep, though our writing evinces a mental state close to both hypnosis and dreaming. Without pressing the clinical comparison, the absence of critical attention, wide-ranging associations, and lack of linear argument in these essays are certainly akin to the freely associative state that precedes sleep. Gardens seem to break down conceptual boundaries, inducing a "passive, contemplative

experience.”⁴² They can inspire “holistic” thinking, “reconnection” to something alien called “nature.”⁴³ To Francesco Colonna, Venus’s garden is designed “not merely to stupefy the intellect, but to confound the senses,” so that it overwhelms Poliphilus until he “no longer knows in what manner he exists.”⁴⁴ In Addison’s words, gardens are “naturally apt to fill the Mind with Calmness and Tranquillity, and to lay all its turbulent Passions to rest.” But do they also lay *thought* to rest?

The text of *The Poetics of Gardens* is repeatedly expressive of a need to shape the experience of gardens, to make something that is imagined as formless into something that obeys certain rules of conceptual order. But the text keeps turning away when it is time to conclude, or develop the argument, or create a transition to another schema. It is the moments of articulation that are lost, and they become readable as moments “written” by the garden itself. In terms of the narrative voice they come from “outside,” preventing the writers from achieving self-conscious and measured transitions. Rhetorically, the text is repeatedly broken, as if a needle is skipping to different parts of a record—and the scene is made even stranger by the fact that the writers cannot hear the lack of continuity. I put it this way to underscore the mixed nature of this kind of response to gardens. On the one hand, the garden seems to induce a kind of dreamy reverie, so that writers are less likely to keep to a single topic, and more likely to free-associate a chain of topics. As in any waking reverie, the dreamer is aware of what is happening, and dreams willingly. On the other hand, the garden seems to limit the writers’ awareness to those passages in which they are enumerating similar concepts. Transitions from one exposition to another are lost, and their only trace is their absence. Something of the same kind happens when we slump in an easy chair and cannot be sure how many times we have fallen asleep or how long we have slept before waking. This is the reverie, the partial control and willing oblivion, that I want to associate with art historical writing that does not quite see what it is doing.

I like reverie, as a mood and as a metaphor, because it is simple (or is that simpleminded?). The wider world of landscapes offers many more complicated problems of control and conceptualization.

For me, the conversations and debates in this book are more than enough evidence of a fundamental lack of what ordinarily counts as control—and yet, from another perspective, one might also say landscapes (and, as I said at the beginning, representations of the body) are simply subjects that bring out a lack of control that is more hidden in other arts.

Notes

1. This is abridged from my *Our Beautiful, Dry, and Distant Texts: Art History as Writing* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997); paperback edition, with new preface (New York: Routledge, 2000). The material in that book was in turn developed from my “On the Conceptual Analysis of Gardens,” *Journal of Garden History* 13 no. 4 (1993): 189–98. Both earlier versions have illustrations.
2. Joseph Addison, from the *Spectator*, quoted in S. Pugh, *Garden–Nature–Language* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 125.
3. The thematic of the body is explored in my *Pictures of the Body: Pain and Metamorphosis* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).
4. J. Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape* (London and New York: Wiley, 1975), 4ff., discusses the “diversity of disciplines” involved in landscape. The range of Baroque references is discussed in B. Stafford, *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account 1760–1840* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1984). Recent works typical of this diversity include M. Szafranska, “The Philosophy of Nature and the Grotto in the Renaissance Garden,” *Journal of Garden History* 9 (1989): 76ff.; T. Ehrlich, “The Waterworks of Hadrian’s Villa,” *Journal of Garden History* 9 no. 4 (1989): 161ff.
5. For a critique of the idea that the picturesque English garden is modeled on pre-existing paintings (rather than a coetaneous and partly independent development) see *The Picturesque Garden and its Influence outside the British Isles*, edited by Nikolaus Pevsner (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, 1974), 3ff.
6. M. Charlesworth, “On Meeting Hercules in Stourhead Garden,” *Journal of Garden History* 9 no. 2 (1989): 74.
7. D. le Dantec and J.-P. le Dantec, *Reading the French Garden: Story and History*, translated by J. Levine (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1990), 31.
8. And likewise a “garden” may derive from an Old English root for “fence,” thereby showing its essential segregation from what which it represents. See A. van Erp-Houtepan, “The Etymological Origin of the Garden,” *Journal of Garden History* 6 no. 3 (1986): 227–31. For “landscape,” see for example J. Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). For “country,” which derives from *contra*, and so means land “spread out over against the observer,” see R. Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973), 369, both cited in Pugh, *Garden–Nature–Thought*, 135.

9. That does not stop gardens from becoming "site[s] of power over the labourer 'upon his knees.'" Pugh, *Garden-Nature-Language*, 3-4.
10. See J. Snyder, "Picturing Vision," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (1979-80): 499ff., for a general theory.
11. See K. Woodbridge, *Landscape and Antiquity: Aspects of English Culture at Stourhead* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970); J. Turner, "The Structure of Henry Hoare's Stourhead," *Art Bulletin* LXI (1979): 68-77; and M. Kelsall, "The Iconography of Stourhead," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983): 133-43.
12. M. Francis and R. T. Hester Jr., "The Garden as Idea, Place, and Action," in *The Meaning of Gardens, Idea, Place, and Action*, edited by M. Francis and R. T. Hester Jr. (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1989), 2-20.
13. le Dantec and le Dantec, *Reading the French Garden*.
14. "The Garden as Idea, Place, and Action," 4.
15. The last three pairs are from C. C. Marcus, "The Garden as Metaphor," in *The Meaning of Gardens*, 27.
16. The best book on this distinction in Western thought is W. Trimpi, *Muses of One Mind* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).
17. *The Meaning of Gardens*, 6, and see C. Howett, "Gardens Are Good Places for Dying," in *The Meaning of Gardens*, 252ff.
18. Marcus, "The Garden as Metaphor," 26ff. Marcus refers especially to E. Birnbaum, *The Way to Shambhala* (New York: Anchor, 1980).
19. He sees two "primary" structures; in the second, the "garden is set against the conservation of energy by proposing a self-yielding world that purports to lie apart from expedience, as a retreat." In one reading of his text, these two narratives coincide in the image of Eden. See *Garden-Nature-Language*, 128-29.
20. Pugh, *Garden-Nature-Language*, 128. Pugh is borrowing from C. Lévi-Strauss's work on the incest taboo, in *The Elementary Structure of Kinship*, translated by J. H. Bell et al. (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 1969).
21. Pugh, *Garden-Nature-Language*, 130, and cf. 133 n. 3, referring to J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis's excellent book *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, translated by D. Nicholson-Smith (London: Hogarth Press, 1973), 481-83.
22. N. B. Johnson, "Geomancy, Sacred Geometry, and the Idea of a Garden: Tenryu-ji Temple, Kyoto, Japan," *Journal of Garden History* 9 no. 1 (1989): 1ff.
23. For nineteenth-century roots of the interest in harmonious proportions, see *Gottfried Semper, The Four Elements of Architecture and other Writings*, translated and edited by H. F. Mallgrave and W. Herrmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 201 and *passim*. For early-twentieth-century interest in harmonies centered on the theosophical movement; see A. Dubach-Donath, *Die Grundlelemente der Eurythmie* (Dornach: Philosophisch-Anthroposophischer Verlag, 1961). For the golden ratio, see also H. J. McWhinnie, "A Review of Selected Research on the Golden Section Hypothesis," *Visual Arts Research* 13 no. 1 (1987): 73-85; Robert Palter, "Black Athena, Afro-centrism, and the History of Science," *History of Science* 31, part 3, no. 93 (1993): 228-87; George Markowsky,

- "Misconceptions about the Golden Ratio," *College Mathematics Journal* 23 no. 1 (1992): 2–19; and for the absence of the golden ratio from Renaissance art, see my "The Case against Surface Geometry," *Art History* 14 no. 2 (1991): 143–74.
24. Johnson, "Geomancy, Sacred Geometry, and the Idea of a Garden," 3. See B. Wai-Bun Ip, "The Expression of Nature in Traditional Su Zhou Gardens," *Journal of Garden History* 6 (1986): 125–40.
 25. L. Kuck, *The World of the Japanese Garden: From Chinese Origins to Modern Landscape Art* (New York, 1968), cited in Johnson, "Geomancy, Sacred Geometry, and the Idea of a Garden," 18 n. 14.
 26. Johnson, "Geomancy, Sacred Geometry, and the Idea of a Garden," 3.
 27. For examples of each see C. Thacker, *The History of Gardens* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1979), 68ff. The categories are from Kitamura Enkin, *Tsukiyama Teizoden* [Creating Landscape Gardens] (1735). Parallels are also available in other arts, including painting. The dry *bon-seki* miniatures, for example, are less ornate than *bon-sai* miniatures or *baku-niwa* miniature landscapes (Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 67).
 28. Thacker makes two interesting comparisons, one to Goethe's *Altar of Good Fortune* at Weimar (1777), and the other Aislabie's "moon-ponds" at Studley Royal (c.1725), which had a kind of "pure," "abstract perfection." See Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 71–72.
 29. D. Slawson, *Secret Teachings in the Art of Japanese Gardens, Design Principles, Aesthetic Values* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1987), 76ff., especially 101.
 30. R. Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), cited in D. Slawson, *Secret Teachings*, 201–03.
 31. P. Rambach and S. Rambach, *Gardens of Longevity in China and Japan* (Geneva: Skira, 1987), 202.
 32. Historians of the garden and of eighteenth-century studies might be interested in the following texts: P. De Bolla, *Discourse of the Sublime* (Oxford and New York: Blackwell, 1989); T. Weiskel, *The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), especially "Approaching the Romantic Sublime," 3ff.; and N. Hertz, *The End of the Line: Essays and Psychoanalysis of the Sublime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), especially 217ff. This literature might illuminate questions of the "sincerity" of the sublime that have been raised in garden history, e.g. in the review of C. Thacker, *The Wildness Pleases: The Origins of Romanticism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), by J. G. Turner, *Journal of Garden History* 5 no. 2 (1985): 207ff.
 33. W. J. Mitchell, C. W. Moore, and W. Turnbull Jr., *The Poetics of Gardens* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1988).
 34. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 1.
 35. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 2.
 36. For a meditation on the idea of the "catena" (list), see I. Hassan, "Pluralism in Postmodern Perspective," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1986): 503ff.
 37. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 6.

38. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 13.
39. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 21.
40. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 23.
41. Mitchell et al., *The Poetics of Gardens*, 26.
42. *The Meaning of Gardens*, 8.
43. This meaning and others incompatible with it are discussed in Arthur O. Lovejoy, "Nature' as an Aesthetic Norm," from *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948), 69ff.
44. The first quotation is from the *Hypernerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice, 1499), vi recto, and the second is the gloss on that passage by T. Comito, *The Idea of the Garden in the Renaissance* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1978), 183.

3

THE ART SEMINAR

This conversation was held June 17, 2006, at the Burren College of Art, Ballyvaughan, Ireland. The participants were: Denis E. Cosgrove (University of California at Los Angeles), Rachael Ziady DeLue (Princeton University), Jessica Dubow (University of Sheffield), James Elkins (University College Cork / School of the Art Institute of Chicago), Michael Gaudio (University of Minnesota), David Hays (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Róisín Kennedy (National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin), Michael Newman (School of the Art Institute of Chicago), Rebecca Solnit (independent scholar), Anne Whiston Spirn (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Minna Törmä (University of Helsinki), Jacob Wamberg (University of Aarhus, Denmark).

James Elkins: In *The Experience of Landscape*, Jay Appleton says “we have little hope of finding anyone in our world of specialists well qualified” in all the fields that touch on landscape. “Perhaps,” he suggests, “we could find a group of experts to prepare a *symposium* [in italics perhaps because it’s very serious], but this would be predisposed to set out specialist arguments in parallel.”¹ What is needed, he says, is synthesis. Now *The Art Seminar* series is not aimed at synthesis: what I hope for is more like a cross-section, a reasonable sample, of the degree of coherence of talk about landscape.

Of all the subjects in *The Art Seminar* series, this one may be the most desperately confused. Like the body, landscape is something we all feel ourselves to be inside. It’s our subject, but we’re also part of it: we help make it; we live in it. Rachael and I have tried to reflect the difficulty of the subject by inviting a truly diverse range of scholars and practitioners: on this panel, we have art historians, critics, landscape architects, urban planners, geographers, and specialists on fields as diverse as tenth-century Chinese landscape painting and contemporary urban planning.

I thought we might divide our conversation today into three parts. This morning we can consider various conceptualizations of landscape; in the afternoon we can talk about landscape in, or as, art; and to close, I want to spend some time considering our own implication in our subject, and how much conceptual distance from it any of us has.

1

To organize this morning’s session, I thought it might be interesting and not too invasive to tot up some senses of landscape that have appeared in the literature. And to frame *that* listing, let me propose that we begin with the pervasive sense that landscape is an ideology, and is best understood as such. A number of the understandings of landscape that have emerged in the last twenty-five years take ideological critique as a sensible starting point. An especially clear formulation is in Denis Cosgrove’s

Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape, where he proposes landscape be understood as “a way in which some Europeans have represented to themselves and to others the world about them and their relationships with it, and through which they have commented on social relations.”² On the other hand, there seems to be a kind of opening now: a sense that it is possible to see beyond that reading, if not outside of it.

Michael Gaudio: Art historical writing on landscape in the last few decades has made it impossible not to recognize that landscape is, at some fundamental level, intimately engaged with ideology, but to say that landscape *is* an ideology would be unhelpfully reductive. To make that claim, to say that landscape painting is fundamentally or essentially an expression of ideology, runs the risk of losing the landscape itself.

JE: But what is that “landscape itself”?

MG: I would say that it is the *work* of making landscapes. If you come predisposed to reveal the ideology behind a painting, and to see the work of art as meaning something other than what it in fact is—paint, materials, techniques—then from the beginning you’re bracketing off the making of the work. I’m not saying that an ideological approach to the interpretation of landscape will always result in this kind of neglect—I could point to many instances where that’s not the case at all. A nuanced understanding of what ideology is and how it might work does leave room for close attention to the work of shaping landscapes.

But as a way of starting the conversation, I’d propose that, while landscape is fundamentally engaged with ideology, it is not itself an ideology.

Denis E. Cosgrove: I agree with that. It is probably a *necessary* recognition, but not a sufficient one, to say that landscape is ideology. It is worth thinking where the attention to landscape as ideology came from. I think it came from a resistance to two ways of thinking about landscape that had dominated the

debate prior to my intervention in the early 1980s (at least within geography, landscape architecture and design). One saw landscape as coming out of an almost spiritual response to nature—an entirely aesthetic, deeply romantic response to the world, as in late-nineteenth-century nature worship. On the other hand, there is the notion of landscape as entirely a product of natural forces that we can understand scientifically, for example geologically, perhaps subsequently altered by human settlement and economy.

Both of those ways of thinking about landscape tended to ignore the social enfolding of landscape, and the historical specificity with which we perceive and represent things. We cannot know nature outside the historical circumstances in which we find ourselves. Nature has a history.

You're right, Jim, that the notion of landscape as ideology developed in *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* proceeded from a rather narrow Marxist interpretation of history and society. But that chapter has now reached a kind of closure.

JE: Even now, just a minute into our conversation, we have three senses of landscape. Two of them may have generated the awareness of landscape as ideology. Let me just repeat them, to start out our informal listing: First: landscape is a spiritual and aesthetic response to nature, especially in the senses inaugurated in romanticism from the early nineteenth century onward. Second: landscape is a product of natural forces, the proper object of natural science or natural philosophy, perhaps altered by human intervention, but still understood ecologically. These would, perhaps, be the two principal senses of landscape that can be thought of as having been articulated *before* the twentieth-century ideological critiques of landscape.

We also have Michael's idea that what eludes ideology in landscape—at least in landscape painting—is its materiality, the processes of its shaping.

Rachael Ziady DeLue: I would like to develop Michael's comment that thinking about landscape *as* ideology blinds us to the object

itself, whether it is an actual landscape or the representation of one. What might it mean to think about the object itself in conjunction with thinking about the landscape as engaged in ideology? Are those separate exercises, or can you think about problems of representation alongside, or as parts of, a wider question of ideology? And might it be useful to think about representation first, such that ideology isn't the term that frames inquiry from the outset?

JE: Let me just add here that Michael's idea about what landscape painting "really is" echoes a formative idea in Denis's *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. In the Introduction to the 1998 edition, Denis, you mention an "unalienated, insider's apprehension of the land" or an "everyday experience of landscape," which you contrast against senses of landscape's ideological, "historical and social discourses." It's a very interesting opening move, because it creates a *structure* within the conceptualization of landscape: an *unrepresentable* experience, had by the person who lives on the land—who works and shapes it—and a *representable* experience.

David Hays: I think that is a relation that landscape architects have to negotiate. They aren't just dealing with a static image. The material has a life of its own. It's constantly changing and has the power to defy our expectations, our attempts to shape it in our own image. Landscape architects must embrace that condition.

Jacob Wamberg: An important part of the postmedieval understanding of landscape has to do with escaping ideology, and coming into a natural place that is free from the constraints of power. There is, in a sense, an ideology of escaping ideology. Nonetheless, studies of landscape will always thrive in the space of ideology. Even in classical antiquity, the Roman sacral-idyllic paintings were regulated by ideological concerns: their commissioners wanted to suppress the traces of the work of slaves, who had produced the culture they desired to escape from, and so avoided images of corn fields and other post-Golden Age

marks. In those cases, the ideology is not explicitly there; it is only present as its negation.

RZD: But is it the same thing to say that landscape is always already ideological, and to say that there are other ways of thinking about the interpretation and meaning of landscape than thinking about it as *always* and *only* ideology? I think we all acknowledge that landscape is always embedded in ideology. But is that the only way to see or understand it? What do we miss when we don't allow ourselves to see anything but ideology?

JW: You're right, there are many ways of interpreting landscape. I would just be skeptical of the idea that it is possible to escape ideology, even if parts of the idea of landscape are predicated on the absence of ideology. That is a general paradox of autonomy.

Anne Whiston Spirn: If you look at the roots of the word *landscape* in Nordic and Germanic languages, for example, Danish *landskab*, German *Landschaft*, or Old English *landscipe*, you see a combination of meanings that associate a place and the people who dwell there, past and present. *Land* means both the physical features of a place and its population. *Skabe* and *schaffen* mean "to shape," and the suffixes *-skab* and *-schaft*, as in the English *-ship*, also mean association, partnership.³ There is a notion, embedded in the original word, of a mutual shaping of people and place: people shape the land, and the land shapes people.

But the *Oxford English Dictionary* claims that *landscape* comes from a Dutch painting term, *landskip*, and was imported into English in the seventeenth century. Not so! Why is it that the meanings of the word *landscipe* in Old English get lost?

JE: That broken etymology is a nice development of our third sense of landscape: landscape as a work of production, a physical reshaping of the land, to do with materiality, as Michael Gaudio first said, and process.

AWS: Landscape is always about shaping. Not just directly, with hands, tools, and machines, but through law, public policy, the investing and withholding of capital, and other actions undertaken hundreds or thousands of miles away. The processes that shape landscape operate at different scales of time and space: from the ephemeral to the enduring, from the local to the national. So I would return to ideology. It is important to understand that landscape is shaped by ideology, by policy. On the other hand, landscape is not only ideology: it moves and shapes each one of us.

DH: Anne, those misunderstandings of the word *landscape* are actually a double false etymology. When people define landscape, they usually take *-scape* as *-scope*, as if it pertained to vision. But it does not.

AWS: In Old English, it implied both an association with a place and a physical shaping. Later it grew into its current sense of *view*, a panoramic view.

DEC: The person who has written about this more closely than anyone else is Kenneth Olwig.⁴ He asks what helps a people shape a land, and he says it comes through customary law: you need a community to regulate things like seed time, and harvest time, and when you can pasture your cattle on the land. That law relates to a particular territory and community, and it is localized, especially in those parts of northern Europe where peasant communities were strongly self-regulating. It is precisely with the rise of a more distanced regulatory regime, and especially the nation state, that landscape becomes more a pictorial thing than a lived experience.⁵ The implication of that historical change in terms of modernity—whether it's good or bad, or causes alienation or doesn't—is inevitably shot through with the interpreter's ideals of the good, the true, and the beautiful: in other words, it is *ideological*.

JE: The understanding of landscape as “landscape” is a sign of another sense of landscape, our fourth sense: landscape as

viewed object, as something built out of representations of space and time.

This sense of a thing viewed can open out in several directions. For the moment I'd like to note that your work, Minna, uses this sense of landscape as *view*, and as a thing built of spaces and temporalities. One of your starting points in analyzing Chinese landscape paintings is Wen Fong's tripartite schema of spatial representation, which he introduced in the late 1960s.⁶ Along with that, you make use of Chinese concepts such as Guoxi's "three extensions," 三遠 *sanyuan*, which can be understood as spatial categories in a familiar Western sense—although you're very careful to note the difficulties of translating *yuan* there as "spaces" or "perspectives."

Minna Törmä: To be precise, Jim, one of my starting points is that I found Fong's tripartite schema inadequate. It didn't seem satisfactory in the analysis of eleventh-century handscrolls.⁷ The handscroll is a fascinating format for representing landscape and in these paintings the viewer is made to experience the landscape from within; they are meant assist you in "traveling while lying down." Fong's schema treats handscrolls as if they consisted of a succession of framed views. But the viewer can, in fact, manipulate the frames in a much more flexible manner; he can manipulate the flow of time and that becomes clear when one analyses the narrative structure instead of focusing on the spatial structure.

JE: Just to pursue this fourth meaning of landscape as a thing viewed, in space and time: a number of us take space as a foundational concept in understanding landscape. Denis, you have written on the development of perspective and space, and sometimes "space" appears in your work as an intentional category, for example when you say that a number of developments after the Middle Ages "suggest an attempt on the part of Europeans to clarify a new conception of space as a coherent visual structure."⁸ And it's routine to use space as an optimally abstract way of starting a more detailed discussion—for example as in the

essay David circulated, in which painted landscapes inside buildings in the gardens at Chantilly are neatly described as “not space-as-picture but picture-as-space.”⁹

What I wonder about these emphases is the historical range in which they are appropriate. This was a point of discussion in volume 3 of this series, *Is Art History Global?*—there, we wondered whether the concept *space* occurs much before the eighteenth century.¹⁰ *Space* and *landscape* could be contemporaries, siblings even.

DEC: The question of space is central here and complex too (and it cannot be disconnected from meanings of time). Most people I think today would agree that the Kantian view of absolute space as a container of things is too narrow and that space is relative: a product of relations between things. All such relations are historical and thus space (and time) are historically (and culturally) constituted. We might revisit the discussion opened by Henri Lefebvre¹¹ on spaces of representation and representations of space, but I fear it would move us too far from the focus on landscape. Any discussion of landscape cannot ignore questions of space, but cannot be confined to them alone because of the irreducible component of the experienced, material world that landscape incorporates.

JW: There is a tension in what we have been saying between walking free, observing a landscape, and being involved in a worked countryside—the shaped side of landscape, the idea of landscape as shaped by human hands. The famous essay by Joachim Ritter on the concept of landscape argues that landscape is the aesthetic experience par excellence.¹² For Ritter, the landscape experience is marked by freedom from duties: it is a disinterested experience. This duty-free view on nature is specifically urban and is invoked when the city dweller goes to the countryside, wishing there to atone for his otherwise industrial exploiting of nature. For me it is nonetheless interesting that when landscape emerges in postmedieval times and is first visualized in the general backgrounds of fifteenth-century painting—in

Robert Campin or Gentile da Fabriano—it does show traces of work. There's a huge difference between that and medieval and classical landscapes, which are mostly free from signs of work—fields, hedges, fences, roads, canals, quarries. So I think the emergence of the modern landscape concept also depends on a new work ethics, emerging in the late Middle Ages, which has been analyzed by Max Weber.

I want to make a point here negotiating between these two poles: landscape in this early modern sense means facing a scene that has been worked, but where the working traces have been put into harmony with nature. It is a way of negotiating between work and leisure.

DH: In eighteenth-century English landscape painting, one sees many portraits of patrons standing or sitting in front of fields that have been worked. One has a strong sense of people in a specific time and place, even if a crucial part of the story, the identity of the laborers, is unrepresented. So the images are both situated and magical, in a dark way. But, as Jacob has noted, it seems that in many medieval representations of landscape it is not possible to discern time so specifically. In later landscapes, it becomes critical for viewers to be able to situate time more exactly: not just the season, but the hour or even minute of the day.

DEC: I am not sure that we can make such a neat distinction between pre- and postmedieval landscape in respect to the incorporation of signs of labor. A painting such as Gainsborough's *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews* (that has become a cliché of ideological interpretation of landscape) contains *signs* of labor, to be sure (plowed fields, managed hedgerows, etc.), but the actual *work* of producing and maintaining the fields is invisible (in a way that is not true of Turner's *Ploughing up Turnips near Slough* or of Courbet's or Van Gogh's images of laborers in landscape. Many medieval illustrations of landscape are in books of hours and show similarly ordered and cultivated spaces, while averting attention from the labor itself that

maintains them—as do the Elder Pliny's descriptions of the villa coasts of Sorrento and Capri.

JW: But that's time in an iconographical context. Without thematic qualification you will never find traces of time, or work for that matter, in medieval landscapes.

DEC: That's not true in my reading of landscape history.

JW: Yes it is. Depictions of time and work become numerous in the 1300s and early 1400s, in calendar illustrations, in health treatises, or in a republican showpiece like Ambrogio Lorenzetti's in the town hall of Siena: they represent a sort of rehearsal of the new landscape paradigm which breaks forth around 1420, but still in iconographical form. After 1420 the stunning and absolutely new thing is that traces of time and work—clouds, atmosphere, cast light; fields, hedges, roads—become part of the painted landscape environment *independently* of what is going on among the figures. The swarm of separate iconographies seems to reach a critical limit and condenses into a coherent paradigm, a new pictorial language. And this new language stressing ephemeral values is fundamental for the effect of landscape painting, mood being expressed through the flickering of light through the ever-changing atmosphere—atmosphere being indeed the exterior equivalent of mood.

Michael Newman: Perhaps all landscape in the post-Christian tradition contains the possibility of redemption, such that Eden is transferred from the past to the future.

RZD: A very American idea.

JE: Actually, Michael, that sounds very much like what Joseph Koerner said when he visited Cork last month to give lectures for a book he will call *Last Experiences of Painting*.¹³ One of his points was that eschatological paintings in the generations of Rogier van der Weyden and Hieronymus Bosch rehearse a kind of eternal, static time, by counterpoising it against dilated representations of human (earthly) time.

RZD: So what we are talking about, then, on the one hand, is the insertion of time into landscape, or the embedding of landscape into a temporal register, and, on the other, time's *evacuation*, what in images takes the form of the excision of people and other markers of mortality or the temporal.

Rebecca Solnit: That theme is very much a part of American landscape, where history is in the future, where nature is Eden regained, where the woodsman with his axe is Adam himself, a really fucked-up Adam who is about to lay waste to the forest. It gets picked up by Ansel Adams, and then in nature photography. It is, for example, almost inconceivable to have a person in a Sierra Club calendar. There is an interesting removal of the figure from the landscape, which generates anxieties. The American vision is different, I think, from the European one: I don't think the fantasy of a role outside the social exists in quite the same way. That is part of the huge problem of landscape imagination in America. Through the sinister auspices of the environmental movement—John Muir, Ansel Adams—the American vision yields an image of a world entirely outside of human agency, which ends up, for example, excising Native Americans—

MN: But redemption doesn't have to be landscape without humans. Maybe that's the American interpretation.

RS: It is, exactly.¹⁴

MN: It could also be the overcoming of the conflict between the human and the natural.

Róisín Kennedy: Thinking about the idea of redemption in terms of twentieth-century Irish painting, I would say that there is a sense of loss instead of anticipation. Rather than looking to the future, it looks to the past. There's an absence of figures, and an absence of human intervention, which has been read not in the sense of a regained Eden, but of loss, in terms of contemporaneous political events such as emigration and displacement. Perhaps

due to our history we don't have a strong sense of a tradition of Irish landscape painting. The image of the West of Ireland was only developed in the early twentieth century.

DEC: That is part of the conceit of standing outside, and looking in. Going back to Minna's work: the idea of a landscape by itself, without figures, without interaction or intervention, is not part of Chinese landscape painting. As you have pointed out, Minna, even the act of looking at Chinese handscrolls involved an unrolling, an enframing in which the viewer is *more* than observer but a traveler *through* landscape.

In saying this, I am not trying to set up an opposition between West and East, but to ask about the roles we play, and that we consider ourselves playing, when we consider landscape: actual or represented. I mean that landscape is one of the media through which this question of our relation to the external world, and our presence in it, is put in play.

MT: Very often a Chinese landscape has figures when it is a representation of a harmonious society. Landscapes without figures exist, but they are often considered to be a kind of oddity, and I find this interesting—that they need to be explained and justified, for example, by a reference to the painter's (eccentric) personality.

JE: We have been exploring the fourth of our senses of landscape—that it is an experience built out of space and time (or their suspension, or their denial). I am wondering about what kind of a list we are assembling. Each time we have talked about a specifiable sense of landscape, we have subjected it to what I think has to be called an ideological critique—that is, in a loose sense, we have tried to elucidate the social conditions it implies or makes possible. Would we want to say that the four meanings on my informal list are equally susceptible to ideological critique?

Jessica Dubow: I think that, when it comes to landscape, the famous dictum that says "Culture is never more in evidence than when

nature is spoken about" is probably still largely correct. But perhaps the limitations of this account might be relieved a bit, and "ideology critique" as a reductive accusation might also be modified, if we ask *why* landscape, perhaps more than any other aesthetic, poses such problems for how we think about the subject, the "enframer," as Denis says. In other words, what is specific about landscape that makes it such a subtle process in which perceptual experience and cultural expression or history and the body are so intimately twinned at the start?

JE: This is presumably one of your objections to Tom Mitchell's often-quoted phrase "Landscape might be seen more profitably as something like the 'dreamwork' of imperialism."

JD: Yes, I do have problems with that formulation—or at least with the things it seems to disavow. But, if we continue with the "ideology critique" accusation for a moment, I think one of the reasons that landscape continues to be seen as an ideological phenomenon par excellence—and this pertains to the perception of actual landscape, rather than its painting—is its relation not to space but to time. Landscape *outlives* history; it surpasses it. Over time—and almost as a function of its earth, its soil—landscape absorbs the events played out on its surface; it inters the marks of past practices as much as it also bears its traces. In landscape art this is perhaps part of what Raymond Williams famously calls the "enamelled pastoral":¹⁵ landscape is ideological insofar as it allows history to decompose.¹⁶

DEC: In its physical, geological, ecological existence as *process*—

JD: Yes, it repairs itself.

MN: Now we are working with two differing conceptions of landscape: one is a broad conception, the physical landscape constantly renewing itself, and the other is a sense in which landscape is a historical representation. But how does this very idea of representation, of the world as a collection of representations arise, and get applied to landscape?—

AWS: But these are not necessarily two different conceptions. The landscape “out there” is both self-renewing and a constructed representation. It’s an interplay of natural and cultural processes, a product of dialogues between builders and place that inevitably includes historical representation. In the combination of the two lies the potential power of landscape as both place and concept—

MN: The problem, for us, is how landscape and its representation are tied to a certain notion of the subject, or to subjectivity. That notion of the subject begins, perhaps, with Descartes, and culminates in romanticism in the eighteenth and nineteenth century; it entails a subject for whom the world becomes a picture, so that the visual relationship is primary.¹⁷ Ultimately, the panoramic landscape becomes the total visual representation of the world. The notion of landscape tied to the representation of the world for the subject suppresses the communal—the other senses of landscape, the association, the shaping, more or less our third sense of landscape.

The question then becomes: Is it possible to free the notion of landscape from being a representation for the subject? And within representation itself, things are not simple or monolithic. Landscape is a site in which representations contest: For whom is the representation presented? For the visitor from outside, or the person who works in the landscape? It’s also a power relation. The question then becomes: how to articulate power relations in representation? Does the traditional representation of landscape—if one can speak in such broad terms—repress or render invisible these power relations?¹⁸

DH: That is a fascinating idea, because our third definition of landscape, as a thing that is worked, is just as alienating as the distance implied in the fourth sense of landscape. It’s obvious that, if a landscape is a framed view, you’re on the other side of the frame. But if you’re reading in a dictionary about the shaping of a landscape, then it’s “those people over there”; you’re alienated from people who aren’t thinking what you’re thinking.

JE: They are the unrepresentable part of the understanding of landscape, as in Denis's contrast.

DH: But I wonder how much that third type of landscape proceeds despite us—whether it surpasses us, and our histories. I wonder if a synthetic history might fold us into both ideas (third and fourth). I'm thinking of Anne's book *The Granite Garden* and its radical yet reasonable argument that the city is part of the landscape.¹⁹ Just five or six years ago, James Corner noted that few outside the discipline of landscape architecture conceive of the city in that way.²⁰ But students in landscape architecture have to ask, from the very beginning, whether human culture is part of nature or opposed to it. How they answer the question has a large impact on the sort of work they do.

AWS: Absolutely. It's impossible to make a garden or shape a larger landscape without expressing ideas about nature. And these ideas have consequences. Those who believe that cities are not part of the natural world, for example, are not likely to take natural processes into account, with disastrous results. And yet, among landscape architects and planners, personal beliefs about the nature of nature are relatively unexamined. For the past twenty years, I've asked students to describe their own definition of nature. Their definitions are surprisingly diverse and vary with cultural background. I've found that students from China, for example, invariably define nature as a combination of discrete physical features like trees, water, rocks, and mountains.

MT: The Chinese term for landscape painting, 山水画 *shanshui-hua*, means painting of waters and mountains. That goes back into the older Chinese philosophy, the sense of *yin* and *yang*. Today we usually associate *yang* (mountain in landscape) with positive, male, active and *yin* (water) with negative, female, passive. But originally *yang* meant something like “flags waving in the sun” and hence brightness; *yin* meant “cloudy.”²¹ But *shanshui* is not wilderness; the human presence is either visible or implied. It is part of culture, not opposed to it. The *yin* and

yang structuring was applied to city planning, and even to small units such as dwellings.

JW: Interestingly, you might say that that is true for the pre-modern West too, that landscape depiction here is also about depicting waters and mountains. In a quite logical correspondence with work traces being absent from ancient and medieval landscapes, their wildernesses are all founded in rocky grounds cleft with occasional water reservoirs. Before 1420 you don't see the territory, civilization's hinterland, but rather *terra*, the virginal earth. I will read that in homology with the geocentric world picture with its polarization between celestial and terrestrial domains. In this sense the pre-modern rocky grounds are overly terrestrial, almost uncovering the underworld with its ravines and chaos. This also fits quite well with ancient ideas of the wilderness as being part of the underworld.

JE: Okay, so let me take this opportunity to introduce the mode of understanding that I suspect is governing the move from ideological interpretation. Landscape, in this way of thinking, is an exemplary encounter with subjectivity. It is understood as a kind of unity—"framed" or otherwise "composed," and always "seen"—which reflects, or articulates, the sense of self.

From my point of view, and I know this is perhaps contentious, the principal point of reference here is phenomenology. I suspect that theorizing on landscape, which was once avowedly an ideological matter, has been increasingly replaced by a kind of *de facto* phenomenological understanding. Landscape is taken to be the most diffuse and dispersed, the most ungraspable, the most unbounded, but also the most optimal occasion for meditating on the unity of the self.

So in a sense I agree with you, Jess, that subjectivity is at issue, but I also think that if you talk directly about subjectivity you'll end up ruining the conversation, because there are also many other ways of talking about subjectivity. What is needed is a meditation on what we mean by "phenomenological encounter."²²

JD: Yes. Because, whatever understanding of subjectivity we may use, what's at issue in landscape is obviously a founding relation of self to object, a relation that in phenomenological terms would be a reciprocity, a kind of a mutual entwinement. Landscape experience then is not just how a given view comes to be represented, but how its viewer stakes a claim to perception and to presence. It's not just about an optical sight or its symbolic mediation, but all those more hidden sensory and affective processes that allow a view to "come into being" for the subject, all those embodied practices which, prior to representation, allow for its realization, its actualization.

DH: This returns us to Michael Gaudio's initial remarks about materiality, which are part of our third sense of landscape as process and materiality. There is always the thing out there, the thing that's bumped into, that's encountered.

JE: That's not a phenomenological interpretation, really.

RZD: David, if I am taking what you say correctly, there is a whole other way of looking at the subject: that the whole idea of relationality, or relations-to, might be suspect. It produces an artificial construction of ourselves as subject and the other as object. The landscape is always "for us," since we construct it; but it seems to me that one of the things that a phenomenological reading allows us is to break down the subject-object relation, to break down the idea of landscape as a view. It is about lived experience, rather than "me-it," or self and other. That is one of the things the phenomenological has to offer: landscape as a thing that we live *within*.

DH: Precisely.

MT: That is why I titled my book *Landscape Experience*. I wanted to emphasize the experience, and not the view, to get the temporal dimension as well. The painter of handscrolls takes it for granted that the viewer will draw from his memories of previous wanderings. With this respect—in response to what

Rachael just said, to give some concrete examples—Bachelard's ideas in his *Poetics of Space* are enlightening and inspiring; and Merleau-Ponty writes about seeing with the painting, instead of looking at it . . .²³

MG: It seems to me this experiential or phenomenological reading of landscape returns us to questions of temporality we were discussing earlier. The sense of landscape Rachael has just described, that it is not a relation between a subject and object but a lived experience or process, is also the very thing that landscape refuses. To the extent that landscape admits temporal experience, it is always an arrested time.

RZD: I am not sure that's true.

MG: I'm talking specifically about landscape representation—

RZD: I don't think landscape is always arrested time.

MG: Well, it's a broad generalization, but I do see it as a pre-occupation of much Western landscape painting. Though I would also say that landscape painting is most interesting when it refuses or fails to maintain the fiction that it can arrest time.

DH: There is a critical difference here between the ways landscape architects think and the ways painters think. As Denis and others have said, it can be necessary to go out of the studio to think about landscape.

RK: I wonder how we are distinguishing nature and landscape here. They seem to be becoming confused.

JE: I decided that, when "nature" first came up in that way, I would read into the record something about Bruno Latour's book *Politics of Nature*. He says he won't have anything to do with nature, "this jumble of Greek philosophy, French Cartesianism and American parks."²⁴ Of course since our first sense of landscape—the one Denis started with—is a subset of nature, we are all in big trouble, according to Bruno Latour.

One of the ways of avoiding getting stuck on the concept of nature would be to note that, when that discussion starts and you go down the road that leads at the moment to Latour's work, you get very far away from issues that could be identified as landscape. In order to stay within earshot of the concepts of landscape, it may be necessary not to worry nature.

AWS: No. I disagree with that. Completely. How one defines nature, each and every one us, influences how we regard landscape and how we shape, describe, and depict it. Take Frank Lloyd Wright and Jens Jensen. They agreed that nature was the authority for design, but argued about what form a "natural" landscape should take. For Wright, landscape was an imperfect manifestation of nature, and the task of the architect was to bring its outer form into conformity with an inner ideal, its nature, or essential characteristics. For Jensen, nature was embodied in the "native" features of landscape itself, which led him to imitate the outward appearance of the local landscape and to use only indigenous plants. So I do agree with your quote from Latour that nature, as a concept, is political and a "jumble." It's best to avoid using the word "nature" without defining what you mean by it. Raymond Williams called it "perhaps the most complex word in the language."²⁵

DEC: Another way to say that, Jim, is that landscape is precisely a Latoureaan project. It's a hybrid concept: nature-culture.

JE: He might love dissecting it into "competencies of the collective," in his terminology. But for me, anyway, it's a question of audibility: we need to keep certain issues audible.

JW: To get back to Jess's question of subjectivity, or Jim's of phenomenology. Landscape is where the subject posits itself in relation to nature. That can be generalized. You can see the development of subjectivity through history *in* landscape images and how they have evolved. Strikingly, there is absolutely no trace of landscapes in cave paintings; the first surviving images are signs of a poorly evolved subjectivity. Consciousness

is about being self-reflexive, positing your thinking as something unique bracketed off from your surroundings, so consciousness must distance itself from nature, establish it as an other, which exactly happens in landscape. So there is no representation of landscape in—

JE: But, Jacob, is it any less surprising that cave paintings don't depict refrigerators?

JW: No, you may say so, but that's exactly my point: landscape is a technology. It must interact with certain historical and social circumstances in order to thrive. But in contrast to refrigerators it's not a sudden late technology; it's developed gradually and in a surprisingly regular crescendo. During this whole process the pictorial depth of field is expanded from zero to infinite, corresponding with a viewpoint that more and more structures the pictorial space. In all other periods apart from the Paleolithic, landscape models exist in more or less developed versions. In the representations made by the first settled societies, there are already the first traces of landscape—trees, tracks of hoof-marks, mountains—then, in the first urban states the picture frame and covering effects enter, followed in Assyria by landscape as proper background. . .

RZD: But how can you analyze cave paintings in terms of something that didn't exist? In terms of the absence of something that is not yet present, that is, the idea of landscape?

JW: It is something you can see in retrospect. It is a starting—

RZD: But is that an historical perspective?

JW: Yes.

RZD: How can it be?

JE: How can it be anything else?

MG: It is one kind of historical perspective, but a problematic one that can only see the past as prelude to a modern, civilized subject that arose in the nineteenth century. That notion of

subjectivity, because it is by default a primitivizing one, *needs* cave painting as its point of origin.

JW: Yes. Sure. But to me this autonomous subject is much more than just an idea, a construction on paper. It is a socially conditioned practice which is currently experiencing a crisis, but which nonetheless had reality in a recent past. And is a tracing of the genesis of this subject different from any other description of a development? In establishing how a certain tsunami came into being you'll have to go back to a submerged quake which often, at the moment when it actually took place, was thought of as nothing special. It's only in retrospect, after knowing the scope of the tsunami, it can be posited as its point of origin. And the curious thing about the development of landscape representation is, again, that it's so evidently marked by a logic, like, say, the number sequence 5, 8, 13, 21 and so forth, which must have 3 and not 4 as its immediate forerunner.

MG: But maybe there's more to cave painting than its correspondence to a Hegelian model of the unfolding of history.

RS: It is important to stake out the specificity and limitations of landscape theory. What's interesting to me about cave paintings is that they seem to show an alternate way of experiencing landscape, one that is deeply connected to things that are happening in contemporary art.

JE: I think that is right: but let's save our exploration of landscape in art for this afternoon's conversation.

JW: Cave paintings give evidence of an involvement with nature so intense that nature cannot be posited as other, and therefore not specialized, not represented *as* landscape. Therefore you may also say that the surroundings of the cave figures are comprised of the natural setting itself: the real rock. To recur to phenomenology, Merleau-Ponty remarks acutely that the Lascaux animals exist at almost the same reality level as the rock formations which sustain them,²⁶ and so they constitute a

particularly illustrative case for what a phenomenological encounter with nature might mean. By way of negation, this peculiar fusion of representation and real setting also sustains Jim's earlier suggestion of landscape and space as siblings, for the cave paintings are just as free from represented space as they are from represented landscape: the animals are never arranged according to a shared virtual space, indeed are often juxtaposed on top of each other, as in photographic multiple exposures.

All these observations and how they're related to the evolution of subjectivity could be seen as a generalization of Schiller's thinking about nature and subjectivity. In his essay "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry," Schiller considers classical descriptions of nature naïve and matter-of-factual, because the Ancients were still part of nature. Modern poetry, on the contrary, is sentimental and overreflective because we have distanced ourselves from nature, making our longing for it resemble the sick person's longing for health.²⁷ In relation to our discussion of cave paintings, then, Schiller's idea of reflexive subjectivity being concurrent with a distancing to nature should just be expanded into a broader and more gradual time scale.

AWS: I think it is worth noting, in relation to Jim's comment, that we have been slipping back and forth between talking about landscape as a thing out there, a place people live and work and shape artfully, and something depicted in paint or film.

JE: For me, this slipping is a sign of how difficult it is to explore what we want from a phenomenological encounter. When Jess or Michael say that the real subject here is ourselves, or subjectivity, I agree, although I'd put it in terms of phenomenology. But, however we arrange our terms, we tend to slide off of talk about phenomenology and into talk about time, about landscape representations, about nature—in other words we talk about cases where we know who we are: nonphenomenological cases.

I'd like to approach this problem by talking about ideas of landscape that are specific to disciplines. In one place Denis asks

“whence the proclaimed unity of the geographical landscape derives,” and he says “It would appear to be produced by the same techniques as that of a painting: from the formal bounding or framing of the scene, from the arrangement of physical forms, from the classification of types of human activity and even from the evocation of mood through atmosphere, light, and color”: in other words, landscape was “taken on board by geography with its ideological implications fundamentally unaltered.”²⁸

The question for me would be: did landscape get a new set of clothes while it was visiting geography? Or has it come back the same?

AWS: I’ve been struck in our conversations yesterday and today by how strongly our respective disciplines influence our ideas about landscape and the ways we talk about it. Particularly striking are differences in the types of theory generated by disciplines like geography and art history, which study landscapes and their representation, and those like landscape architecture and art, which are engaged in the making of landscapes and paintings or photographs. Landscape architects draw from the theories of many other disciplines—geography, art history, ecology, anthropology, art, and architecture—and we must grapple with how to integrate the insights they give, which are often at odds. For a landscape architect, landscape must be many things at once: a physical place, a historical representation, a site of production, a medium of expression, and a sphere of action. This places special demands on theory: a profession that makes landscapes needs theories and methods that support that practice. We cannot escape the integrative and shaping imperatives of the discipline.

RZD: As you said earlier, Anne, in relation to etymology, it’s not just that we live in a place that we shape. In Jess’s words, landscape “surpasses” us, and in doing so it shapes us.

AWS: And that reciprocal shaping happens in many ways. Contemporary Danish landscapes, for example, are being shaped

today by nineteenth-century paintings of the Danish “Golden Age,” which once were shaped, in turn, by the character of the rural landscape near Copenhagen. Take the area around Lejre, a cultural landscape that was idealized by Golden Age painters and celebrated by poets, that now is protected by law as scenery of historic national significance. Lejre is now a bedroom community, but certain farms must remain in crops, even though owned by a doctor or businessman.

JD: Yes, but I said that when we were talking about why landscape has traditionally been so susceptible to ideological analysis. What I was referring to was the way in which the recuperative processes of landscape make it appear to exist beyond and after the time of its actors and activities: the way it dehistoricizes or ahistoricizes. And it is, for this reason, a political problem.

RS: But then it is rehistoricized in all sorts of ways.

RZD: On the one hand, landscape is available to us as something like a timeless and eternal space, an idea that can offer great pleasure and/or solace. But as such it can also be an incredible source of anxiety. It makes us want to fix, to freeze . . .

RS: An example of that is the American West, which has long been seen as a kind of violent, chaotic, self-transforming kind of landscape. The National Parks created a static landscape, which also made it an incredibly vulnerable landscape. Instead of managing the land with controlled fires, the National Parks Service created a fragile landscape, where fires can burn across hundreds of thousands of acres . . . because of that belief in static nature.

RZD: This reminds me of Thomas Cole, who said to painters, “Get out into nature quickly, before it’s gone.”

MN: I think there is no turning back. The anxiety about landscape and authenticity, or of returning to a natural state, has to do with our contemporary consciousness, and with a sense of loss. We never can go back.

DEC: We never could.

MN: We never could, but even more so now. Can we even speak anymore of a “natural” landscape? The transformation is total and permanent; and this theme brings us back to phenomenology, and to how we conceive of the relation of the subject to the landscape. There are different kinds of phenomenology, Husserl’s and Merleau-Ponty’s. Husserl’s phenomenology is based on the intentionality of the subject who aims at the things. Merleau-Ponty wrote critically about *pensée de survol*, an “observation from above” or “thought that soars over.” Instead he wanted a kind of being-in-the-world that involves the subject and which he described in his unfinished, posthumously published book *The Visible and the Invisible* as the “flesh of the world” or as a fold, implying the imbrication of the sensing and the sensed, the seeing and the seen, the touching and the touched: there is no position outside from which to master or dominate this process. Maybe the issue around phenomenology and landscape has to do with these different points of view: being implicated, as opposed to the possibility of seeing something from above, or outside.

JE: “Ways of seeing,” by the way, is another formula that has been used to define landscape. The expression seems to be a mixture of John Berger (that is, an ideological critique) and Merleau-Ponty. In other words, I suspect it is an unhelpful euphemism, disguising a confused idea.²⁹

JD: To bring these things together: in my discipline of cultural geography, there has been a very strong turn to phenomenology in the last few years. In part it’s been part of a very welcome need to think beyond the category of the image or, rather, the “image-as-text,” of wanting to renew that more full-bodied realm of affect and perception that lies outside, and is in excess of, the representational frame. But I suppose one could also see the turn to phenomenology as a kind of symptom: the result not just of being dissatisfied with the exaggerations of discourse theory, but also perhaps of the need for a new kind of poetics or

even an ethics; one which might talk of the need for a greater implication in the object-world, a need to look out at a space and have it look back.

Jim, you asked earlier whether geography has taken landscape from art history and returned it in different clothes. I would be interested to see if Denis thinks so. But we can observe similar returns in different disciplines, and I think we can see the phenomenological turn as an interesting cultural symptom in itself.

JE: If we can get far enough back from it to see it. Where *are* you when you are standing back there, looking at phenomenology?

JD: In a state of—God knows.

MN: You need a phenomenological description of where you are when you see phenomenology as a symptom!

DH: Pardon me for saying this, but maybe you're in outer space. (I am thinking of the famous photographs of the Earth as seen from outer space.) That's what those images were about, getting outside the system. But then where do you go?

JE: Our confusion may be built into the idea of landscape. As Jean-Luc Nancy says, "landscape begins when it absorbs or dissolves all presences into itself."³⁰

Well, this has been a very interesting morning. I have with me here a list of the meanings of landscape that have emerged in the literature, in our precirculated papers, and in the course of yesterday's preparatory conversations. In our conversation, that list has divided into two *kinds* of meanings: those that have been taken as definitions—that is, the four I mentioned as they came up—and two that have been taken as structures that determine meaning—ideology, and now phenomenology. I think we more or less agreed that ideological interpretations can be surpassed, but that's curious since that our conversation consisted mainly of ideological critiques. It's also interesting that we made fairly little headway understanding what phenomenological

interpretations might entail, especially given our agreement that landscape and subjectivity are indivisible.

It's also fascinating, but a big relief, that we have managed to talk for an hour and a half without mentioning the sublime, the beautiful, or the picturesque. They were implied, of course, in several contexts, but they never emerged as subjects in their own rights. In the list I brought with me, the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque loom large—their literature is daunting, and it could be argued that they are central and indispensable for the *history* of landscape theory. But I can't imagine we'll manage to avoid them this afternoon.

Deirdre O'Mahony [*Question from the audience*]: I'd like to outline a local issue which touches on some of the ideas related to landscape heard today. The drystone walls are part of the "made" landscape of the Burren and characteristic of the West of Ireland. These have been damaged by wild goats, affecting farmers' EU-funded REPS [Rural Environment Protection Scheme] subsidies, leading to culls of many of the goats. Farmers are encouraged through their subsidies to maintain the "authentic" landscape but, within that, a "natural" element has intruded and is threatening livelihoods by knocking the walls, creating conflict between some farmers and ecologists. The REP scheme is designed to preserve a key picturesque element of the landscape intact: the denuded, depopulated western landscape which continues to hold cultural value in Ireland today. Is it possible to find a theory of landscape that relates particular, complex, lived realities on a local level with theoretical aspirations?

DH: The tension you're mapping out is a leading concern today, and by no means in western Ireland alone. In every landscape conference I attend, tourism is at issue. I think that's fascinating: when farmers are paid to leave their work, it could mean that fields lie fallow or that they are cultivated not for food but to suit a preconceived idea of what is traditional and picturesque. But that idea may come from far away and have little to do with the place it newly shapes.

JE: Let me just add, as someone who came face to face with one of those wild goats—it had red hair down to the ground, and enormous horns that wound round and round—I didn't find it picturesque, sublime, authentic, problematic, or ecologically valid: I found it terrifying!

RK: We have been hearing here of how landscapes have been defined in terms of artistic representations, like Constable's archetypal English landscape. The stone wall was identified as a key characteristic of the Irish landscape in modern Irish art most notably in the paintings of Paul Henry. That imagery was then appropriated for tourism. But, as Deirdre has suggested, the preservation of this image of the West of Ireland landscape has become larger than these contexts: it answers to a kind of national need to maintain a distinctive and familiar Irish landscape. The problem for those living in the West is that your surroundings have become part of the modern myth that the landscape is and should be retained as a static phenomenon.

MT: Visuality definitely dominates. There is also a fear, for example, in Finland that, if the fields are left uncultivated, they'll fill up with willow bushes and birches and the views will disappear. That would create a veritable bird paradise, but it seems that people prefer the idyllic views of cultivated and well-ordered land to a soundscape created by the singing of the birds.

JE: Dzmitri, come down to the microphone, please. You all might like to know Dzmitri has come here all the way from Belarus!

Dzmitri Korenko [*Question from the audience*]: First, let me thank Jim for inviting me to participate in this extremely interesting discussion. It seems to be very fertile in terms of the number and diversity of problematic issues you have touched upon.

I feel it's important to refer back to the initial problem Jim posed, as to whether the ideological critique of landscape is possible given our fundamental implication in the subject, and given certain limitations in interpretations inspired by Marxism. Rather than searching for ways out of ideological

critique, I would suggest we systematize and revise the relation between the categories that are relevant for the problematics of landscape, and that we do so using a series of binary oppositions. Most of them have already been mentioned in the discussion, so I will list them briefly: nature versus culture, objectivity versus subjectivity, aesthetics versus lived experience (or utility), visual representation (as image) versus geographic place (shape), stasis versus mobility, spatiality versus temporality, historicity versus cultural change, preservation (authenticity) versus consumption, nature versus technology.³¹ In fact, ideological meanings seem to be always present when only one category, traditionally the first one, in those oppositions is emphasized with the intention of obliterating the other. Hence, an alternative ideological critique of landscape should make in a conscious and dialectical way the relevant binaries explicit in each particular case and look at the configuration of the power relations—not necessarily defined in terms of class relations or other binary relations—that they sustain. In other words, because we recognize *ourselves* as always already implicated in the landscape, we need to see on what terms *the other* becomes implicated and represented in the landscape. Rethinking the binarisms and recognizing the hybrid nature of contemporary landscapes would be, perhaps, another strategy of imagining landscapes beyond the dominant cultural ideologies.

And a final remark on this point: critical thinking about landscape and ideology should also somehow acknowledge and investigate the possibility of subverting or at least reappropriating ideology *through* landscape. It seems reasonable, on the one hand, to question the visual representational matrix (such as the framing and perspective) of landscape as inescapably ideological and turn to other, nonrepresentational ways of experiencing landscape. On the other hand, it also seems possible to see representation as subversion of ideology and as an occasion for the open contestations of subjectivity—which is, perhaps, close to what Michael was already talking about.

I am concerned that totally dismissing the Marxist perspective or attempting to think outside of it is too radical a step, at

least if we think of Marxist analysis not just in terms of class relationships or modes of colonial domination, which reduces the complexity of social relations. I'd like to point to the radical break in the socio-spatial aspect of landscape, which has remained unaddressed this morning: the implicit assumption about the landscape and its representation being that it is somehow related to place, even if that relation is mediated socially. What remains unacknowledged within geography and art history is the transformation of the place of social relations into the space as shaped and structured by a variety of global flows: hence the proliferation of landscape metaphors—town-scapes, city-scapes, motor-scapes—in contemporary social theory and human (cultural) geography. Those are, perhaps, more than metaphors: they are new conceptualizations, structural transformations. A notable conception of the structure of global flows in landscape terms is Appadurai's. He distinguishes five kinds of landscapes of global cultural economy: finance-scapes (investments and transactions across the globe), techno-scapes (the variety of technologies, communication and transportation systems involved into global mobilities), ethno-scapes (movements of people from migrants to tourists), media-scapes (various representations and images of distant locations), and ideo-scapes (production and consumption of knowledge, ideas, and ideologies), which form contemporary cultural landscapes.³²

In my opinion, this kind of spatial structure challenges, first, the assumption about the landscape as being purely about a natural, geographical piece of land ("landscape itself"), by pointing out other factors, "scapes," at work. Secondly, this approach suggests a fundamental reconfiguration of the structure of the representational and nonrepresentational aspects of contemporary cultural landscape as well as its materiality and immateriality.

JE: Thanks for that. I wonder if it would be overreading to suggest that you have a different sense of the critique of ideology than some of us. In our talk, ideology has more or less evaporated: it

hasn't needed to be directly or systematically critiqued. But that is, of course, the archetypal, predetermined overconfidence of people who want to escape Marxism.

And regarding Arjun Appadurai's senses of landscape: I wonder, given the slipping and sliding we've done this morning, how well a longer list—even the list I have here—might be controlled. It will be interesting to see how this plays out in the Assessments people will be writing in response to this roundtable—whether there will be a clash of systems and classifications.

DEC: I think that Dzmitri raises some important points here; the phenomenological turn in cultural geography to which Jessica referred above has not, in my opinion, resolved its relations with Marxism as an historiography (although it has been helpful in maintaining the sense of materialism central to Marxism and of the material body that tended to get lost in ideological critique).

Appadurai's usage is interesting but I think that his use of "scapes" is too casual and demands a closer interrogation of the meaning of "scape" that, as we saw earlier, incorporates both the sense of a collective (as in the English "ship": friendship, comradeship) and of "scope" (distanciated seeing). I am not sure Appadurai has thought this through, and his focus on virtual spaces also raises issues in relation to the materiality of landscape that phenomenology emphasizes.

2

JE: Welcome back, everyone. We have two topics this afternoon. The first is landscape in and as art, and the second is our own implication in our subject. To start things out with the first topic, I thought I would run through a list of passages in Denis's writing, in which he has speculated about the moment in which landscape art—and particularly landscape painting—became a genre of less than pressing interest.

Denis, on page 12 of *Social Formation* you say "landscape as

an active concern for progressive art died in the second half of the nineteenth century,” after romanticism. On page 20, you say “in the past 100 years landscape [painting] has lost much of its claim to be an important preoccupation of progressive artists”; on page 13, you mention the “intense artistic expression” at the *fin de siècle*; on page 14, you observe that “the art of the final years of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth centuries includes some of the most enduring of Europe’s landscape images”; and on the same page you cite Peter Fuller for the idea that “one aspect of post-modern culture has been a strong revival in recent years of landscape as a vital part of artistic exploration.” (I imagine Fuller was thinking of Auerbach or Hodgkin.)

Now I hope it goes without saying I’m not holding you to any of those! But in that selection you’ve done what few art historians would dare: you’ve speculated about the moments when landscape art (always, inevitably, and ultimately, the art is painting, film, and photography, but also architecture, landscape design, and other media) “ended” as a serious pursuit. Your range of examples, from the early nineteenth century to post-modernism, is a really nice illustration of just how many ways there are to think about this. So the question I want to start with is this: Are there occasions when landscape can be seriously pursued as a contemporary theme, medium, or interest? Can landscape painting, for example, still be practiced by people seriously engaged with the history of art, or does it have to find expression in various local and regional contexts?

MG: The idea that landscape ceased to be a serious subject for artistic representation at the end of the nineteenth century, while it may be true, is also problematic when you consider the ways in which landscapes, politically and ecologically, continue to be shaped by those defunct artistic traditions. Perhaps the postmodern interest in landscape is, at least in part, a way of dealing with this very recognition—the recognition that those romanticizing and idealizing conceptions of landscape never did go away.

RK: For Irish artists, in the last twenty years, including the so-called era of postmodernism, landscape has continued to be hugely important. But landscape has been dealt with in a completely different way from the traditional kind of landscapes of earlier decades—the misty, somewhat abstract manner that dominated Irish painting through most of the twentieth century. In the last twenty years we have artists engaging with landscape to different ends, partly to subvert the nationalist emphasis on an idealized West of Ireland landscape. Artists have engaged with the theme of landscape in different media and forms. For example landscape has been used to explore issues of gender and colonialism, mostly notably in the work of Kathy Prendergast. She, like other artists of her generation, has used landscape to critique the dominant poetic notion of the landscape that exists in Irish art.³³ These artists have also moved away from painting, using video, photography, and other media.

JE: I asked this as a bifurcated question, because I think that works by contemporary or near-contemporary artists who work with concepts that could still be called “landscape” comprise one side of the problem. Certainly it’s the side that countries prefer to present in biennials and that is favored in national art magazines. But there is another side, which is one of my own interests: every country that I know of has ongoing, belated landscape traditions in painting and photography. Sometimes they are abstract, and some are even conceptual, and those press forward into the twenty-first century. But the overwhelming majority are not responses to postmodernism or even to more recent abstraction. In different ways, they come to have claims on the place, claims which can be illegible to people outside the place. Work like that is the daily fare of regional and city galleries, newspapers, and arts centers here and elsewhere.

RK: Yes. In Ireland along with the more radical approach to the theme there is a continuation of romantic landscape painting, the kind that flourished in the mid-twentieth century.

JE: It comes from the nineteenth century, where it was already

problematic, in the sense of being beholden to English and German models, and belated in reference to international histories of romanticism.³⁴

RK: Yes, its roots are in nineteenth-century romanticism, but its development in the twentieth century could be seen as a local version of modernist expressionist painting applied to the landscape. This type of landscape painting is still being produced and widely exhibited, but it is not in any way what you'd describe as an avant-garde. It is supported by the marketplace, and until relatively recently it would have been seen by some members of the establishment as an appropriate way of representing Irish culture. But younger artists wouldn't even bother reacting against it. Landscape continues to be important, but completely independently of that kind of nationalist context.

JE: In my experience, and not necessarily in the Irish context, such work becomes increasingly mystical. There is a formulaic title, *The Light in X*, which is repeated around the world. The claim is: "I know what the light in my part of the world looks like, and it is in this painting; if you had the lived experience of the place, you would see it."

MT: This kind of painting also works as a kind of nostalgia.

JE: I'll give an example, because these painters are so often omitted from art history. Seán McSweeney is an Irish painter, not especially well known. He was reviewed a couple of years ago in the *Irish Times*. Looking at one of his loosely painted abstract canvases, the critic said that "you feel you can walk into" the landscape, "the yellow catching the emerging gorse of a spring hillside" in County Wicklow. Now those references to gorse, and to Wicklow, won't be seen by very many people, but they are crucial to the appeal of the painting.³⁵

RK: McSweeney is the doyen of the local expressionist landscape painter that I was referring to. His work is well known in Ireland. Its popularity relates very much to a nostalgic attachment to place.

DH: In the culture of landscape architecture, there has been a different development. Whereas landscape painting has fallen away from the front line of art, art has fallen away from the front line of landscape architecture. One of the unresolved questions in landscape architecture is whether or not it really participated in modernism, in parallel with other creative disciplines. There are landscape architects in the postwar period who looked to other forms of art for formal cues, just as many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century designers had done; but more recently, if you look to art, or aspire to it, you lose credibility, at least from the perspective of many practitioners. In the culture of contemporary practice, ecology is more important than form.

Concern for the latter is considered arrogant and misguided, given the weight of other considerations. In much recent literature on landscape architecture, “art” is a dirty word, a way of putting work down as superficial, even irresponsible. The paradigm of art typically invoked in such cases is a weak cliché: that art is made by an angst-filled individual expressing him- or herself in an isolated studio.

That idea completely ignores recent and not so recent developments in art from which landscape architects could benefit, not to mention the fact that art is always socially engaged, even in that cliché.

AWS: It’s not so simple. The question of whether landscape architects participated in modernism, in dialogue with other arts, has been raised by architects who are ignorant of work by modernists like C. Th. Sørensen, Thomas Church, Dan Kiley, and Lawrence Halprin, to name just a few. This history is being recovered.³⁶ And it’s important to distinguish between the profession, as a whole, and its greatest practitioners. In 1979 Martha Schwartz produced the *Bagel Garden*, which appeared on the cover of *Landscape Architecture* magazine.³⁷ It shocked the profession and provoked a series of fierce debates about the role of art versus ecology in landscape design, which I think are now well over—

DH: Yes, but I'm talking about after that period, about where we are now.

AWS: Oh, yes, now it's well respected.

DH: We had Peter Walker visit our department recently; his work is often referred to as "like art" because of its resonances with minimalism. When we spoke of his work *as* art, he said, "Absolutely not: landscape architecture is not art." Someone asked, "What about Martha Schwartz?" And he replied, "Martha Schwartz is not a landscape architect."

AWS: But Martha is his former wife and ex-partner! She is certainly a landscape architect, and an artist, too. There's a lot of back story here. And Pete, from the late 1970s through the 1980s, was probably the most influential proponent for landscape architecture as art.

DH: But since then, and as one legacy of the culture against which Schwartz was reacting, the idea of landscape as a practice of art has been increasingly denigrated within the discipline.

JE: But is it cogent to claim your work isn't art? Is that a way of evading influences, evading history?

DH: All of the above, and more.

AWS: Yes, I agree about evasion on the part of those who strive to design artful landscapes and yet claim that their work is not art. But Martha Schwartz presents herself as both landscape architect and artist. Her best works fulfill their function as gardens and plazas even as they are works of art. Schwartz is a master of rhetorical landscape language. My personal favorite is *Splice Garden*, on the roof of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which employs two forms of paradox—antithesis and oxymoron. Antithetical Japanese and French garden motifs are juxtaposed in a balanced, parallel structure; all the plants are plastic, a fusion of contradictory elements. The garden is simultaneously

light-hearted and serious, witty and chilling, a landscape version of gene splicing and artificial life entirely appropriate to its context.³⁸

JE: In cases like those, it would make sense to speak of a post-modern practice. But I wonder, in the case of painting, given painting's history, whether it is even structurally possible to create a postmodern landscape.

I want to bring Tim Jones's work in at this point as an example. Tim is the Dean here at the Burren College of Art, and he participated in volume 4 of *The Art Seminar*, called *States of Art Criticism*. He has put up an exhibition of his work here. There are very large drawings of hatchmarks, maybe five feet high by nine feet long, and other paintings of single splattery curvilinear lines, done with a squeeze ketchup bottle filled with ink and sea water. The word "landscape" is not directly part of the work. But the pictures are encounters with places: with the idea of wind, in the case of the large works, and with the idea of the littoral (the meeting place of sea and land) in the case of the calligraphic squeeze-bottle paintings.³⁹

Here it seems abstraction acts as a vehicle to "purify" the landscape tradition, and bring it into line with postmodern or contemporary concerns.

JD: To counter that observation, I think I have to say that there's been a revaluation of landscape in contemporary postcolonial settings—I am thinking for instance of the dominant themes of two recent Biennales in São Paulo and Johannesburg in which landscape, in its broadest sense, was used to think about the spatialized nature of historical process—and of its memory and retrieval. In those contexts, it seems that landscape art is an extraordinarily important new vehicle for reconceiving what we might call a new politics of landscape which is precisely not a "purified abstraction."

JE: Would you think that is a radical reconceptualization, or does it carry through elements of the older landscape tradition by presenting them differently?

JD: I think it is a real reconceptualization for the important reason that landscape in certain postcolonial contexts appears less in relation to sedentary ideas of territory, of territoriality—all those things that traditionally tied landscape art to the identity of the nation state and the excursions of empire—than to ideas and experiences of mobility, of exile, of Diaspora: of landscape as process rather than as place.

MN: I think I can bring those two interpretations together. Abstraction was an attempt to break with the relation to landscape through representation. Abstraction doesn't always imply abstraction *from*: there is also indexicality, the trace—works that are traces *of* landscapes. If you take the representation of landscape as a problem, insofar as it is implicated with a certain notion of subjectivity, a certain conception of romanticism, you can then perhaps try to think of the alternatives. One would be these kinds of abstraction, including indexical abstraction. Another would be a direct intervention in the site, as in land art.

And that, in turn, can move toward installation, and the rejection of representation in favor of *presentation*, so that the visitor to the installation experiences something directly rather than by representations. On the other hand, it can move to a *deconstruction* of landscape as representation, for example James Coleman's *Connemara Landscape* (1980), as the deconstruction of a certain kind of representation of the West of Ireland. This is a work, consisting of a single slide projection of a white-on-black drawing, which seems to contain landscape clues, but can't be seen in a straightforward way as a representation of a landscape, which also raises the question of situatedness. The viewer is invited to search for a position from which the figure, the complex of lines, will cohere into a landscape, like looking for the correct viewing point for an anamorphic image. But maybe that point will never be found, insofar as the viewer by definition cannot see the landscape from the point of view of the one who works it. And maybe the "figure" we are looking at is not even a representation, but some kind of writing.

JE: Michael, in land art, romantic landscape is very much a part of the project; and in the second it is brought along as part of the meaning.

MN: But for these artists there is a self-consciousness about the ways in which our relation to landscape is mediated by the romantic tradition, and it is in relation to this that their alternative strategies have to situate themselves. For example, much American land art would involve the rejection not only of the representation of landscape for direct intervention, but also of the scale and relation to the countryside of the English-type landscape garden. In relation to another aspect of romanticism, the sublime, there is arguably a rejection of transcendence though pragmatic interventions, such as changes made to the landscape by means of techniques from the construction or mining industry—pouring, cuts, and so on.

JE: Landscape representation, and references to it, might be like sugar: a sweet leftover from the romantic tradition, which can be mixed in with other things. If you don't use too much, it can flavor the work. But then again, maybe landscape representation is like strychnine: even a little bit of it is poison.

MN: Or maybe these moments are transitional. The problem for us might be: How can we somehow figure landscape differently? There may be certain moments that break from the tradition, and move towards something which we haven't yet found.

MG: It's interesting to see how such moments of break, or possible break, have been reclaimed for tradition. The claim that abstraction is a form of landscape representation was made in the 1960s and 1970s, about abstract expressionism, that is was part of a romantic tradition.⁴⁰

JE: A famously marginalized claim, by Robert Rosenblum, which never goes away!

MG: Right, and so the point is how tricky it can be to think about abstraction through the category of landscape. Not long

after that claim was made, Rosalind Krauss tried to rethink sculpture in terms of landscape, in really productive ways, in “Sculpture in the Expanded Field.” It was a very different way of thinking about minimalist sculpture and land art, not through a coherent evolution of landscape but using landscape as a cultural term among others: landscape/not-landscape, sculpture/not-sculpture, and so forth.

DEC: The other term, aside from landscape, that can be found everywhere is *map*. Take Kathy Prendergast, who has done a series of works involving mapping. Historically, the relation between topographic mapping and painting is intense. The eighteenth-century English garden is as much about topographic mapping as anything else. Or take Mark Dion’s work, which is about site- and place-specificity.

JD: And archaeology.

DEC: Yes, but it’s also about time, history, and the death of the landscape itself.

JD: At the beginning, we talked about landscape as being predicated on the division between aesthetics and utility that underwrites so much of classic Western thought. (Those were our first two senses of landscape.) One of the principal tools of reconceiving a different kind of landscape, I suppose, would be to retie that Gordian knot between aesthetics and utility. You see that in new readings of the map, as Denis suggested, as well as in the kind of non-Western “land art” that describes, say, Zen sand gardens, the geometric sand paintings of ancient Tibet, the pictogram images of the Navajo of Southwest America and so on. It’s the same desire for this retied knot that incidentally also underwrites the turn towards phenomenology in cultural geography, of not just looking at the map and at what mapping does but in thinking about what precedes it, at what initial somatic and sensational aspects are enjoined to its functional properties.

AWS: The tension between and necessary union of utility and aesthetics is at the heart of landscape architecture, a central

theme in the discipline's theoretical writings, and the landmarks of its practice express this unity. To a landscape architect, it's inconceivable to separate utility and aesthetics, though some may give more weight to one concern than the other. Recent innovations in mapping by landscape architects like Anuradha Mathur aim to help designers resolve this tension.⁴¹

DEC: The tradition of maps and mapping also removes us a little from the suffocating embrace of ecology when thinking about the natural world and places and our relations with them.

AWS: No, that tradition doesn't remove us from the "embrace of ecology"; it gives us ways to think about how ecological processes interact with other sorts of processes that produce landscapes, ways to imagine how to reshape a landscape.

DH: It allows us to be selective. Mapmakers, when they had a scientific objective, were searching for significant form. J. B. Jackson wrote an essay about how he began to look at landscape through his military experience.⁴²

Within early modern Europe, mapmaking developed in strikingly diverse ways depending on the mindset and objectives through which patrons looked to their landscape conditions. The tradition becomes very deep if we include such figures as Roman augurs, who, through gesture, would delimit spaces within the sky wherein to look for significant forms (the flight patterns of birds, the shapes of clouds).⁴³

For me, Tim Jones's paintings and drawings really hearken to that tradition. They have a scientific sense to them, but also religious overtones. I found that, if I stood back, there was a lot of movement: the pictures were presented as representing things they couldn't represent, which I found fascinating. And that is a preoccupation of both science and religion.

RK: Tim's paintings move away from the poetic, romantic notion toward the scientific, and I think that's what you're saying as well, Jess—

JE: It's interesting to hear this talk about maps from geographers,

because I think the twentieth-century interest in cartography is sometimes part of a wider phenomenon within modernism: the turning away from kinds of representation that are associated with romanticism. Think of Duchamp, for example, drawing some things in perspective, which he associated with “optical” painting, and other things in parallel projection (and fantastical variations of it), which he associated with the modern, the mechanical, the nonartistic. Or think of grids and their theorization.

In those terms, the turn toward cartography in geography is part of late modernism.

DH: In early modern painting, perspectives were sometimes manipulated to convey information normally associated with maps and plans. One can think here of estate portraits that appear naïve to some viewers because the perspective shifts about.⁴⁴ That tradition was extended in the early nineteenth century by Thomas Hornor, a land surveyor and self-described “pictorial planner of estates.”⁴⁵

MT: I have gone to famous mountains in China, where, instead of a map, I was given a reproduction of a landscape painting, which enabled me to find my way. These are colorful photograph-like pictures of the mountains, tourist brochures, which have advertisements of restaurants and other sights of the area on the margins and on the reverse side.⁴⁶

RZD: Landscape painting in America in the nineteenth century *was* a form of mapmaking. It was understood, and shaped by, the explosion of cartography. It was also the case that painters made maps for their paintings. Paintings were, in fact, *experienced* cartographically. So sometimes an interest in cartography is not a move away from painting, as much as it is an extension of it.

MN: There is a history here that shouldn't be forgotten. There's a French artist based in London named Marine Hugonnier who, in 2003, made a film called *Ariana*. It was set in Afghanistan.

(Ariana is the name of the Afghan airline.) Part of the fiction of the film is a filmmaker and her crew going to Afghanistan, and trying to find a panoramic viewpoint; they are continuously frustrated because all the panoramic viewpoints have military installations, so they are either dangerous or forbidden. I wrote an essay on this film, and while researching it I discovered panoramas have a military origin in tactical planning.⁴⁷ So the whole idea of the panorama is tied to the military domination of the landscape, which is conceived as a battlefield.

DEC: Jay Appleton's *Experience of Landscape*, which you opened by quoting, Jim, has that same idea: he also notes the military origins of panoramas. His fundamental concepts of "seeing without being seen" and "prospect/refuge" derive from military ways of experiencing landscape and enemies within it.

JW: If I may historicize this further: just as postmedieval landscape painting is very much caught up with mapping, so this "mapping impulse," as Svetlana Alpers calls it, is absent throughout classical antiquity and the Middle Ages. As far as I can judge, mapping is marginalized to topographical maps and measurements of fields, for example in Roman land surveying. There one can find small, beautiful maps which are full of all those objects belonging to the controlled territory—fields, roads, fences, canals—that are excluded in the more horizontal landscape backgrounds of larger images.⁴⁸ So what happens in the shaping of the postmedieval pictorial paradigm is that this hitherto marginalized mapping gaze, only looking down, is fused together with the panoramic gaze, looking outwards.

JE: We are getting a little off-topic here, because we were talking about landscape in, and as, contemporary art. I've been taking the temperature of the conversation, because I'm interested in whether or not this theme of cartography might be a vaccine against things in landscape painting—especially its romantic origins—that we're not happy with. (I'm giving up my strychnine metaphor, and switching to Thierry de Duve's vaccine-against-premodernism metaphor.⁴⁹) I would like to

get a sense of what we think we are curing, or making more interesting, by bringing in cartography.

RZD: It's landscape-as-ideology that we really want to cure, not romanticism.

JD: In that sense, perhaps bringing in cartography is a way of talking about something that we fear is no longer available: of a dialogue between self and space that is no longer cognitively, or even existentially, possible. It's an obvious thing to say that we now live in a predominantly unmappable world—whether we see that in terms of the so-called borderless flow of global capitalism, the virtual space of electronic and digital media, the supersession of the nation state, and so on. But perhaps landscape and landscape art cannot but be a problem under such different spatial configurations.

RZD: Are you suggesting there is something of a bankruptcy of landscape, so that we're left without a paradigm?

JD: In a sense, yes, but I certainly would want to avoid any reified form of romanticism which would make the loss of a landscape paradigm, or the crisis of a changing relation between self and space, into a cause for nostalgia.

RS: In the nineteenth century, railroads were spoken of that way, as the annihilation of time and space.

JD: Yes, absolutely. The loss of a supposed "organic" correspondence between the body and its surrounding world was as much a problem for the Moderns as it is now.

RS: Right: I just thought you hadn't situated that far enough back in time.

MG: I wonder if we don't want to make a distinction within the unitary concept of cartography. If we look back to early modern practices, geography was the all-seeing, conceptual mapping of the world—it was a mental construct. Chorography, on the other hand, was the sensory, descriptive side. It is based on

the body, on the experience one has on the ground, bumping into things.

These are two distinguishable, separable parts of cartographic practice. I wonder if the chorographic sense of a body on the ground, walking through space, adds another dimension to the contemporary artists' responses to cartography.

JE: Just as a parenthetical remark, I wonder how much purchase these general terms have. I've learned some surveying, using an old, non-digital theodolite, and making trigonometric calculations. I surveyed my parents' fields, and got someone to input the data into a mapping program. The experience was full of very quick shifts between "cartographic" *views* of the landscape (through the sighting telescope, onscreen) and "chorographic" *encounters* with the landscape (holding the meter stick still, getting pine needles in my eye, pushing marker flags into the earth).

DEC: It is telling that the whole question of *chorography* and *geography* has been placed back on the table in geographical theory in the past decade, after years of neglect as a settled question. I think this does reflect some of the concerns we have been debating: about postmodern spaces that Dzmitri raised this morning, about changing social conceptions of space and about the phenomenology of place.

AWS: Landscape architect Anuradha Mathur's work brings together the cartographic and chorographic aspects of mapping.⁵⁰ She maps her body in the landscape, moving through it, and matches the materials and processes of mapmaking to those of the landscape she's working with. In the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, which is shaped by fire, she asks her students to use charcoal. In her monumental project on the Mississippi, she produced silk screen maps, the inks laid down like sludge in successive layers of deposition. Mathur's mappings help her to experience how natural and cultural processes shape a particular landscape and to imagine how to design new landscapes that reveal those processes and the history of their interactions.

Conventional mapping techniques tend to limit a designer's ability to think about how a landscape will evolve over time. For landscape architects, maps are not only tools for understanding a place; they're also a medium of design thinking and a means to communicate proposals for new landscapes. Mathur's approach grows out of innovations in landscape representation initiated by James Corner in the late 1980s in his teaching of landscape architects at the University of Pennsylvania, which he has extended in writing and practice.⁵¹

DH: In geography, you use the same forms of representation to depict places, whether they are Istanbul, Los Angeles, or your parents' field. In chorography, the forms are place-specific. For example, Jim, the map you produced could have featured some of those annoying pine needles as well as images of your parents and the crops grown in their fields.

JE: This may be the moment to bring in a second question about landscape in, or as, art. We have been talking about the history of landscape art, and its importance at different times. Let's reverse perspectives, and ask about what senses of landscape we may have *outside* of representations in art or popular culture. I'll introduce this with four examples.

First, there's a book by Sheila Gaffey, called *Signifying Place: The Semiotic Realisation of Place in Irish Product Marketing*.⁵² She has some entertaining pictures, taken from advertisements, showing how the Irish landscape has been used to market products internally (that is, not for the tourist trade, which is a separate question).⁵³ One ad shows a mountain; it was used to market a product that "will last eternally," like nature. Another shows a waterfall; the associated product is projected as being pure. A picture of a Georgian house is meant to elicit a "bygone age of grandeur."⁵⁴ For me this raises the question of what forms of Irish landscape available in popular consciousness are *not* loaded in that way.

The second example is a book by Grady Clay, called *Real Places: An Unconventional Guide to America's Generic Landscape*.⁵⁵

Clay's book has a great table of contents, with short chapters on such topics as "Abandoned Farm/Area/Town," "Active Zone," "Air Rights Area," "Annexation Area, Arrest House," "Arrival Zone," "Avalanche Zone," "Battlefield/Ground," "Bioregion," "Blast Site," and "The Boondocks." It's an attempt to see freshly, using new categories.

A third is Dolores Hayden's very entertaining book *A Field Guide to Sprawl*, which has aerial photographs, taken mostly over Colorado, of all sorts of things that most of us wouldn't be aware of—things like "Elephant in a Snake," and "Alligator Skin."⁵⁶ (That's the pattern left by a developer who lays out roads for a suburban development—a housing estate, as they call it here—and then doesn't build. The scars on the land look like alligator's skin.)

And my fourth example is a newspaper review. This is Tom Lubbock, a critic for the UK *Independent*, reviewing the current Constable show at the Tate Britain—he waxes eloquent, as journalists can do, saying how much he hates Constable: "In Constable country," he says, "nothing is clear. Shadow becomes murk. Light becomes gunk. All textures blur. Nothing feels either wet or dry, airy or solid, but something in between. This world is without tactility, and without space. . . . Its views can't be entered. Its air is thickly oppressive." But then he feels it's incumbent on him to show that he's a good English observer. He says that he loves English countryside, and he gives a list of things that are not in Constable, which he loves: "Give me a leafy lane," he writes, "a rolling hill, a rippling beech, a lonely moor, a sweeping valley, a plunging gorge, a tangled wood, a gurgling brook, a patchwork of fields, a plain with megaliths, and I'm deeply, happily at home."⁵⁷

DH: Can I point out that, next to that review you're reading, there is an ad for "The Glorious, Unspoiled Caribbean": "save up to £920 per couple"?

JE: Yes! So, here's where I'd like to go with these examples. I'd like to know if any of us has the capacity to imagine landscape outside of our experience of painting, photography, film, and

other arts. I'd like to ask Rebecca in particular, because reading the things you've written about Yosemite, I wonder if tourists ever take snapshots that aren't derived, at several removes, from the canonical photos made by Muybridge or Adams? If you could look at ten thousand of their pictures, would you find any that are strangely composed?

RS: I think most of them are strangely composed, because they are very nonchalant about it. I spent five weeks over three years, with some landscape photographers, rephotographing images made by Ansel Adams and Eadweard Muybridge. It was a very time-consuming experience; I watched the photographers as they worked, and so I would end up sitting still for hours. There's a famous viewpoint, Glacier Point, where some of the major photographers, such as Eadweard Muybridge, made images. There is now a parking lot there; you can drive right up. People get out of their car, walk to the rim, take a picture of their beloved with the very Ansel-Adamsy, sublime abyss beyond them, and turn around and go. The entire experience takes five minutes or less. My collaborators made a slow exposure of the scene there, keeping the camera lens open for eight minutes, intermittently. All the figures became blurs, because no one stayed for eight minutes.

I think their pictures reference landscape: they know landscape when they see it; they know the canonical images, but they aren't interested in making really good pictures. Their project is an indexical reference to the fact of having been there.

JE: It's also a social act.

RS: And the thing about Yosemite is that it's thirteen hundred square miles, and has about thirteen hundred buildings in it, a huge amount of asphalt, many parking lots . . . and nobody except a few survey engineers photograph such things as the parking lots. People train themselves not to see the infrastructure.

JE: I don't want to be misunderstood. I see the tourist enterprise as entirely different from Adams's, or even Klett's, projects. The

tourist experience is indexical and social; Pierre Bourdieu has some good things to say about what it means to go to a place and photograph your family. So I don't mean that the tourists are just making sloppy reproductions of Adams or Muybridge. But I am very pessimistic about the possibility that, in the millions of photographs of Yosemite, there are any that are not beholden, by some chain of discoverable connections, to people like Muybridge.

RZD: Another way to say that would be to ask what it means to say the tourists in Yosemite know landscape when they see it. *What* do they know? Is it a matter of recognition?

RS: I think there are two answers to that. One would be my grumpy answer in the 1980s: So what if everything is a mediated experience? Who wants to be a blank?

On the other hand, Yosemite was very much an all-White place until the 1990s. My sense, watching women in saris being photographed by their partners in rugby shirts is that maybe the reference points are now different. There are a lot of non-Western, non-North-American points of reference now.

JE: Rebecca, you wrote about a Japanese painter who was working in Yosemite.

RS: Chiura Obata.

JE: Thanks. You mention him as someone who might have been seeing differently.

There is a wonderful book called *Reconfiguring Modernity: Concepts of Nature in Japanese Political Ideology*.⁵⁸ The author, Julia Adeney Thomas, quotes a contemporary Japanese critic, Karatani Kōjin, as saying "the impetus behind the Japanese 'discovery of landscape' (*fūkei no hakken*) (as opposed to [painting of] traditional 'famous places') was the importation of European and American landscape painting."⁵⁹

So even an observer from the "outside," coming to Yosemite, might not take a photograph that is not dependent, ultimately, on Muybridge or Adams.

What I'm trying to do here is create a problem for all of *us*, because kinds of images that occupy and direct our imagination of landscape are often the ones we're not really talking about: not necessarily the Altdorfers, Friedrichs, or Innesses, but belated, local landscape painters like the ones Róisín and I were talking about, or late-romantic photographers like Adams's.⁶⁰

MT: I went to Yosemite and the Grand Canyon ten years ago, and there I realized that I already *knew* those landscapes. I found the right images automatically, as it were.

RS: One of the great landscapes in Yosemite was called Agassiz Rock, after the very annoying naturalist Louis Agassiz. It was constantly photographed. The famous rock is no longer on the hiking path; Mark Klett and Byron Wolfe found it—but it has disappeared from the vocabulary of the place; it is no longer a reference point; no one looks for it; it is not photographed since it is incredibly hard to find. National Parks have a dual purpose of protecting nature and entertaining Americans. So they steer the imagination, control what is and what is not seen, and they do an incredibly good job of it.

DH: And the infrastructure that does that, leading visitors right up to the photo spots, is in part the practical work of engineers and landscape architects, which returns us to the points made earlier about marketing. Part of the evil genius of marketing is that even the most generic things can seem to be intensely personal. It makes me think of McDonald's one-billionth cup of coffee: it was completely generic, but it was in someone's hand: it was *her* cup of coffee. Those photographs, even though they can't escape tradition, are still highly individualized. One can be cynical about them, but the intimacy they generate is truly amazing.

JD: In *Landscape and Power*, Tom Mitchell says that landscape *painting* is always a representation of something that is already a representation in its own right.⁶¹ What he means, of course, is

that, before the work of all secondary mediations, the physical world is always already an encoded and cognizable field. What I like about that formulation is the way it may be understood as a phenomenological, rather than discursive, proposition: that a view of a landscape while necessarily a matter of cultural mediation need not imply the lack of an immediate or embodied contact; rather, it organizes the world for our bodily engagement.

MN: Maybe we could think of the mediating moment as framing.

JD: Yes. There is, as we've said many times, no landscape without the presence of a subject, an observer. Perceptual practice is also a positioning. It's Merleau-Ponty who says that we're always "*condemned to meaning*" and that we can't inhabit or move through or intend towards the phenomenal world "without its acquiring a name in history."⁶²

MN: In landscape, that works by framing, doesn't it? The tourist makes a decision about framing. Their snapshots are framed for them and by them, and also in accord with memories of images, so that their pictures are also pre-framed. So if we take the problematic of landscape as at least in part a problem of framing, the question becomes one of how to transform framing itself.

DEC: There are two things involved. One is the framing, which as we've endlessly said is conventional. The other thing is that you place somebody *in* the picture. People rarely just go and take the view; as Rebecca points out, they snap a loved one or loved ones against the backdrop of the iconic landscape view.

RS: They do bring expensive cameras, and—

DEC: Yes, because they are all unconsciously reproducing Ansel Adams. But, as I say, not really: the snapshot places *someone* in the famous view. The best thing is if you can get someone to take you as a couple, to show you *as* a couple. How many times has each one of us been asked to take a shot of a couple we

neither know nor shall ever see again, holding hands with Merced Falls or some other landscape behind them?

It is an extraordinary fusion of the intimate and the supposedly distanciated.

JE: As Bourdieu pointed out, such photographs shore up our sense of our own families.⁶³

DC: To a special place, with a whole set of references and projections.

DH: But there is something perverse in focusing our whole conversation about Yosemite on those few images, and on the people who go and take them. What happens when the frame dissolves? I am thinking of Lucy Lippard's essay about visiting the Grand Canyon: she didn't just stay on the rim, but descended into the chasm.⁶⁴ She was uncomfortable, disoriented, even frightened. Her essay suggests what a hell hole the Grand Canyon can be. She says that all of the framework, as it were, was left behind up on the rim. Or at least enough of it to raise doubts about its ubiquity.

RS: So what are some other ways of describing what's out there, other than landscape paintings and photographs, which often bear a striking resemblance to real estate advertisements? They describe what is out there as passive, static, and consumable in certain ways. When you look at hunter-gatherer societies, you see that people are very concerned with cyclical time, rhythms, seasons, celestial bodies, and animals . . . things that are implicit or explicit, although not always, in landscape representation.

Another way to describe Lucy Lippard's book *Overlay*, whose subtitle is *Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory*, is that it is an entire anthology of other ways of describing what's out there.⁶⁵ It is focused on process, performance, the human body, interaction, relations with animals, and many other things. It makes us realize that there are other ways to understand landscape—or rather the places and processes that landscape is one

very specific and maybe reductive version of. When we talk about contemporary art, this other kind of landscape is very much part of what is being done—

JW: Perhaps our present problems with fully inhabiting the landscape concept have to do with cultural history actually taking a kind of cyclic turn. After having passed the mature stage of the autonomous subject, including that subject's environmental projection, landscape, we have, since 1900, witnessed an increasing blurring of the boundaries between subject and surroundings which in certain ways reactualizes our earlier relationships with nature, not least those of prehistory. With reminiscences of what the cave painters did, postmodern visual culture is in many ways concerned with breaking up the distanced and framed view, thereby again letting representation and reality merge. However, this cyclic turn is in no way a naïve return to nature; on the contrary our whole representational ballast, including landscape, is still there to be further elaborated and integrated in it, so it's no wonder if we today have a rather ambivalent, if not confused, relationship to the landscape concept.

MN: Another way of dissolving the frame is to do as Michael Snow did in the film *La Région Centrale* in 1970. He had a machine fabricated that turned slowly through a 360-degree pan of a deserted mountain landscape. The film takes three hours, moving between incredibly close views of the ground, to mountaintops; you lose all sense of your own upright posture and of horizon. The intent is to bring the entire outer frame into the frame, and dissolve the conventional filmic frame in that fashion. Of course the one point you never see is the center of the device. It's the blind spot that makes the whole project possible. But it's an attempt to break with the humanism of landscape representation, and to make a landscape as nearly non-human as possible. That seems to be an important limiting case in our conversation.

JE: I don't mind mediation, or the lack of it. Nor am I convinced that there is a way out of the frame, or that it would be

interesting to try to find it. What I care about is that we are all—including the tourists—beholden to a landscape art tradition that most of us, Rebecca aside, are not talking about: that is, the late-romantic, Western tradition of painting and photography.

RS: But some of the tourists in Yosemite don't come from that tradition. There now are a lot of Chinese and Japanese visitors; there is still an indigenous population that never went away; there is an increasingly Latino population that is as indigenous or mestizo as Spanish, or more so. These people have seen the ubiquitous landscapes on printed money and wallpaper and facial tissue packaging, but they aren't exactly northern European romantics. They may be conversant with that discourse, but it's not necessarily what they're rooted in. I believe they represent something truly different.

JE: But that is why I mentioned Thomas's book, and the Japanese painter. I really doubt a Japanese visitor, in particular, would be outside the Western tradition.

DEC: There is a great series of books, published in the 1950s, by a Chinese poet, author, and artist named Chiang Yee, called *The Silent Traveller in . . . London, Oxford, Lakeland, Yorkshire Dales*. He traveled in the 1930s through classic English landscape scenes—"heritage" landscapes—commenting on his responses to them and illustrating the works with sketches that rendered them according to Chinese landscape traditions.⁶⁶ The calligraphy and form are Chinese; the subject matter and the framing are English.

MT: I am sure we are often amused by Chinese or Japanese tourists when they are posing for their photographs in Yosemite or in any other famous tourist attraction. Photography is a convenient and quick way to record your presence—"I was there." Maybe your suspicion is correct, Jim, when it comes to recent times, but the Chinese have a long tradition of cultural landscape tourism within their borders. They commemorated their visit by writing a poem and maybe inscribing it on the spot, on a

stone or something (Chinese version of graffiti). Or one could make a painting of the event or place.

JE: Well, this is a large subject, so I'll just register my doubt about that. There have been many hybrid traditions in Chinese painting, starting with Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining 郎世宁) or, even before, with the possible Western influences on Dong Qichang. In terms of twenty-first-century practice, I doubt that many of us see landscapes independently of the history of Western art.

3

Let's move on to the last of our topics for today: our manifest lack of distance from our subject. In abstract terms, the question might be: Is our implication in landscape different from our implication in other subjects? But there is also some concrete evidence of our implication: it's our presence here, in Ballyvaughan, in the heart of the heart of landscape representation in Ireland. We've all come out here, and we've all been tromping around in the landscape. Yesterday most of us climbed to the top of Black Head, Dobhach Bhraínn.⁶⁷ We're immersed in the landscape, intoxicated by it, even a bit sun-struck. I do think that's a different level of immersion from what we might experience in discussing other subjects. We're hardly like dispassionate observers of protons or fruit flies.⁶⁸

[For readers: Ballyvaughan is in the Burren, a protected landscape in the West of Ireland. It is an outlandish karst landscape, covered in fractured rocks. Early visitors sometimes thought it was unpleasant rather than sublime. The speleologist and scholar Ernest Baker thought it was a "wilderness," the "stoniest waste in the British Isles . . . a prospect as infernal as unassisted Nature could produce."⁶⁹ When Baker wrote, in the early 1930s, land prices were 1½ pennies per acre. Now the land is very expensive, and the landscape is routinely described as beautiful, sublime, and picturesque.⁷⁰ It isn't obviously any of them, and it fails to conform with commercialized notions of ideal landscapes, but

it is a huge tourist attraction, and our group was very susceptible to it. Almost all the panelists climbed to the top of Dobbach Bhraínín. The only person on the panel who showed no special interest in going out into the landscape was Jessica Dubow.]

Now my own take on this is that our not-so-secret addiction is really, ultimately, to ideas of landscape articulated by the romantics, and more directly to second- and third-generation, regional, local, and belated romantic Western landscape painters, filmmakers, and photographers. Koerner's subject last month was partly Caspar David Friedrich. One of the questions he set himself concerned Friedrich's current popularity, and one of his answers was—I'll put it much more roughly than he did—that we are still inside a tradition of experience, *Erlebnis*, that is best expressed in traditions of painting that lead up to Friedrich, and through him to us.

MN: On the other hand, how could we imagine if there were no landscape? Can you imagine a situation with no landscape? Where would we be, or who would we be, in that circumstance?

DH: Yes, I don't know if I agree with Koerner. He's marvelous and stuff—[*Laughter.*]

JE: You can always cut that “stuff” from the book!

DH: I'm picturing Friedrich's *Wanderer above a Sea of Fog*, in which I'm looking at the back of someone looking at a landscape: but what I've seen in landscape architecture recently is so much richer than that.

JD: What are the trends in landscape architecture that are more dominant?

DH: For example, the work of Nicholas Brown, who walks, somewhat in the spirit of Richard Long, but often in relation to Native American history and contemporary cultural politics.⁷¹ His work has been difficult to show. The best way to understand it is to experience it with him, to participate. That's so different

from Friedrich. I think it's off the mark to suppose that now is another Friedrich moment. Friedrich's figure stands alone, propped up by the cane of class and everything attendant upon it. As Henri Bosco said, "When the shelter is solid, the storm is good." But our position today is less sure. Even now, or perhaps even more so now, landscape has the potential to humble and humiliate us. Yesterday, walking in the Burren, I was astonished by the number of lichens and wildflowers on the rocks we were climbing. To me it's amazing (and humbling) to be amazed by something as simple as the number of flowers in a place. Landscape experience can also be humiliating. Landscapes can defy us, exposing our limits. Maybe this belongs to a conversation on the sublime, but I'm referring not just to large phenomena. I'm also thinking of the micro and the mundane.

AWS: One of the things landscape architects struggle with is that some of the greatest works of landscape art are not recognized as having been designed and constructed. Frederick Law Olmsted, at the end of his career, worked in Boston, in the Back Bay Fens. He saw this work as the opening of a "new chapter in the art" of landscape architecture.⁷² This was the first attempt anywhere, so far as I know, to *construct* a wetland. Olmsted proposed the Fens as a combination of utility and beauty, a restoration of polluted tidal marsh flats to serve human needs. The power of that restoration wasn't lost on people in Boston at the time, but within a generation people forgot that it was constructed.

How did Olmsted move from the pastoral, pictorial style he had used in Central Park, to the idea of reconstructing a marsh? Well, Martin Johnson Heade had been painting coastal marshes north of Boston. Perhaps his paintings influenced Olmsted. Certainly they must have contributed to public acceptance of Olmsted's revolutionary proposal.

RS: Another example is Golden Gate Park and the de Young Museum, which are the center of a debate about landscape. Most of San Francisco was sand dunes before White settlers

came, and it took decades to stabilize them before trees, lawns, and other European features could be put in.

DH: Central Park is viewed by most visitors as the part of New York City that wasn't developed.

AWS: And yet it was completely remade. The Sheep Meadow was a fabrication. And the Ramble was not some wild remnant of what existed before, but a deliberate construction of the wild.

MG: These examples all raise a similar point, that we all stand in constructed landscapes without realizing it. It brings us back to Jim's point, about the special difficulty of theorizing landscape when you're already within it. Is there anything else that is like this in art history? One does come to mind: perspective. It's an art historical practice that has generated fascinating theoretical texts, Panofsky's essay above all. Jim has written on this, too: the special problem of perspective is that you can never stand outside the subject that perspective has constructed, which is *you*.⁷³ That may provide an analogy to our problems theorizing landscape.

JD: It's more than an analogy: it *is* the problem. Landscape is *the* conceptual problem of perspective.

JW: I agree. Landscape is a fleshing out of perspective. It's hardly a coincidence that landscape in postmedieval European painting has its breakthrough at exactly the same time as perspective, the years around 1420. On the other hand, the hesitance in classical antiquity toward developing a fully wide-ranging landscape image corresponds with an absence of systematic perspective. They didn't have an idea of autonomous space either but used concepts like *topos*, place, understood as a container for bodies. Spengler has some wonderful reflections on this as a result of ancient thinking being bound to the body as a universal symbol, whereas modernity, including its capitalism, instrumental music, long-distance weapons, infinitesimal mathematics and, of course, landscapes, thrives in infinity.⁷⁴ Infinity, both in

landscape and perspective, provides the depths against which the autonomous subject can measure itself.

MN: But, Jess, maybe construction has gone beyond subjectivity now, beyond the subject. What strikes me about Friedrich's landscapes is that they are not so much representations of landscape as of consciousness, or of consciousness *as* landscape. They have a kind of hyperreal, "simulated" quality to them, so they are almost digital *avant la lettre*. I think digital, simulated landscape has gone beyond that stage of landscape-as-representation-of-consciousness, creating almost inhuman landscape spaces. That is something we haven't really discussed at all: the idea of an entirely artificial, digitally constructed landscape, which is what most high-budget Hollywood films these days provide. Some art practices, especially indexical practices, are in a sense an attempt to resist the total substitution of real landscapes by digital landscapes.

JE: Michael, you were saying yesterday that our thinking about landscape requires us to be in a certain historical position—

MN: It's the paradox of historicization: that, to historicize, you have to be outside the history you're historicizing. But, at the same time, that very position can be historicized. How do we get a grip on the idea that the "essence" of a phenomenon, say landscape, appears historically—and perhaps does so only when the historical life of that phenomenon has come to an end? Walter Benjamin wrote at the end of his Baudelaire essay, on the ruins of Paris, that the beauty of a thing appears at the moment of its disappearance.

JE: That is a perfect note on which to end. Especially because we are all besotted by this particular landscape, and we're on our way to yet more touring this afternoon: it goes to show how much we are all in need of medical—or is that philosophic?—attention.

Margaret MacNamidhe [*Question from the audience*]: I am concerned because this landscape—the one here in the Burren—

has been represented as a kind of romantic wilderness. This is in reference to something that Rachael said this morning: we need to talk about an absence—in this case the absence of sociability. Or again, in reference to Denis's idea of the social enfolding of landscape, we need to bring in the question of the social context.

I agree with Luke Gibbons that there isn't actually a romantic tradition here.⁷⁵ The landscape has traditionally functioned as an animated force. He views the West of Ireland tradition in particular as one freighted with national significance. There are two traditions of landscape in play: the romantic landscape, and the cultural or national landscape. The latter was never actually denuded. There was always an intensive cultural life. The Congested District Board, for example, was brought in after the Famine; Roger Casement came here, after having been to Peru and the Congo, and saw Ireland as the next cause that he needed to embrace. So Luke Gibbons, talking about film in particular, has taken that idea of the socialized landscape and brought it to bear on things like John Ford's *The Quiet Man*, and the temperament of Maureen O'Hara as she is depicted set into the landscape, and picking up on the weather and climate.⁷⁶ Landscape, in the film, is an animated force. What you see is an elaborate stagecraftery going on, and the animation teeters on the verge of something filmic. Synge's *Riders to the Sea*, which came out of the Celtic Revival, also presents a kind of socialized landscape. Representations of the West of Ireland as a wilderness have been imposed from the outside, by people like Fassbinder. As a last example: right now, on Broadway, there is Martin McDonough's latest installment in the *Leenane Trilogy*, his West of Ireland trilogy, in which they're using five gallons of blood each night. That's the animated landscape, straight out of Synge.

DEC: Maybe *land* is the better term than landscape here, as a term. It can be an active term, an agent in history. That would be very different from the way it was framed in North American discourse. It helps, too, with the way the Irish were framed,

marginalized, and diminished, by the English: this can be a way that such projections can be taken on board and thrown back, as a form of resistance. Particularly in the West, with the Congested Districts and the Gaeltacht, it's important. In the traditions we've been looking at, I think we are beholden to romanticism, even though it is different to say that we're beholden to Friedrich—that's another matter.

AWS: Margaret, your point about regarding landscape itself as a protagonist is why I believe it's so important to go back to the original meanings of the word. The term *land* embraces both people and place, but it lacks the sense of active mutual shaping that is embodied in the roots of the word *landscape*. More recent definitions of landscape as merely something seen, even when that seeing includes the ideological context, deny the dynamic force of landscape, the natural processes that shape a place and all the beings that inhabit it. It's not just a matter of humans shaping landscape; it's also landscape shaping humans, as individuals and societies. Landscape is an endless, reciprocal drama.

DEC: I agree, but here in Ireland you have a strong landscape tradition, in the narrow sense of the English landscape tradition—all those parks surrounding the Georgian houses of the Anglo-Irish gentry. Recently landscape historians have been recuperating this as a landscape tradition that is authentically Irish.⁷⁷ So, if we're to be specific about Ireland, that historiographic revision that refuses to privilege only the West and the Gaeltacht tradition is important.

RS: Actually, one of the problems with landscape representation, which makes it one of the weaker traditions of art, is that it is traditionally imagined as feminine and passive, pejoratively. You plow it; you conquer it; you discover it; you explore it; you own it. The artistic responses of the past forty years address that. I was recently thinking of Joseph Beuys's fascinating piece *I Love America and America Loves Me*, where he locked himself up with a coyote for a week. A live coyote is a very different kind of

representation of nature than a landscape photograph, it's safe to say. Here, there are representations of sublime things, like torrents, but by and large representations do picture nature as passive.

Dzmitri Korenko [*Question from the audience*]: It's been said that artists were the major cultural agents creating the images of landscape. I think it is also worth focusing attention on some other popular, and non-visual, representations of landscape: maybe more popular touristic representations, such as images shown in the city of landscapes as escapes. This idea of artists creating images is perhaps overstated.

DH: I would underscore that maps are a major form of landscape representation. There is a marvelous recent book called *You Are Here*, which compiles maps of all sorts—treasure maps, Eskimo maps, really an expansive sense of maps.⁷⁸

DEC: Probably the most powerful medium for representing landscapes today (at least in the conventional pictorial sense) is the movies. At least from my perspective, landscapes in movies are understudied.

MG: There are also non-visual kinds of landscape: itineraries, for example, which tell you how to experience landscapes in walking through them.

JE: Or poetry, of course: I'm happy that we've all been concentrating on visuality, but several of us are interested in poetry—

RZD: I would add by drawing our attention to the recent literature on walking, Rebecca's book included.⁷⁹ Walking sometimes involves itineraries, but it also engages a different experience that is not the making of a picture, or the observation of a view, but an everyday experience that may not have to do with art.

MN: Although it must be said that the everyday experience of landscape these days has more to do with driving than walking.

RZD: That is debatable.

MN: But surely walking privileges people who have the time and financial support to permit them to walk.

RS: The first radio interview I did after the walking book asked me “Don’t you think walking is elitist?” I didn’t have my wits about me then—I was jet-lagged, and it was early morning East Coast time—and so this is the first occasion I have been able to deliver the best response, which is “So what do the poor do?”

MN: Yes, but maybe they don’t walk to experience the landscape.

RZD: But it would be wrong to presume that landscape, as an idea or concept, and not just a material reality, is not available to the working class or poor.

AWS: For me the most compelling thing about landscape is that not only is it the place where we humans live but it’s also a medium of expression in which everyone engages. Landscape is pragmatic, poetic, rhetorical, polemical. Sometimes these expressions are a form of art. I believe landscape is also a form of language. Through it, humans share experience with future generations, just as ancestors inscribed their values and beliefs in the landscapes they left as a legacy, a rich lode of literature: natural and cultural histories, landscapes of purpose, poetry, power, and prayer.

DEC: Certainly, in my experience, landscape is one of the few terms in art discussion that ordinary people feel able to express an opinion about, and which they feel they experience and understand; the same would not be true of terms like expressionism, postmodernism, conceptualism, and so on.

JE: This is a lovely, endless subject, but we need to stop. It’s time for us to go for our next hike in what we persist in pretending is the actual landscape.

Notes

1. Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975), 5.

2. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998 [1984]), Introduction to the 1998 edition, and also in the text, p. 1. Another useful starting point is the Introduction, *The Iconography of Landscape*, in which Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels provisionally characterize landscape as “a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolizing surroundings. *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, edited by D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1.
3. These roots and older meanings are discussed in Spirn, *The Language of Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
4. Olwig, “Recovering the Substantive Meaning of Landscape,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86 no. 4 (1996): 630–53; idem, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic: From Britain’s Renaissance to America’s New World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).
5. Olwig argues that “it is not enough to study landscape as a scenic text. A more *substantive* understanding of the landscape is required,” one which will recognize “the historical and contemporary importance of community, culture, law and custom in shaping human geographical existence—in both idea and practice.” Olwig, “Recovering the Substantive Meaning of Landscape,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86 no. 4 (1996): 645.
6. The ideas are used in Wen Fong’s *Images of the Mind: Selections from the Edward L. Elliott Family and John B. Elliott Collections of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Art Museum, Princeton University* (Princeton NJ: Art Museum, 1984), 20, but they first appear in his “Toward a Structural Analysis of Chinese Landscape Painting,” *Art Journal* 28 (1969): 388–97.
7. Törmä, *Landscape Experience as Visual Narrative: Northern Song Dynasty Landscape Handscrolls in the Li Cheng-Yan Wengui Tradition* (Helsinki: Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae, 2002).
8. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 21.
9. Hays, “Landscapes within Buildings in Late Eighteenth-Century France,” in *Sites Unseen: Essays on Landscape and Vision*, edited by Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).
10. *Is Art History Global?*, vol. 3 of *The Art Seminar* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
11. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).
12. Ritter, “Landschaft: Zur Funktion des ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft [1963],” in *Subjektivität: Sechs Aufsätze* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989 [1979]), 141–90, especially 150–51: “Landschaft ist Natur, die im Anblick für einen fühlenden und empfindenden Betrachter ästhetisch gegenwärtig ist: Nicht die Felder vor der Stadt, der Strom als ‘Grenze,’ ‘Handelsweg’ und ‘Problem für Brückenbauer,’ nicht die Gebirge und die Steppen der Hirten und der Karawanen (oder der Ölsucher) sind als solche schon ‘Landschaft.’ Sie werden dies erst, wenn sich der Mensch ihnen ohne praktischen Zweck in ‘freier’ genießender Anschauung

- zuwendet, um als er selbst in der Natur zu Sein." Quoted in J. Wamberg, "The Landscapes of Art: A Short History of Mentalities," *Meddelelser fra Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* (Copenhagen), special issue on "Landskab" 7 (2005): 139–50, n. 1.
13. Koerner, *Last Experiences of Painting* (New York: Routledge, 2008) will be vol. 4 in the series Theories of Modernism and Postmodernism in the Visual Arts, edited by James Elkins.
 14. This distinction in American and European visions of landscape perfection (as original wilderness or cultivated and tended garden respectively), is discussed in great detail by Marcus Hall in *Earth Repair: A Transatlantic History of Environmental Restoration* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2005). [Note added by DC.]
 15. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press: 1973), 18.
 16. On this capacity of landscape to "absorb" the marks of history see Jonathan Smith, "The Lie that Binds: Destabilizing the Text of Landscape," in *Place/Culture/Representation*, edited by James Duncan and David Ley (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 80.
 17. See Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture" (1938) in *Off the Beaten Track*, edited and translated by Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
 18. See John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting, 1730–1840* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
 19. Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).
 20. James Corner, "Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice," in *Recovering Landscape*, edited by James Corner (Princeton NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 2.
 21. More on the etymology with regard to landscape is found in Richard Wilhelm's Introduction to *I Ching or Book of Changes: The Richard Wilhelm Translation* (London, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).
 22. Edward Casey, *Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Casey, *Earth-Mapping: Artists Reshaping Landscape* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005). I thank Denis for reminding me to cite Ed Casey here!
 23. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 1994); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *L'Oeil et l'esprit* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964).
 24. Latour, *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
 25. Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, revised edition (London: Fontana, 1983), 219; Williams, "Ideas of Nature," in *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso Editions and NLB, 1980), 67–85.
 26. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," translated by Carleton Dallery, *The Primacy of Perception and other Essays*, edited by James M. Edie

- (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 164.
27. Friedrich Schiller, "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry" (1795), in *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe*, edited by H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 189–90. Nisbet reprints in full (slightly modified) the translation by Julius A. Elias, New York 1966.
 28. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 33, 38.
 29. Denis Cosgrove traces it back before Berger to Panofsky: Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 13, 38.
 30. Nancy, "Uncanny Landscape," in *The Ground of the Image*, translated by Jeff Fort (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 51–62, quotation on p. 58.
 31. Surprisingly, little was said in the roundtable about the historically constitutive relationship between landscape and technology. Historically, the growth of French landscape painting, especially Impressionism, according to Nancy Austin and others, was related to the emerging art market outside the institution of the French salon and the development of the transportation system and the railroad network. Austin, "Naming the Landscape: Leisure Travel and the Demise of the Salon," in *Transformations in Personhood and Culture after Theory: The Languages of History, Aesthetics, and Ethics*, edited by Christie McDonald and Gary Wihl (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).
 32. Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, special issue of *Theory, Culture, and Society*, edited by Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1990).
 33. Catherine Nash, "Re-mapping and Re-naming: The New Cartographies of Identity, Gender and Landscape in Ireland," *Feminist Review* 44 (Summer 1993): 39–57, extracted as "Gender and Landscape in Ireland," reprinted in Fintan Cullen, *Sources in Irish Art: A Reader* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), 302–06. See Prendergast, *The End and the Beginning*, with an essay by Francis McKee (London and Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1999).
 34. For example there is George Petrie, whose work effects interesting transformations in the model of nationalistic romantic landscape, but who is virtually unknown outside Ireland. Many nations have such painters, who are integral to their senses of their past—which raises the question of when landscape became "irrelevant." For Petrie, see Tom Dunne, "Towards a National Art? George Petrie's Two Versions of *The Last Circuit of Pilgrims of Clonmacnoise*," in *George Petrie (1790–1866): The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past*, edited by Peter Murray (Cork: Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, 2004), 125–36, which argues, starting from Tom Mitchell's equation of landscape and ideology, that Petrie refigured English romantic landscape stereotypes.
 35. Eileen Battersby, "Family Pictures," *Irish Times*, March 31, 2003, 14. It is also typical of such reviews that the critic proposes a line of influences that would not be seen by all viewers. McSweeney, she says, is "clearly part of the great Irish romantic landscape tradition of Jack B. Yeats and Patrick

- Collins,” and “he also looks to the American Abstract Expressionism of two transplanted Europeans: Willem De Kooning and Mark Rothko.” Later in the review Battersby mentions Nolde, Rouault, and Motherwell. A more reasonable genealogy would link McSweeney just to Rothko and Collins.
36. Sven-Ingvær Andersson and Steen Høyer, *C. Th. Sørensen: Landscape Modernist* (Copenhagen: Architectural Press, 2001); Thomas Church, *Landscape Architect: Designing a Modern California Landscape*, edited by Marc Treib (San Francisco CA: William Stout, 2003); Malene Hauxner, *Open to the Sky: The Second Phase of the Modern Breakthrough, 1950–1970* (Copenhagen: Architectural Press, 2003).
 37. *The Vanguard Landscapes and Gardens of Martha Schwartz*, edited by Tim Richardson (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 2004). In Ireland, there is the Grand Canal Square in the Docklands development in Dublin.
 38. Spirn, *The Language of Landscape*, 100–01, 230–31.
 39. Tim’s work can be sampled at www.burrencollege.ie/faculty/timemlynjones.html.
 40. Rosenblum, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975).
 41. Anuradha Mathur and Dilip da Cunha, *Mississippi Floods: Designing a Shifting Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2001).
 42. John Brinckerhoff Jackson, “Landscape as Seen by the Military,” in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 131–37.
 43. Joseph Ryckwert, *The Idea of a Town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1976; second edition 1988), chapter 1, “Town and Rite: Rome and Romulus,” 27–40.
 44. See Dianne S. Harris and David L. Hays, “On the Use and Misuse of Historic Landscape Views,” in *Representing Landscape Architecture: Images, Models, Words*, edited by Marc Treib (New York: Routledge, 2007).
 45. Thomas Hornor, *Description of an Improved Method of Delineating Estates, with a Sketch of the Progress of Landscape Gardening in England, and Opinions on the Picturesque Effects Attempted in Rural Ornament* (London: J. Harding, St. James’ Street, 1813).
 46. These illustrated maps have actually a long history. In imperial times the pictorial maps of the topographies of famous mountains were usually engraved on stone steles. The stele was then placed at the bottom of the mountain. See, for example, Kiyohiko Munakata, *Sacred Mountains in Chinese Art* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 54–58.
 47. See Michael Newman, “Interrupting the Pan: Marine Hugonnier’s *Ariana*,” in Michael Newman and Jeremy Millar, *Marine Hugonnier* (London: Film and Video Umbrella, 2004).
 48. See the books by O. A. W. Dilke: *The Roman Land Surveyors: An Introduction to the Agrimensores* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971) and *Greek and Roman Maps* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985).
 49. de Duve, *Kant after Duchamp* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1996).

50. Mathur and da Cunha, *Mississippi Floods*. See also her work in *Young Architects: Second Nature* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001).
51. James Corner and Alex MacLean, *Taking Measures across the American Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1996); <http://www.fieldoperations.net/>.
52. Gaffey, *Signifying Place: The Semiotic Realisation of Place in Irish Product Marketing* (London: Ashgate, 2004).
53. Gaffey cites, among others, J. Adler, "Origins of Sightseeing," *Annals of Tourism Research* 16 no. 1 (1989): 7–29.
54. Gaffey, *Signifying Place*, 44, 46, 47.
55. Clay, *Real Places: An Unconventional Guide to America's Generic Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
56. Hayden, *A Field Guide to Sprawl* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004).
57. Lubbock, "The Critical View [review of an exhibition of Constable's painting]," *Independent*, Monday, June 5, 2006, 14–15, quotations on p. 15.
58. Thomas, *Reconfiguring Modernity: Concepts of Nature in Japanese Political Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
59. According to Karatani (Thomas's words) the Japanese "discovery of landscape was accompanied by the discovery of interiority (*naimen no hakken*) because . . . external scenery creates a philosophical standpoint that produces consciousness not only of objects but of the self as well." Thomas, *Reconfiguring Modernity*, 174. Thomas is citing Karatani Kōjin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, translated by Brett de Bary (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 22.
60. Although there are many exceptions, where the principal influence on contemporary conceptions of landscape is first-generation romanticism. Denis E. Cosgrove quotes Carl Sauer's "Morphology of Landscape" and comments that Sauer's descriptions remind him "of the heathland landscape by the German romantic landscape painter, Caspar David Friedrich. The synthetic understanding, even if rarely successfully achieved by geographers, has been a declared aim in much of their work." Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 30, commenting on Carl Sauer, "Morphology of Landscape," in *Land and Life: Selections from the Writing of Carl Ortwin Sauer*, edited by L. Leighy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 323–24.
61. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell, second edition (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002 [1994]), 14.
62. Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), xix.
63. This is also discussed in vol. 2 of this series, *Photography Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
64. Lucy R. Lippard, "Too Much: The Grand Canyon(s)," *Harvard Design Magazine* 10 (Winter/Spring 2000): 5–11.
65. Lippard, *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory* (New York: Pantheon, 1983).
66. Chiang Yee, *The Silent Traveller: A Chinese Artist in Lakeland* (London: Country Life, 1937; reprinted Edinburgh: Mercat, 2004).

67. The Irish is as spelled in Tim Robinson's *The Burren: A Map of the Uplands of North-West Clare, Éire* (Cill Ronain, Arainn: Folding Landscapes, 1977).
68. This intoxication is the subject of my "On the Conceptual Analysis of Gardens," *Journal of Garden History* 13 no. 4 (1993): 189–98, revised in *Our Beautiful, Dry, and Distant Texts: Art History as Writing* (New York: Routledge, 2000 [1997]).
69. Baker, *Caving: Episodes of Underground Exploration* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1932), 163.
70. See for example www.burrenbeo.com; historical descriptions are available at www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/the_burren/historical_description-s.htm. The Burren caves are another element that is not susceptible to the usual aesthetic categories. We had originally planned a speleological tour of the "secret system of caves and conduits" that runs through the Burren. (Auden, "In Praise of Limestone," in *The Faber Book of Landscape Poetry*, edited by Kenneth Baker [London: Faber & Faber, 2000], 119.)
71. www.walkinginplace.org
72. Anne Whiston Spirn, "Constructing Nature: The Legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted," in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, edited by William Cronon (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 91–113.
73. Elkins, *The Poetics of Perspective* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).
74. Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1972 [1923]), 71–123, 238–39, 369–70.
75. Gibbons, *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics, and the Colonial Sublime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
76. Gibbons, *The Quiet Man* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2002).
77. Finola O'Kane, *Landscape Design in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004).
78. Katharine Harmon, *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2004).
79. Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Viking, 2000).

4

ASSESSMENTS

Kenneth R. Olwig

The "*Actual Landscape*," or *Actual Landscapes*?

It's time for us to go for our next hike in what we persist in pretending is the actual landscape.¹

What I find striking about this roundtable's wonderful cornucopia of ideas, touching on virtually every corner of contemporary landscape debate, is the consistent tendency to refer to "the landscape" in the singular, as in James Elkins's closing reference to "*the actual landscape*" (italics mine). This is particularly notable given the many statements made by roundtable participants to the effect that landscape has a variety of meanings. The tendency to speak in the singular is also notable with respect to another concept, often identified with landscape by the roundtable—that of *nature*. And, while at it, one might as well note the panel's tendency to speak of *time* and *space* in the singular, though we see the occasional caveat. We know better, as Elkins suggests, but our critical facilities seem to be put on hold when confronted by "what we persist in pretending is the actual landscape."

The singularity of the singularity in the use of the concept of landscape becomes particularly striking when it is counterpoised to the observation that landscape is notable for having a double identity. As Yi-Fu Tuan has observed, what appears to give the concept of landscape its power is that it is a "diaphor," because it combines at least "two dissimilar appearances or ideas," thereby generating a "tensive meaning." This tension derives from the fact that landscape means both "domain" and "scenery." A domain, in this context, can be understood as a place, region, country, or *land* inhabited by people and it thus belongs to the discourses of politics, economics, community, society, and what I would call the art of place making. Scenery, on the other hand, belongs to the discourse of the aesthetics of space. "The diaphoric meaning of landscape," according to Tuan, "lies not in one image (concretely known) pointing to another, but rather in both—equally important—imaginatively synthesized."² Under the singular dictionary heading of "landscape" lurks what thus might be regarded as almost two different words, which have nevertheless become intertwined in a tensive relationship that generates

many of the different uses of landscape that occurred round the roundtable. In the following I will first concentrate on elucidating the character of this “diaphor” in order to later explicate the implications of the tendency to treat landscape in the singular.

Two meanings of landscape

The two meanings inherent in the diaphor of landscape are well expressed in the definition of *landscape* in Dr. Johnson’s classic 1755 dictionary: (1) “A region; the prospect of a country”; (2) “A picture, representing an extent of space, with the various objects in it.”³ At first glance, it might seem that definition one refers to the object of representation, whereas the second refers to the pictorial representation of that object. But this is not the case. In the second definition, what is represented pictorially is not a region or a country, but first and foremost “space,” the “objects” being secondary to the space. It may seem counterintuitive that an artist is more interested in space than the objects in that space, but the fact is that space itself, as a form of nature, is an important object of artistic representation. When the various objects in a painting representing an extent of space happen to be objects identifiable with those normally found in a region or country, it is easy to think of landscape 2 as being the pictorial representation of landscape 1, and thereby forget the predominant importance of the space being represented. This is especially the case because space does not appear to be as “visible” as the various objects represented, even though it could be argued that all one sees in this sort of painting is space! But I will return to this later.

Anne Whiston Spirn brings out the tension between definition 1 and definition 2 when she first points out (p. 92) that in Old English *landscipe* referred to a place (such as a country) and to the people living in that place:

Land means both the physical features of a place and its population. *Skabe* and *schaffen* mean “to shape,” and the suffixes *-skab* and *-schaft*, as in the English *-ship*, also mean association, partnership. There is a notion, embedded in the original word, of a mutual

shaping of people and place: people shape the land, and the land shapes people.

But the *Oxford English Dictionary* claims that *landscape* comes from a Dutch painting term, *landskip*, and was imported into English in the seventeenth century. Not so! Why is it that the meanings of the word *landscape* in Old English get lost?

A probable answer to Spirm's question is that the *OED* editors saw discordance between *landscape*, understood as a particular place, and the scenic idea of landscape as a form of representation in pictorial space, and therefore decided to eliminate *landscape* from the contemporary definition of landscape. As Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out, modern dictionaries of "national" languages tend to work toward the generation of a "*standard*" language by glossing over, or eliminating, discordance:

It [the dictionary] assembles, by scholarly recording, the totality of the *linguistic resources* accumulated in the course of time and, in particular, all the possible uses of the same word (or all the possible expressions of the same sense), juxtaposing uses that are socially at odds, and even mutually exclusive (to the point of marking those which exceed the bounds of acceptability with a sign of exclusion such as *Obs.*, *Coll.* or *Sl.*). It thereby gives a fairly exact image of language as Saussure understands it, "the sum of individual treasuries of language," which is predisposed to fulfill the functions of a "universal" code.⁴

Johnson's early dictionary, however, does not seek to smooth over difference by eliminating meanings that do not fit together. Instead, he provides two distinctly different definitions of landscape, the uses of which might be seen to be "socially at odds, and even mutually exclusive."

Discordant ideas of landscape

The way that Johnson's two definitions of landscape can be seen to be mutually exclusive and socially at odds can be illustrated by a statement attributed to Michelangelo, regarding a new style of "land-

scape” painting then emerging from the low or “nether” lands of Northern Europe, and which he identifies with Flemish artists:

They paint stuffs and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadow of trees, and rivers and bridges, which they call landscapes, with many figures on this side and many figures on that. And all this, though it pleases some persons, is done without reason or art, without symmetry or proportion, without skilful choice or boldness and, finally, without substance or vigour.⁵

Since Michelangelo met these paintings in the social context of the Italian art market, he saw them primarily as pictures representing a particular artistic genre going under the name given to them by these foreign painters—“landscapes.” Michelangelo was not interested in the particular subject matter of these pictures, which must have been largely unknown to him, nor was he concerned about the meaning of “landscape” in these artists’ native society. What *was* of importance to him was the paintings’ pictorial qualities. For him pictorial representation required spatial symmetry and proportion and his ideal for landscape representation thus would appear to be congruent with Johnson’s definition 2. The Dutch painters’ understanding of landscape, however, was in accordance with (the etymologically primary) definition 1 in Johnson’s dictionary, which defines landscape as a “region” or “the prospect of a country.” Michelangelo ought to have asked what these foreigners were seeking to represent, why they did so in a way that violated the spatial norms that he took for granted, and why “it pleases some persons.” He was not writing as an art critic, however, but as a partisan, competing with these Northern bumpkins on the Italian art market and therefore did not ask these questions. Art historians, however, should do so.

The *-land* in landscape 1

Art historians might be inclined to think of a *prospect* primarily as a form of pictorial representation, but the primary sense of prospect is actually “an extensive view” with no particular reference to the practice of making pictures. The use of the term “prospect” to refer to “a sketch or picture of a scene” is in fact minor, and now “archaic.”⁶

This suggests that artistic representation was not central to the constitution of landscape in the sense of definition 1. A region, country or land was something that might be encompassed by someone looking at it, in prospect, from a distant elevation, but it was not constituted by this process of looking. What one sees in prospect is a pre-given place that has been constituted through social activity in the course of the making of history.⁷ This landscape is a “region” in the sense of “country” or *land*, country’s synonym—the *land* in *landscape* in this primary sense.⁸ Anyone with even a passing knowledge of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century landscape painting from the low lands should sense that there is something wrong with the *OED*’s definition of landscape as “a picture representing natural inland scenery, as distinguished from a sea picture, a portrait, etc.”⁹ Anyone who has visited a museum with a reasonable sampling of such paintings would know that they often include nearly as much sea as land, and as much culture as nature, if not more. The *OED* reduces the *land* in *landscape* to a form of nature—soil, and then counterpoises it to other natural elements, such as the *sea* in *seascape*, but the *land* in these paintings is clearly a cultural, not a natural, category. They are paintings of regions, countries, or lands, understood as places (real or imagined) in which the water and soil have been shaped by people into a domain of dwelling. A region, country, or land, in this sense, is not pre-given and unchanging, the way the laws of nature or space are often thought to be pre-given and unchanging. It is rather something that has come about historically through human cultural, economic, and legal practice.

The *-scape* in landscape 1

The *-scape* in *landscape* derives, as Spirn notes, from the Old English *skiepe* and is related to the word “shape,” which she uses in the physical sense of shaping, as in “the people shaped the land.” Denis E. Cosgrove comments, in his contribution to this discussion, that I have written “closely” about this subject (p. 93), thus making me a phantom participant in this discourse. Now that I have the opportunity to participate more directly, I would like to add the observation that “shape” also has normative and qualitative associations, so that

people do not just shape the land physically; they also “put the land into good or bad shape.” The same qualitative associations adhere to “-ship,” for example in words like “friendship,” “fellowship,” or “citizenship.”¹⁰ Friends, fellows, or citizens are concrete actors, but between friends, fellows, and citizens one has the more abstract state or quality of *friendship*, *fellowship*, or *citizenship*. *Countrymen* likewise share “countryship” (to use a word now “obsolete”), and *landsmen*, to follow the same logic, share a bond of *landship* that gives them a sense of belonging within a social landscape, like that painted by these low lands painters.¹¹ Following this sense of *-ship/shape/-scape*, landscape painters or poets who make a prospect of a land or country the subject for an artwork or poem are seeking to do more than just reproduce what is before their eyes. They try to capture the more abstract state, quality or “shape” of the place (as in good *shape*, bad *shape*), because this is what makes them artists practicing the art of place making, rather than surveyors or cartographers. Such artists or poets thus attempt to represent the *countryship* or *landship/-scape* that exists between people living in a land, and that puts their material environment in a given *shape*. The meaning of landscape is thus more than land or country; it includes the more abstract quality of a place that makes it perceivable as a land or country with its own particular qualities. That abstract quality could be called its “culture” in the sense of “the body of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits constituting a distinct complex.”¹²

David Hays is, as substantiated above, quite right in pointing out that the definition of *-scape* as *-scope* is a false etymology, adding that: “When people define landscape, they usually take *-scape* as *-scope*, as if it pertained to vision. But it does not” (p. 93). Spirn is also quite right to point out that: “In Old English, it [*-scape*] implied both an association with a place and a physical shaping. Later it grew into its current sense of *view*, a panoramic view” (p. 93). As one source of this line of discourse I might add that I do not disagree with either Hays or Spirn.¹³ Yet, insofar as the early landscape painters of the low lands did paint regions (in the sense of *country* or *land*) as seen in prospect, they were nevertheless engaging visually with the *idea* represented by the suffix *-scape* at a time when *-scape* did not signify *-scope*, but something quite different. The nether lands artist, standing

on a high elevation (or pretending to do so), gains a wide prospect over the country below, which gives an overall view of the character, or *shape*, of the land that would not be visible closer up. *-Scape* became identified with *-scope* because the distant view provided one way of abstracting the abstract quality of a *region*, *country*, or *land's -scape*.

The *-scape* of custom

Key to the understanding of both *-scape* and the “ideological” importance of landscape, as Denis E. Cosgrove points out (with reference to my work), is the notion of “custom” and “customary law” (p. 93). “Ideology” is one of the words that come up most frequently in this roundtable, but it is never defined. It is an odd word to define using a dictionary because most dictionaries tend to gloss over the discordance embodied in the term. They will tell you, among other things, that ideology is “a branch of knowledge concerned with the origin and nature of ideas” and that it is “a systematic scheme or coordinated body of ideas or concepts especially about human life or culture.”¹⁴ In these senses it appears to be quite straightforward to argue that the low lands artists of Michelangelo’s era were influenced by the ideas of their time and sought to express the idea of *landscape* in the paintings they gave that name, just as other artists might seek to express the idea of nobility in a portrait of a nobleman, or piety in a portrait of a saint. By the same token it would also seem to be unproblematic for an art historian to be concerned with “the origin and nature of” the idea of landscape, as the participants in the roundtable have sought to be. I, myself, have concerned myself with the origin and nature of the idea of landscape in a book that was even called *Nature’s Ideological Landscape*.¹⁵ Ideology, however, is a problematic word to use because underlying its usage is often a discordant notion that is only hinted at in the dictionary, and this is the Marxist (and Napoleonic) sense of ideology as “false consciousness.” This means that, when a member of the roundtable refers to the ideological import of landscape painting, it is difficult to know whether the panelist is referring simply to the ideas that a painting may convey, or whether the panelist is referring to the falsities that the

painting might trick people into believing through, for example, the creation of spatial illusion. This mistrust of the ideological also applies to its root, the *idea*, so that both ideas and the representation of ideas are often implied to be somehow less genuine, and more reflected and alienated, than direct experience and action.¹⁶ It is this negative sense of ideology, and ideas, that would appear to lie behind the idea, expressed by some participants in this roundtable, that art is not about ideas, but experience and the physical doing of art. This in turn explains the appeal of phenomenology to these participants. *Custom* is interesting in this context because it begins with nonrepresentational praxis and doing rather than with ideas. It thus provides a possible key to the roundtable's seesawing between an understanding of landscape as ideology, and an understanding of landscape as "unrepresentable" practice (p. 102).

Custom is not, in its point of departure, an idea that people *think*, but it is rather an expression of what people *do* as individuals and as a group, and it sets precedence for the ways things morally ought to be done in law ("morality" derives from the Latin word for custom). Custom becomes the foundation for conscious customary law, and ultimately common law, when there is a conflict. Thus, if the people in village A drive their wagons on the left side of the road in their village, they may never give this a thought because this is the side of the road where they have been driving out of habit since time immemorial. But, if the people in village B drive their wagons on the right, and if someone builds a road between A and B and there is a head-on collision between the driver of a wagon from village A and a driver from village B, the case may then go to a regional court. Once the case has gone to court, and been debated by representatives of the region (as would have happened at the predecessor of the modern court, the "thing" or "moot"), then driving on either the left or the right would no longer be something that you simply do; it would become a matter of law and an *idea* for general reflection. A reason for choosing driving on the left might be that this is what is done in a majority of villages in the region or country. Driving on a particular side of the road may then become a matter of regional identity. A landscape painter making a prospect of one of these lands would be careful, of course, to paint the wagons moving on the side of the road

appropriate to that land. This is because driving on one or the other side of the road is at least partly expressive of "the body of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits constituting a distinct complex" that makes up the identity of a particular region. The painter, in this way, contributes to place making by helping to generate awareness of the cultural practices of a given place. An artist like Michelangelo, however, who is primarily interested in pictorial symmetry and balance may well be irritated by all the differing and peculiar detail in the paintings from these different regions, and therefore conclude that: "They paint stuffs and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadow of trees, and rivers and bridges, which they call landscapes, with many figures driving their wagons on this side and many figures driving on that side." This last artist would also be making a point that many critics of custom, and customary law, have long made. There does not appear to be any symmetry or proportion, rhyme or reason, let alone morality, behind, for example, the customary practice of driving on either the left or the right. I have deliberately chosen such a banal example because even here an important principle of "*landship*" is operating, namely the idea that, once the precedence has been set and the people of a land has agreed to do something in one way, there is a moral and legal obligation to behave accordingly. It is this obligation that lies behind the sense of identity tied to a given land: "we do things this way here. We may change, but only after we have agreed to do so through our legal and cultural institutions."

There is good reason to believe that the painters of the low lands during the time of Michelangelo were particularly concerned to represent the customs of their homelands. This is because these artists largely lived in a society made up of a hodgepodge of "lands" of differing sizes and character that were then federated in various complex ways into the larger political entities that were authorized to act on the international scene when this was necessary, as in time of war. But these various local lands, drawing on varying local custom, were responsible for the vital community work of, for example, maintaining the dikes that protected the land as both a human community and the physical material shaped by that community. In this context the moral responsibility to act according to local custom becomes

quite palpable, and community building and dike building become two sides of the same coin. This form of social organization, however, was threatened by neighboring states that were based upon more top-down and centralized forms of rule, and that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries sought to impose their power over these nether lands.¹⁷

The threat of the imposition of top-down state rule from the outside created a greater awareness of regional similarities within the low lands of Europe. It thus forced village A and village B to consider the fact that, even if they might differ with regard to their particular local customs, they nevertheless agreed about the importance of custom as a general legal and cultural principle. Brueghel's painting thus, as the art historian Michael Rosenthal writes, "emphasizes not only the logic of the terrain," but also "the logic of the activity" shown in the paintings. It contains "an element of explanation, sometimes to the near-diagrammatic."¹⁸ A contemporary of Brueghel would no doubt have understood that Brueghel in his paintings was mapping the way particular customs shaped the landscape and that he was in this way appealing to the sense of identity of a people who celebrated the landscape diversity generated by custom. Brueghel was thus engaged in what might be termed the art of place making. Today, however, what appeals to us about these paintings is not the forgotten ideas and customary principles they embody, but the sensation of practice: the bodily and tactile doing of landscape, which is the foundation of custom, and which Tim Ingold calls the "taskscape."¹⁹ The phenomenologist Martin Heidegger, as Ingold points out, uses this kind of taskscape as a portal to phenomenological knowledge, but it can also simply provide a portal to reflection on the relation between artistic and social practice. It can thus make us aware of the fact that the artistic representation of landscape is not necessarily visual and from a distance, but it can and should engage all the senses (and arts) that the body employs in shaping a land as a community and place. This landscape thereby literally engages the senses of place, region, country, and land. It is landscape in the sense of Johnson's first definition and it is still very much with us, as the section of the roundtable on landscape painting documents.

Landscape 2 vs. landscape 1

The conflict between the centralizing, top-down ruled states and the nether lands (many of which are now encompassed by the modern state called The Netherlands) is not comparable to the conflict between village A and village B. The reason is that both A and B founded their law on an evolving and changing body of custom (as is still the case in the United Kingdom and the United States), whereas the surrounding states were seeking to found their laws upon a very different logic that was seen to be superior to, opposed to, and more progressive than that of custom. They thus looked not to changing custom, but to timeless, rational principles inherited from Roman law. These principles were, according to ancient tradition, often inspired and symbolized by the geometry of space and the principles of harmony and balance identified with this conception of space. These were the sort of principles that guided the aesthetics of much of the Italian Renaissance art of Michelangelo's day. His reaction against the landscape paintings of the low lands was thus symptomatic of a larger context in which the understanding of landscape 1 and landscape 2 is socially at odds. It is here that the relationship between the two senses of landscape becomes "tensive," and the outlines of a "diaphor" begin to emerge. The implications of this diaphor become apparent when one submits the second sense of landscape to scrutiny. This then brings us to landscape understood as: "A picture, representing an extent of space, with the various objects in it."

Landscape and the representation of space

The importance of Denis E. Cosgrove's work on landscape lies, at least in part, in his relentless pursuit of the *OED*'s scenic spatial sense of landscape (Johnson's number 2), which was, in his words, that: "the concept of landscape and the words for it in both Romance and Germanic languages emerged around the turn of the sixteenth century to denote a painting whose primary subject matter was natural scenery."²⁰ This led him to conclude, in an essay written together with Stephen Daniels, that: "A landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing or symbolising surroundings."²¹ By

pursuing this sense of landscape so rigorously, Cosgrove made it clear that geographers, and others, who treated landscape scenery as a kind of nature-given reality were overlooking the fact that this mode of representation was a human construction, emerging from the arts, which had enormous influence through landscape architecture and spatial planning on the forming of the material world studied by the geographer. This sense of landscape is also deeply ideological in the Marxist sense of false consciousness because whole disciplines have been constructed around the idea of landscape scenery as the suitable “natural” subject of an objective science, whereas the fact of the matter is that the object has been preconstructed according to particular spatial ideals that are the proper subject of the arts and humanities.²² This brings us to the surrealism of René Magritte.

The process by which the object of representation is shaped by its representation, the subject of Cosgrove’s work, has especially fascinated the surrealist artist René Magritte. In an analysis inspired by Magritte’s work I have termed this process “circulating reference,” using a term borrowed from Bruno Latour.²³ The painting in question is of an easel with a painting on it that shows a view through a window. Behind the painting on the easel we also see the window that is the subject of the painting on the easel. Through this window, as represented both on Magritte’s painting of the “actual” window and on the painting on the easel, we see an urban scene. The view of this urban scene on the picture on the easel overlaps with the “actual” view through the window, so that the two merge into one another. It therefore is somewhat difficult to tell when we are looking at Magritte’s representation of the “actual” view through the window and when we are looking at Magritte’s representation of a painting, on an easel, representing this same view. Magritte hereby appears to be making an oblique reference to the famous window described in Leon Battista Alberti’s Renaissance classic, *On Painting*, in which Alberti explains how he begins to construct perspective scenery: “I inscribe a quadrangle of right angles, as large as I wish, which is considered to be an open window through which I see what I want to paint.”²⁴ The scene framed by Magritte’s window shows both the conical top of a tower with its sides extending vertically upwards into a point in space, and the similar form of a boulevard, extending

horizontally into the infinite distance. The “circular reference” represented in Magritte’s painting lies in the fact that the city depicted is a recognizable generic nineteenth-century European city that has been constructed along the same perspectival, geometric principles as those used to make the painting, the tapering cone of pictorial perspective being congruent with the cone of the tower and the tapering shape of the boulevard. Magritte’s point seems to be that there is no “actual landscape,” but only circular representations of representations of landscape that are themselves the outcome of the artist’s method of representation in pictorial space—that of central point perspective.

The title of Magritte’s painting is “Where Euclid Walked,” and it illustrates as well as possible, I think, the definition of landscape as: 2) “A picture, representing an extent of space, with the various objects in it.” Though there are objects in this space, such as the conical top of the tower, they are all in some sense figments of the Euclidean spatial imagination. We are dealing with an *idea* of pictorial space of the kind that can be termed “absolute space”: “space independent of what occupies it: the space in which positions are finally determined.”²⁵ In the end, one could argue, what we look at when gazing at a landscape painting of this kind is not so much the objects as space itself. As Tom Mitchell puts it:

The vernacular expression [“look at the view”] suggests that the invitation to look at landscape is an invitation not to look at any specific *thing*, but to ignore all particulars in favor of an appreciation of a total gestalt, a vista or scene that may be dominated by some specific feature, but is not simply reducible to that feature. . . . The invitation to look at a view is thus a suggestion to look at nothing—or more precisely, to look at looking itself—to engage in a kind of conscious apperception of space . . .²⁶

Walking with Euclid through time

Euclid has been walking for some time, and I think that it is important to point out that central point perspective, which is the focus of Magritte’s painting, is actually a fairly recent example of geometry’s

influence upon urban and regional design. David Hays, in discussing cartography, refers to a book by Joseph Ryckwert called *The Idea of a Town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* (p. 154, note 43). The ancient town can, as the book's title suggests, be regarded as the materialization of an idea that was capable of representation, as in the geometric space of the map or plan. In the case of the ancient city and region, geometry was also used in planning, much as was the case with the use of perspective and geometry in planning the classic nineteenth-century European city depicted by Magritte. The word *region* has the same root as *regent* and *regulate*. In Latin it was related to words meaning a *ruler*, both in the sense of a regent and in the sense of a device used to draw a straight line. In ancient times the regent was a high priest and lawgiver, and the justice of his rule was identified with the straightness of his rule, as opposed to crookedness. Prior to building a new city the regent would rule out the regular roads and squares of the town and its *region* with the straight line of a ruler, thus establishing his rule through the geometrical spatial structure of the city and its region.²⁷ The techniques of perspective drawing that emerged during the Renaissance, as Cosgrove has pointed out, are related to the techniques of surveying and mapmaking.²⁸ Both locate objects within absolute space. The use of central point perspective to represent space in the Neoplatonic atmosphere of Renaissance Italy and its subsequent application to urban and regional design from the Renaissance to the present might then be regarded as a renaissance, or rebirth, of ancient classical geometrical spatial ideals.²⁹ It is these ideas that walk again in the city depicted by Magritte, and likewise walk again as an ideal in modernist urban planning.³⁰ Euclid would then indeed have walked, like a ghost, both through a particular form of pictorial representation of space and through the objects represented in that space. The plurality of objects represented may differ, but the space within which they are located is singular and uniform. This observation brings us back to the question of the singularity of landscape, nature, space, and time, noted at the outset.

The singular nature of landscape

Raymond Williams has commented on the singularity of the Western idea of nature, suggesting that this is connected with Western monotheism.³¹ This is well illustrated by an influential essay written by the American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1836 called "Nature." Emerson's idea of nature is suffused with the transcendental idea that the Godhead resides in nature perceived as landscape. In this essay the singularity of nature, landscape, and God is manifested through the single eye of the artist that is focused upon the landscape, uniting its varying parts into a natural spatial unity:

*The charming landscape which I saw this morning, is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds give no title.*³²

"The eye," according to Emerson, "is the best of artists." Sight enables the perception of nature as a landscape scene in which "perspective is produced" by "the mutual action of its structure and the laws of light." Perspective effectively transforms the material world into space, much as Tom Mitchell describes. "The least change in our point of view," according to Emerson, "gives the whole world a pictorial air" that confers the power to reduce people to "apparent, not substantial beings." Such changes of view suggest "the difference between the observer and the spectacle—between man and nature."³³ This space, in turn, "integrates every mass of objects, of what character so ever, into a well colored and shaded globe, so that where the particular objects are mean and unaffecting, the landscape which they compose, is round and symmetrical."³⁴ The eye, for Emerson, is also "the best composer" and light is "the first of painters" because it creates a unifying sense of sublime infinitude that applies not only to a uniform and singular space, but also to a uniform and singular time.³⁵

For Emerson, as for Michelangelo, what makes the poet an artist is the possession of an eye that can subsume landscape and its varying temporal rhythms within a space and time that is regular and symmetrical. For them landscape is the landscape of Johnson's definition 2, and it is this landscape that thus manifests itself as a singular nature encompassing the material world, as well as space and time. If the participants in the roundtable perceived the landscape in such singular terms, this is because landscape 2, I would venture, has taken such a hold on our imagination and perception that it becomes "*the* landscape," even when we know better.

The "progressive" landscape

The practitioners of landscape 2 emphasize the space within which objects are located. The ability of a society to comprehend space as a fundamental organizing and unifying principle behind the world of things, organized within its space, is often seen to be a sign of modernity. This idea is behind what Michael Gaudio termed the "Hegelian model of the unfolding of history" as applied to landscape (p. 108). Historical progress can thus be measured by the ability of a society to comprehend the world in terms of the ideal ideas and laws of geometry. This idea of progress lies behind the influential ideas of landscape art propounded by the early nineteenth-century German theoretician Carl Gustav Carus in his *Neun Briefe über die Landschaftsmalerei* (1815–34). According to the art historian E. H. Gombrich, Carus described the history of art as "a movement from touch to vision":

Wanting to plead for the recognition of landscape painting as the great art of the future, he based his advocacy on the laws of historical inevitability: "The development of the senses in any organism begins with feeling, with touch. The more subtle senses of hearing and seeing emerge only when the organism perfects itself. In almost the same manner, mankind began with sculpture. What man formed had to be massive, solid, tangible. This is the reason why painting . . . always belongs to a later phase. . . . Landscape art . . . pre-supposes a higher degree of development."³⁶

Carus's ideas, in Gombrich's opinion, prefigured a questionable form of modern thinking in which art is the measure of a society's stage of development. "By inculcating the habit of talking in terms of collectives, of 'mankind,' 'races,' or 'ages,'" this mode of thought, wrote Gombrich, "weakens resistance to totalitarian habits of mind."³⁷ "Totalitarian," here, is a term that might also be applied to the tendency to think of *God*, *Nature*, *space*, *time*, and *landscape* in the singular because in this way totalities are formed out of what are, in fact, a multiplicity of phenomena.

This idea of progress through stages of development was used to justify the imperialism of "modern" countries toward less developed countries in the name of progress. Landscape 2, as the embodiment of this idea of progress, thus becomes "something like the 'dream-work' of imperialism," as James Elkins puts it, citing Mitchell (p. 100). Mitchell has described the conception of landscape development at the time of Carus as "imperial" because it legitimizes

the claim that not merely landscape *painting*, but the visual perception of landscape is a revolutionary historical discovery of the European Renaissance that marks, in Ruskin's words, "the simple fact that we are, in some strange way, different from all the great races that existed before us."

This form of ideology exemplifies what Mitchell sees to be an attempt to create a "'natural history' of modernity." Mitchell has also termed this mode of thought "the teleology of modernism" or, alternatively, "the teleology of landscape" because it is based on the idea that phylogenesis recapitulates ontogenesis in the stratified development of a mature civilization. This development can be measured by a society's ability to comprehend its world as a horizontal landscape scene, controlled by abstract laws.³⁸

The ideology embodied in "imperial landscape" was used to help justify the clearing of Yosemite Valley of the Yosemite "Indians" because it was claimed that they not only did not appreciate its scenery but also damaged it through their practice of burning the "natural" meadowlands.³⁹ This removal of the "Indians" meant that the landscape in sense 1 (as people and place) was emptied, leaving behind a huge spatial void in the ground to be filled by landscape in

sense 2. But what a spatial void! Images of this scene, emptied of its native inhabitants, have become “canonical,” as Rebecca Solnit points out, as when seen through the lenses of an Ansel Adams or an Eadweard Muybridge (p. 135). These are sanctified images of Emerson’s singular Nature with a capital N, emblematic of a singular God, with an equally large G. It is this way of deifying and representing landscape that makes landscape into “a subset of nature,” as James Elkins puts it (p. 105). These are images, I would add, that also have transfixed my mind, both when seen on hiking trips along the rim of “the actual landscape,” and when viewed in the gallery/chapel in which Adams’s photographs are exhibited in the valley below. But how “actual” is a landscape that must be secretively maintained by the U.S. Park Service to maintain seemingly pristine natural meadows that are actually the cultural landscape created by the burning practices of the Yosemite people?

“Imperial landscape,” as Mitchell calls it, provided a justification not only for the conquest of the Third World in the name of progress and development, but also, for example, for the Nazi invasion of the lands to the east of Germany, where the Slavic peoples, like the native population of Yosemite, were seen to be of a lower stage of development, unable to appreciate or care for the landscape.⁴⁰ This form of argumentation is still used today to justify European discrimination against immigrants, whose mosques, for example, are not seen to naturally belong in the landscape.⁴¹

Diaphor and landscape

Though the use of the ideology of “imperial landscape” to justify colonization and discrimination is disturbing, perhaps its spookiest characteristic of landscape, in the sense of “A picture, representing an extent of space, with the various objects in it,” is its ability to colonize the mind of the person gazing at its space. The effect of landscape representation in sense 2 can be to subsume the objects of landscape 1 within its space, so that it can be difficult to distinguish between the landscape as a place shaped by culture and dwelling and landscape as a form of nature constituted by space and the physical land organized within that space. This is how landscape becomes associated with

ideology, in the sense of false consciousness, and this is why it is important to keep in mind the character of landscape as a diaphor.

When Renaissance artists, in paintings of the “annunciation”—the announcement by Gabriel to Mary of the incarnation of God in the bodily form of Christ—made use of the then new form of central point perspective to represent the infinite space of a heavenly God, I am convinced that they were consciously “representing an extent of space, with the various objects in it” in order to express an idea that was intelligible to their public. They were thus representing an idea of God as an all-encompassing force through their representation of an all-encompassing heavenly space that gave order and harmony to the earthly objects within it. This form of representation, I believe, would have been understood as a representation of space as a symbol of the Godhead. It would also have been an effective form of representation because of the magical quality of spatial illusion created by the new, and thus consciously provocative, technique of central point perspective. These paintings thereby exemplified ideology in the straightforward sense of “a systematic scheme or coordinated body of ideas or concepts” where the figures of Gabriel and Mary make it clear that we are dealing with a religious subject. There is a tension between the two identities of landscape, understood as diaphor, that enables us to appreciate and compare the artistic ideas and ideals of Michelangelo with those of the contemporary landscape painters of the nether lands. The situation is quite different, however, when the lands shaped by Miller, Locke, and Manning, or by the natives of Yosemite, are appropriated by the poet, surveyor, architect, or planner, who claims a greater right of ownership because they are capable of representing these lands as objects within an all-encompassing space. Then we begin to glide into ideology in the sense of false consciousness and in the sense of “imperial landscape.”

What makes this roundtable fascinating, and what fascinates the participants in the roundtable, is precisely the fact that the meaning of landscape is so hard to pin down. Even though we know that landscape has many meanings we still persist in thinking of landscape in the singular, along with nature, space, and time. It becomes clearer why this is so when we conceive of landscape as a diaphor, a word with two identities that are in a tensive relation to one another, and

that work to generate a complex pattern of divergent meanings. This might be worth thinking about the next time it is time to “go for our next hike in what we persist in pretending is the actual landscape.”

Maunu Häyrynen

*Assessment of Landscape Theory Roundtable Seminar*⁴²

I found the assessment task of this all-embracing discussion intriguing. The diversity of viewpoints corresponded to the different disciplinary and professional backgrounds of the discussants. The discussion succeeded well in clarifying the positions on landscape and laying bare their differences.

What struck me as particularly interesting was the general distancing from Marxism-based ideology criticism, represented by Denis E. Cosgrove, and a textual or imagery-based approach to landscape, exemplified by W. J. T. Mitchell, as opposed to phenomenology. Such a “turn” places the emphasis on the experience of landscape, which, however defined, entails the risk of leaving the wider context of the politics and economics of landscape in the background. In my view it is insufficient to concentrate solely on signification and experience in the study of landscape. In the ensuing discussion the question of power relations within landscape was linked to cultural Otherness, a valid aspect in itself but largely disregarding the wider issues of social hegemony and contestation, which were, though, brought up by the comment of Dzmitri Korenko from the audience.

The roundtable was focused on landscape and environmental art as well as landscape architecture (or design). While the centrality of art cannot be underestimated, popular landscape imagery was addressed among the discussants mostly in terms of tourism. This may betray a hint of elitism, as popular imagery still plays a key role in asserting territorial identities, maintaining cultural boundaries and conditioning social practices, including tourism as well as professional activities dealing with landscape. Art is a field among others—science, nature conservation, land development, advertising, leisure—in the societal process of production, mediation, and consumption of landscape imagery.

Textual and phenomenological interpretations of landscape do not exclude one another. The representable and the unrepresentable occur in constant interaction, resulting in the historical stratification of both. While landscape experience can hardly be totally free from ideological framing, representation of landscape has to relate somehow to the lived environment.

The ideological force of landscape representation as well as landscape imagery depends on its indexical capacity, on the extent to which it may be seen to correspond with the everyday life experience of the audiences it implies. This becomes particularly manifest in national landscape imageries, which gain credibility across the society by offering an arrangement of recognizable and verifiable spatial references. These fuse individually and collectively experienced places into an ideological spatial order or scopic regime—actually regimes, since the national articulation process takes place simultaneously in different genres and is mediated by different institutions, as noted by Sverker Sörlin. The same location may appear in the multiple contexts of landscape painting, economic geography, national history and ethnography, and so on.

Popular landscape imagery responds to fundamental changes in the everyday environment, brought to the fore by social and economic development, so as not to lose its anchoring—with the exception of national parks, conservation areas, designed landscapes, and similar settings institutionally forced to conform to their representations. This triggers the historical dynamics of landscape imagery, which may be described in terms of Cosgrove's "alternative landscapes," inspired by Raymond Williams. Redundant landscape representations—traditional rural or industrial scenery, for instance—are losing their anchoring in the lived environment, while emergent landscapes such as urban sprawl or agro-industry are located at the margins of representation. Discrepancies between dominant landscape representations and lived environments lead to contestation in ethnic conflicts, conservation disputes, and so on.

Replacing the politics of landscape by its poetics would in my opinion unnecessarily limit the scope of analysis and obscure the historicity of landscape. Yet I see both approaches as perfectly justified and reconcilable. Many other fields of cultural studies are

currently showing a renewed interest in macro-level social and economic approaches, and there is no reason to ignore them in the discussion on landscape.

Jill H. Casid

Landscape Trouble

Reading the conversations at the landscape theory roundtable from a temporary perch in Dallas, Texas, occasions not a little landscape trouble. Here it strikes a note of strangeness to read a transcript of talk about an unmodified and general “subject” entwined with the landscape, notions of a central way of representing or theorizing landscape, and the difficulties of establishing distance from landscape. Reading and writing this response in this place of sheltered land ownership there is little chance, to paraphrase Homi Bhabha, of taking the signs of planting around one as if they were natural wonders.⁴³ Looking out at the tree-lined brick walls with security cameras, the flower-bedecked mounds flanking the guard-patrolled entrance, and the carefully winding streets around the artificial lake that make any egress a slow affair, the concept of landscape as an active verb and an ongoing process, as the making and remaking of land and human subject, is impossible to avoid. While distance appears far less of an issue, paths concerning the genius loci or place of theory, the hybridity and polycentricity of landscaping, the ways in which landscape theory does and does not travel, the importance of discourse in theories of landscape and the scaping of theory, and ways of accounting for the differences in and of the human subject in the landscape appear from this prospect as routes more pressing to follow and I will lay these out briefly.

1. Genius loci: under a transplanted live oak in a gated community

The distance and difference between the temporary place of my reading and writing under a transplanted live oak in my mother’s house situated in a gated community in Dallas, Texas, and the location of the seminar in Ballyvaughan, Ireland, make genius loci, that classic tenet of landscape theory, seem all the more necessary to

consider. The nearby shopping malls with names such as Willow Bend and North Park where people go not just to shop but also to walk even before the department stores open and the gated community within which I am sitting may be as far from what one might call Alexander Pope's first law of landscape planning and design or the dictum that one consult the "genius of the place" as it is from the Burren College of Art in Ireland (contentiously characterized in the roundtable discussion as situated in a "romantic wilderness").⁴⁴ However, the ostentatious year-round greening of the gates, the plants both live and artificial under the climate-controlled glass ceilings of the shopping malls whose names evoke botanical specimens and terrains they do not bear physically, and the landscape maintenance at the hands of Mexican Americans to whom the land of Texas once belonged bring the genius loci of landscape theory to the fore by its evident negation. Here, for example, one need only glance at who digs up the flowering plants once they have started to wilt in the sun to sense the still pressing concerns of the border theory galvanized by Gloria Anzaldúa about the land of the border zone as not at all the verdant and self-healing erasure of history evoked in the roundtable conversation but rather, in her words, "una herida abierta."⁴⁵

What is the place of landscape theory and does it or should it have a place? Here amidst the gilded version of the border zone with its shopping malls and gated communities that have been so obviously introduced and are so evidently alienated from the environment and surrounded by reminders of my Jewish Diaspora family's lack of stable roots in this or any other irrigated or desert landscape, I am struck by the almost complete absence of reference in the roundtable conversations to exile, nomadism, displacement, migration, immigration, border crossing, and Diaspora. With the exception of Jessica Dubow's differentiation of the approaches to landscape art in postcolonial contexts (p. 124), the roundtable conversation is audibly quiet on the recurrent themes of the complex and vexed relations between humans and land that have been the major concern of much modern, postmodern, and postcolonial theory. As I write, local news of George Bush fleeing a tornado on his Prairie Chapel Ranch in Crawford, Texas, spins the lesson that efforts to harness the rugged cowboy landscape image for current power

politics may be foiled by ungovernable energies. But the particular landscape image of a U.S. president playing cowboy and then running from a twister on a ranch in Crawford, Texas, reminds that the places of landscape theory also include such diverse terrains beyond the frames of European landscape painting as—to name just a few that have been productively theorized—the desert, the jungle, the island, and the plantation. This scene also cautions that centers and peripheries may not be so clearly distinguished and that landscape theorizing needs to account as well for: (1) the non-fixity of place, that is, of movement, including alienation and displacement, (2) the diversity of places, that is, of the non-unified, non-universal qualities of landscape, and (3) the hybridity of place, that is, the cultural, political, and geographic complexity of places, places that have been theorized, for example, in the work of Edward Soja and Homi Bhabha as between-spaces and third spaces.⁴⁶

2. Sugar and landscape, or questions of hybridity and polycentricity

Having just participated in organizing a visual culture conference, curated a video exhibition, and finished a semester teaching a graduate seminar around the theme of “trans” and the reconsideration of Fernando Ortiz’s introduction of the concept of transculturation in *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, I expect to encounter sugar as a major agent in the transformation of landscape.⁴⁷ True to expectation, sugar does come up in the proceedings of the landscape seminar, but not in the colonial and material ways in which I am habituated to considering the relation between sugar and landscape. Sugar appears not as a botanical agent in the landscape but as a simile for the taste or effects of landscape representation. In the words of James Elkins, landscape representation is “like sugar”, which is modified further as a “sweet leftover from the romantic tradition, which can be mixed in with other things” (p. 126).

In my own scholarship on landscape, I have been fascinated by sugar and specifically the ways in which it is historically mixed up with the historical and ongoing hybridization of place, that is, the global traffic in people, plants, and machines that not only

transformed, for example, the New World through the plantation system but also profoundly altered those metropolises imagined as dislocated from such zones of contact. My first book, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization*, looks at landscaping and transplantation between England, France, and the West Indies as discursive and material technologies of empire that invented the notion of the national genius of the place in Europe and the idea of tropical landscape in the Caribbean.⁴⁸ The book focuses on the impact of colonization on the Caribbean and, out of my surprise with where my research led me, the project argued that colonization materially transformed the Caribbean region, disindigenating and making over these islands' environments in the image of an idea of tropical landscape. Materially, the construction of the sugar plantations, on which the economy of the British, French, and Spanish colonies in the Caribbean was based, involved vast deforestation, the clearing of all undergrowth, and the burning of any remaining roots. Not only were the main cash crops of the plantation system—sugarcane, coffee, and indigo—transplants, but plant transfers to the Caribbean from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the South Pacific so radically transformed the landscapes of the Caribbean islands that those species of flora most symbolically associated with the "tropics" were precisely those plants (for example, the bamboo, royal palm, coconut palm, and infamous breadfruit) by which the European colonial empires grafted one idea of island paradise onto another. In essays such as "Inhuming Empire: Islands as Colonial Nurseries and Graves," I have also argued that European landscape representation has also functioned not "like sugar" but rather as a direct response to sugar or the landscape of the colonial sugar plantation.⁴⁹ For example, the tendency to forget France's early colonial empire derives, in part, from the eighteenth-century reimagining of empire as its seeming opposite, an insulated, self-sufficient island garden or anti-empire. Following the historical and material itinerary of sugarcane and its refined products leads to a recognition of the hybridization of place as a technique of empire that also radically destabilizes the insularity of the development of European culture, including Western and specifically European landscape representation. But the transformative linkage of sugar and landscape has wider import for landscape theory

than further attention to sugarcane. The transplantation of botanical specimens, the landscapes they transform, and the places their itineraries connect underscore the necessity for theorizations of landscape to expand their frames globally, deepen their considerations historically, and set the representational practices of landscaping in relation to material practices. I suspect that such work will further demonstrate that what we take as “European” and “Western” in landscape representation and practice is implicated in and produced out of a long and wide history of trading and colonial contacts. This leads me to the potential in further questioning and radical rethinking of the seminar’s discussion of the claimed centrality of the Western landscape painting tradition to the experience of landscape. What might theories of landscape representation and practice become, what accounts might they generate, if they were to proceed contrapuntally and polycentrically, taking up the challenges, for example, of Ella Shohat and Robert Stam’s “Narrativizing Visual Culture: Towards a Polycentric Aesthetics”?⁵⁰ What happens to claims for the end of interest in landscape art or, for that matter, the sense of what landscape art is if one includes Cuban modernist Wifredo Lam’s resiting of Cubist strategies in his painting *The Jungle* (1943) and the Cuban exile Ana Mendieta’s “earth-body works” or if one considers the anthropophagist movement in Brazil and its complex and ironic retooling in such mixed-media paintings as *Meat à la Taunay* by contemporary Brazilian artist Adriana Varejao?

3. Traveling landscape theory

Just as landscape may be understood best as a dynamic process rather than a static, reified thing, theories do, of course, travel. And, as Edward Said influentially argued in his essay “Traveling Theory,” theories are altered in the process of moving from one place to another. Said worried that theories may be domesticated in their relocation.⁵¹ However, two decades later, he revisited his arguments to stress the possibilities that theories could be revitalized with their many and various new sitings.⁵² Thus, I wonder what might have occurred if someone had shifted the landscape theory seminar discussion from a restricted characterization of the Marxian tradition as

“ideological analysis” and phenomenology as its seeming antidote to bring up, for example, border theory (particularly given Ireland’s own history of occupation and contested internal borders) or cultural anthropology’s forays into landscape theorizing, feminist theory, queer theory’s challenges to ideas of nature and the solidity of the matter of the body, psychoanalysis beyond the indirect reference to Freud buried in the dismissal of Tom Mitchell’s thesis that “Landscape might be seen more profitably as something like the ‘dream-work’ of imperialism,” such poststructural revisions of Marx, Freud, and Lacan as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, and postcolonial theory’s emphasis on the politics of place. As this work is no more indigenous to Dallas than to Ballyvaughan, such theorizing is no more necessarily in place (or out of place) here than there.

Theorizing about landscape may be necessarily and importantly shaped by the locus within which one theorizes and its “spirit” or “genius” as well as its histories, politics, and cultural assemblage. However, critical attention to the genius loci of landscape theory does not mean that the complex genius of one particular locus must be landscape theory’s limit horizon. Instead, I would like to suggest taking a cue from James Clifford’s etymological rerooting of theory from the Greek term *theorein* meaning “a practice of travel and observation” to develop landscape theorizing as a practice that requires attention to the densities of place, a consciousness of the concrete itineraries that the “traveling theorist” pursues and the baggage carried along, and an effort to keep moving in the sense of attending to the silences and absences.⁵³

4. Theoryscapes

Curiously, while the landscape theory seminar set up achieving distance as one of the central problems for theorizing about landscape (that is, how we conceptualize landscape when we are immersed in it) and proposed phenomenology as a solution to ideological analysis and the supposed excesses of discourse theory (p. 103), the “Introduction” to *The Art Seminar* series is implicated in the discourse of landscape with its rehearsal of what we might call the metaphorics

of theoryscaping. Current writing on the visual arts is compared to a “trackless thicket” in order to assert that it is “not a wilderness.” Instead, visual graphs (that are given the look of geological formations) convert “theory in art history” into a “landscape of interpretive strategies” through which the series offers a well-blazed and navigable trail. Put simply, the series and its introduction landscape theory. No doubt the delirious experience of hiking a small portion of the historic Appalachian Trail in Shenandoah National Park during a heatwave this past August has intensified my interest in signs. In this case, as we ascended along the steep elevation of the trail, the blazes painted on the trees and rocks positively shimmered with promise as they beckoned upward to a possible breeze and the prospect of relief from the tunnel of bugs. However, there was no escaping landscape as discourse. I do not think it was just perversity that made the signs guiding the hiker, camper, and tourist’s experience of the park as fascinating as the “scenic views” to which they led and pointed and also made the signs frankly more compelling to photograph. Favorite photographs include those of the rustically carved signs that cheerfully translate menace into brightly painted cartoons that announce “Bear Country, Protect Your Property and Food” around the outline of a retreating black bear and “Falls Can Kill, Stay on the Trail” above a yellow stick figure falling head first down a blue waterfall. The charm of these signs is the way they transmute fear into a palpably felt sense of the landscaped national park’s discourse of protection.

What then does the landscaping of theory do when it enframes a volume dedicated to landscape theory? First, in demonstrating that material practices of landscaping such as the transformation of wilderness into charted territory are mental and tropic ones as well, the landscaping of theory also betrays the ways in which the activity of theorizing mobilizes landscape as discourse even in cases in which “landscape” is not the object. Second, and as a corollary to the first, the sense of being immersed in landscape and unable to establish (or having difficulties with establishing) distance may be prompted or accentuated not by the sense of physical surround (submersion into the matter of landscape) but rather by conceptual absorption in landscape as discourse. Lastly, this landscaping of theory highlights that not only does theorizing take place (in the sense of being an event in

space and time) and travel (over space and time) but much of it also already both activates landscape as discourse and, with its use of theory to scape the world, strives for transformative material effects. While in the open discussion portion of the landscape theory seminar Dzmitri Korenko introduced Arjun Appadurai's use of landscaping terms to describe the global flows of the current economy, we might also think of Martin Heidegger's concepts of clearing and worlding (and Gayatri Spivak's reactivation of worlding), Frantz Fanon's "wretched of the earth," Fernando Ortiz's transculturation of sugar and tobacco, Michel Foucault's heterotopias, Julia Kristeva's abject zones, Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity, Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome and nomadism, Jean Baudrillard's simulation as the desert of the real, and Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphael Confiant, and Jean Bernabé's concept of "créolité." This partial list further emphasizes not only the extent to which theory is already entangled with landscaping but also that the wide array of theory's concepts of landscape is productively proliferating, diverse, and contentious.

5. Inscape, outscape, what is the figure in the landscape?

The *Landscape Theory* volume consciously courts contention by presenting discussion of landscape as the optimal occasion for meditation on the "unity of the self" and yet framing this evocation of a unified subject with the recitation of the series "Introduction" that takes the "gaze, psychoanalysis, and feminism" as the keywords by which to chart the increasing incorporation of theory into art history. It is surely no accident that this representation of the figure in the landscape as a "unified self" flagrantly disobeys the lessons of Lacan's account of the gaze, of psychoanalysis more generally speaking, much of feminist theory, and, I would add, queer theory, critical race theory, and intersectional analysis, namely the concepts of the divided subject constituted both by differences from and by complex relations to others and riven by internal differences. This breaking of the rules of the divided and differenced subject might also be taken as an invitation to further landscape trouble. The transcript of the conversation cautions that direct confrontation with the problems of subjectivity—and I conjecture the specters of differences and divisions—will end

up ruining the conversation. However, I cannot help but be tempted by what ruin promises to usher back in. I have already outed myself as a descendent of a Jewish Diaspora family who is reading and writing from a temporary perch in a gated community in Dallas, Texas. The easy part is to add the affective affiliations of queer and feminist as well as an admission that I have long mistrusted the orchestrated “harmony” of the conversation-piece version of landscape. Let me close with a call for ruin, that is if ruin means theorizations based in embodied, sensate encounters with landscape that involve mucking around in the pleasures, difficulties, shame, and desires of the differences within and without.

Dianne Harris

Self and Landscape

Many of my earliest memories include camping trips and family vacations spent touring landscapes with my geologist father. These excursions nearly always focused on sites of geologic significance in the United States and included impromptu, on-site lectures on topics such as the formation of the goosenecks of the Colorado River, braided streams, columnar basalt, glacial erratics, alluvial plains, sedimentary processes, and so on. By the time I was ten I was conversant in geological time scales and understood why the Sierra Nevada should be referred to as a “young” mountain range and that certain types of shale (which I could identify and which frequently contained lovely fossils of extinct arthropods called “trilobites”) indicated the possible presence of petroleum deposits. My younger sister’s pet rock, which she obtained on a vacation near the Grand Canyon and which she carried wrapped in a tiny blanket, had a scientific name: *erinaceous*.

Perhaps it was this early exposure to geomorphology that led to my interest in landscape architecture, which I studied as an undergraduate and then practiced as a professional before returning to school to study first architecture and then the history of the built environment. I study and write about architecture and landscapes, and my response here derives largely from my perspective working within the very small and relatively young field of landscape history.

When I speak and write about landscape, then, I refer to a physical phenomenon with specific contours and properties that are shaped and reshaped by natural and cultural processes. Landscape, for me, always begins with the geological framework through which I first learned about the world outside, and I use the term “landscape” to mean everything that sits in and grows out of the surface of the earth, including buildings: gardens, certainly, but also urban and suburban form, agricultural fields, transportation networks, patterns of development, dwellings, public parks and plazas, religious and ritual sites, the inscription of pilgrimage, trade networks, and the demarcation of the movement of people across the earth, and more. In short, I use “landscape” to mean places shaped and occupied by humans (some scholars refer to this as “cultural landscape studies”). This essay does not, therefore, engage in the debates that evolved during the seminar about landscape as a term, conceptual problem, paradigm, idea, or something in need of a cure. Instead, I am concerned with landscape as a material reality. Although I have produced in-depth historical studies of landscape representations—both visual and textual—I am primarily interested in questions about the material manifestations of human/landscape interactions. When I study landscape representations (maps, paintings, printed views, drawings, descriptive texts) I do so to try to understand specific sites, but, since the representations themselves are complex documents, they too demand careful interpretation and cannot be relied upon as documentary evidence of the physical features of sites at particular moments in time.⁵⁴

I study landscapes because I want to know why places look as they do and what they might tell us about human history and culture that we simply can't learn from other sources of information or material forms. Landscapes are not simply a more visually appealing means of apprehending knowledge that is otherwise accounted for in other humanities disciplines and they are not strictly visual phenomena (though the viewing systems demanded by and constructed within landscapes and their representation fascinate me and have become the subject of some of my work⁵⁵).

The impact of Denis E. Cosgrove's definition of landscape as a way of seeing and as a representational system linked to specific modes of social formation cannot be overstated.⁵⁶ Cosgrove's

research has moved easily between the worlds of representation (maps and paintings in particular) and form (villas, urban form, rural landscapes) but has always explicitly indicated that landscapes develop in a real world, their existence dependent on and determined by the vagaries of class structure, economics, political factors, and cultural structures.⁵⁷ But landscape is a complex and highly variable phenomenon, and we've barely begun to scratch the surface when it comes to exploring interpretive strategies and frameworks for analysis.⁵⁸ The desire expressed by some of the Art Seminar panelists to move beyond what James Elkins called the "pervasive sense that landscape is an ideology and is best understood as such" (p. 83) seems premature in a field (landscape history) that has only recently explored that idea and in a very limited number of ways by a few scholars. Moreover, I would amend Elkins's statement. Landscape, when considered not as a painting but as a physical entity, is not itself an ideology. Instead, it is the matrix through which ideologies may become manifest in specific viewed and experiential contexts. Perhaps art historians have exhausted this analytical approach, but landscape historians have much still to learn about the ideological underpinnings of specific sites, and about the precise ways those meanings are conveyed, perceived, interpreted, understood, and incorporated into the workings of cultural systems.

W. J. T. Mitchell published his essay on "Imperial Landscape" in 1994—more than a decade ago—in which he urged readers to "take a harder look at the framework in which facts about landscape are constituted," and to look beyond the naturalizing veil of aesthetic beauty in order to see that landscape is the medium through which political agendas are naturalized.⁵⁹ Yet in the small fields of landscape and garden history, a relatively few scholars share this concern while many continue to explore the formal, aesthetic, and design dimensions of the field.⁶⁰ Although the "spatial turn" in the humanities has resulted in a large number of studies that focus on the abstract or theoretical properties of space, a limited number of studies have only begun to emerge in the past fifteen years that uncover the ways in which a precisely delineated landscape framework serves to naturalize specific forms of cultural authority and socio-political and/or economic structures.

The traditional tools of the architectural and landscape historian—formal, stylistic, and iconographic analysis—are still necessary and useful, but historians might increasingly examine landscapes as sites for understanding the operations of authority, the flow of capital, the manipulation of environmental resources for specific ends, the creation of social hierarchies, and more. By studying landscape, we can begin to see and understand some fresh perspectives on the mechanisms of specific cultural systems such as racism, oppression, strategically instituted famine, poverty, environmental degradation and its links to flows of capital, social exclusion, and class stratification. We can also, of course, gain new insights into the human impulse for sensual and spiritual delight, religious practice, good stewardship, wise policy development, and the great gift that is public space.⁶¹ Cultural geographers have made these questions the focus of much work, yet landscape historians can offer something different and perhaps more precise by studying the specific material dimensions of sites. Studying landscape as a conveyor of ideology allows us to call attention to the ways in which the built environment (or cultural landscape) frequently becomes complicit in cultural formations. Landscape is particularly good not just at hiding this kind of involvement, but at making it seem inevitable and natural—even “God-given”—and it is therefore exceptionally powerful as an ideological tool.

Because this is true, the seen landscape is frequently misleading. If we wish to examine how power operates in and through the landscape, for example, we might ask how difference is constructed, who is left in, who is left out, and look carefully at what’s visible, but also at what is erased or consciously rendered invisible and for what purposes, so landscape studies must also involve analyzing that which cannot be seen.

I agree with those members of the panel who asserted that landscape is an agent in historical formation, and my own research has evolved from the central premise that built form (including landscape) is a consequence of culture, which it also shapes in turn—that is, as Anne Whiston Spirn and others have noted, landscapes are active agents in the formation of culture.⁶² Happily, this is becoming an accepted axiom among scholars who study the cultural landscape.

Yet we seldom investigate the precise manner in which this agency transpires, or its various impacts. How does landscape work to actively shape culture?

Landscape is a way of seeing, it is a symbolic system, it is a matrix for conveying ideologies, *and* it is also a way of knowing. But what role does it play in producing specific kinds of human knowledge? One of the ways we might begin to understand this is by building on a statement James Elkins made in which he asserted that landscape "is an exemplary encounter with subjectivity . . . understood as a kind of unity . . . which reflects, or articulates, the sense of self."⁶³ As such, we can ask about the roles landscapes play in the formation of personal, family, state, and national identities. As humans, we evaluate and formulate self-identity largely through lived experience. "Who am I?" is frequently answered in reference to the exterior world. Identity is *located* socially, physically, in time, and in place.⁶⁴ Building on the work of Henri Lefebvre, Dell Upton has noted that the self is always a self located in space.⁶⁵ Place attachment and its symptoms—nostalgia, homesickness, patriotism, nationalism—are an example of the role landscapes play in the "psychic investment in identity."⁶⁶

To push this point further, consider the following: If to be without a face or a name is to lack identity or to destabilize identity, what is it to be without a landscape? It can be difficult to imagine an answer to this question, since landscapes of one sort or another constantly surround and envelop us. George Lucas's 1971 film *THX1138* provides a possible point of access for imagining life without landscape. Although Lucas created a very specific setting, he also formulated a cinematic world with little chromatic variation and indistinct boundaries, few perceived forms, and a seemingly limitless spatial realm of undifferentiated mist that confines through the anxiety of apparent placelessness. His characters wear uniform clothing, have shaved heads, and move in a realm in which the near absence of landscape (perhaps as nearly absent as is possible) enhances their sense of subjugation and loss of individuality. To be without landscape is, perhaps, not to be.

Erving Goffman's analysis of identity formation emphasized the importance of performance in social interaction, incorporating

the idea that “everyday life becomes a series of frames, of frozen moments, stills, through which individuals pass and perform within specific boundaries.”⁶⁷ Because his analysis hinged on a theatrical analogy, his work suggested that the physical properties of the frame or scene—whether theatrical, cinematic, or, we might suggest, landscape—contribute to the formation of personal identity. As scholars have increasingly recognized the instability of subjectivity, it has become correspondingly clear that spatial interaction is a requisite component of self-invention and reinvention.⁶⁸

Examined in the most literal sense, landscapes then become spaces for the performance of identities that are various, multiple, and complexly formulated. Even at the territorial scale, the link to identity remains strong. Citizenship, which is a specific form of identity, and the laws surrounding it are based in the territorial principle of *jus soli*, the notion that a person’s nationality at birth is determined by the place of birth—the literal Latin translation of this principle is “right of soil.”⁶⁹ And territory is landscape conceived in its broadest and most epic form. Citizenship was historically defined then, at least in part, in terms of territorial connections and the right to own property. And it is in the landscape—through ownership, occupation, and manipulation of space—that citizenship is largely expressed. Likewise, citizenship depends on engagement in the public sphere. The spatial expression of citizenship, then, is rooted in the very subjects of landscape history: plazas, parks, streets, squares, cemeteries, fields, and even privately held landscapes such as gardens. This is not true simply in Western contexts—we know, for example, that in the ancient Andes laws prescribed that land be held in common and it was the rights to access of those commons and their resources that largely determined citizenship.⁷⁰

The connection between landscape and national identity—which occurs at this territorial scale just mentioned—is more widely acknowledged and investigated, yet much remains to be done. Literary critics and art historians alike have long acknowledged the intricately formulated connections that exist, for example, between English national identity, painting, literature, political economy, and, more recently, garden/estate history and landscape theory as they developed in the eighteenth century.⁷¹ Homi Bhabha has shown that

colonial and postcolonial identities are, in part, spatially formulated through migration and displacement, and architectural historians who study postcolonial sites increasingly indicate the extent to which identity shifts as landscapes change, even when those shifts are linked to resistance.⁷²

The connection between landscape and identity may, in fact, be so obvious as to seem banal, but if that is the case we have surprisingly few studies to indicate the precise mechanisms through which landscape operates on our sense of self, on personal or individual identity. If the self is reflexively produced, it is produced through sets of mediated experiences in which both the particular and general characteristics of our surroundings play a part.⁷³ So one of the ways in which landscape operates as an active agent is in its role as a device constructed for the mediation of specific lived experiences that may accrue toward identity formation.

Three of the traditional categories for historical analysis—race, class, and gender—are primarily tools for examining distinction/differentiation and the formulation of identity. We know most about the ways in which landscape can serve as a signifier for social and economic class just as it also serves as a tool to create a sense of an individual's status. Studies emerging from scholars who study "race and space" have likewise begun to indicate the mechanisms through which landscapes reinforce notions of racial identity, exclusion, minoritization, segregation, and the operations of white privilege.⁷⁴

At the level of the family or individual, detailed studies of landscapes can reveal much. As my own studies of postwar houses and gardens in the United States reveal, house and garden form are physical frameworks for the formulation of specific personal and family identities related to dynamic notions of race and class.⁷⁵ The relationship is reciprocal and unbounded: house/garden and occupant create and recreate each other in a seemingly infinite system of operations using the media of the everyday: walls, paving, fences, lawns, ornaments, choices in home decoration, storage, vegetation, maintenance, and so on. Ideas about privacy, security, display, ownership, consumption, and the status of location all contribute to the intricacies of status, class, race, and gender differentiation as

formulated through the spaces we inhabit, both indoors and out. The myriad decisions we make about the design of our surroundings are, ultimately, decisions about ourselves. As we create our surroundings, we simultaneously inhabit, move, even perform within them, and the surroundings reproduce us just as we produce them.

In the final two sentences of the Art Seminar, James Elkins noted that landscape “is a lovely, endless subject, but we need to stop. It’s time for us to go for our next hike in what we persist in pretending is the actual landscape.” As I stated at the beginning of this response, I don’t contest the existence of an “actual landscape,” so the meaning of his last words remains unclear to me, especially because the proposed hike is a leisure activity rooted in experience of the tangibly present, if highly dynamic, surrounding landscape. That hiking was part of the Art Seminar experience is indeed telling. Perhaps the hikers came to a greater understanding of their topic through an embodied performance (hiking) that is a product of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’ cult of leisure, sport, and nature. But participation in the hike demanded that each member determine some things about him/herself (“Do I enjoy the outdoors?,” “Am I comfortable with outdoor experiences?,” “Do I enjoy exercise?,” “Am I physically capable of the exertion demanded by hiking?,” “Am I interested in seeing the Irish landscape?”) that contributed to their identity as individuals and within the group. As they hiked, their bodies assumed specific postures; they moved about using manners that contributed to their understandings of themselves, the group, and their place within it. The hike may have had several purposes: recreation, bonding among participants, learning about the landscape of Ballyvaughan, however interpreted. No matter the explicit purpose of the hike, it neatly reinforces my points. Landscape is indeed an endless subject. Landscapes change and change again, presenting an ever-expanding set of questions for study. We can only know them as specific entities for a short time, but through them—because of them—we can come to know our evolving selves.

Jennifer Jane Marshall

*Toward Phenomenology: A Material Culture Studies
Approach to Landscape Theory*

Born and raised in Arizona, I have what you might call an over-developed sense of landscape. My childhood stomping ground—a vast saguaro wilderness—offered limitless vistas of breathtaking, spiritual beauty: each one cut straight from an Ansel Adams photograph or a John Ford movie. But panoramas like these, so recognizable as symbols of the American West, were really only exceptional moments, self-consciously taken in at the end of a hike, or appreciated cinematically through the windshield of a car. More often, the romantic view of a spare and lonesome desert was interrupted by a million other things: cactus spines, barbed wire, beer cans, and roadside shrines, not to mention the very material presence of the heat itself. Looking up and out, turning eyes into cameras and car windows into movie screens, afforded only momentary luxuries, visual indulgences enjoyed only when there was time enough to quit scanning the ground for rattlesnakes and Gila monsters.

In my work as an art historian, I think about how objects “mean.” Writing histories of sculpture, design, and museum display, I reckon with how objects communicate meaning in ways that are very different from the signifying operations of paintings or pictures. In fact, if two-dimensional images seem to relish their inherent abstraction as signs for something else, things fascinate me because they can always take the low road of representational identity: standing for nothing other than themselves. However much an inherited teaspoon might inspire memories of grandma—and so act abstractly as a sign of familial piety, tradition, or loss—it can also always function more hamfistedly as simply a sign for “spoon.”

This strange semiotic split offers an interesting parallel to the divide that separates landscape as I experienced it growing up, and that same landscape as an artifact of cultural production. If the many iconic representations of the Arizona desert all serve to transform the landscape into a cipher (signifying, say, America’s rugged individualism), my lived experience of the place could never be so neatly summarized. Instead, my relationship to the landscape was a

hodgepodge of sensations, impressions, meanderings, and insights: real, embodied experiences in a real, encompassing place. Landscape, in this way like things, invites the projections of cultural fantasies, while never fully capitulating to their ideological imperatives. Like things, landscape seems to hold something else in reserve in the brute materiality of its being.

All this brings me to what I found to be the landscape seminar's most compelling debate. Throughout the day, participants returned to the implicit opposition between the ideological and the phenomenological dimensions of landscape: between the landscape as a determined cultural production and the landscape as an indeterminate subjective experience. When James Elkins opened the seminar in Ballyvaughan, he asked participants to start from the assumption "that landscape is an ideology, and is best understood as such" (p. 83). This proviso indeed served well as a point of departure, providing a baseline for discussions on everything from the absence of laborers in the painted British countryside to the presence of tourists at the Grand Canyon's rim. However, and even as they could never quite shake the landscape-as-ideology equation, participants more frequently called this premise into vigorous debate. While obliged to recognize the myriad unnatural uses to which nature has been put, participants seemed more eager to draw interpretive and political strength from the loamy terrain of the "landscape itself," in the words of art historian Michael Gaudio (p. 89).

It was Gaudio who raised the first doubts about Elkins's ideologically minded premise. Afraid of "losing the landscape itself" in a wholesale surrender to cultural absolutism, he unleashed a wave of like-minded concern. Geographer Denis E. Cosgrove, whom Elkins had credited as an early author of the landscape-as-ideology thesis, now offered its moderate revision, proposing ideology critique as a necessary, but ultimately insufficient, way of coming to terms with landscape. One landscape architect, David Hays, remarked that his was a medium with "a life of its own" (p. 91), and another, Anne Whiston Spirn, made a similar point: urging respect for landscape as an active force *on* social relations, not just an instrument *of* its hegemony (p. 92). A certain kind of preservationist impulse was definitely afoot. "What do we miss," Rachael Ziady DeLue

wondered aloud, “when we don’t allow ourselves to see anything but ideology?” (p. 92).

With all this said, Elkins was willing to admit the philosophical use value of considering an “unrepresentable experience” alongside the one made “representable” through ideology. In this spirit, he proposed a new tack. What did participants make of the recent ascendance of phenomenology, lately embraced by some as a useful alternative to the late-twentieth-century dominance of ideology critique? A positive response seemed a foregone conclusion, since Elkins already suspected that phenomenology was “the mode of understanding . . . governing the move from ideological interpretation” in the day’s debates (p. 103).

In turning to phenomenology, the seminar participants developed a drastically more relational and less hierarchical model of landscape than the one possible under ideology critique. If theories of ideology maintain that cultural imperatives determine an individual’s affections and ideas from above (and so always conceal “real authenticity”), phenomenology refuses the very categorical divisions on which the false consciousness of ideology depends: those lines drawn between self and society, inside and outside. Instead, phenomenology imagines reality as the indeterminate *product* of experience, not the absolute, disinterested truth by which all experience is measured. In Edmund Husserl’s classic formulation, glossed in the seminar by art historian and theorist Michael Newman, the phenomenological subject is contingent upon its perception of the physical world, to which it is ineluctably directed. Just as the Husserlian subject is one of “being-in-the-world,” the Husserlian object (or also landscape) could be defined by its “being-in-perception,” its essence defined by its presence to consciousness. Newman brought these points to poetic summary, asserting phenomenology’s useful responsibility to the “imbrication of the sensing and the sensed, the seeing and the seen, the touching and the touched” (p. 112). Moreover, and because, as Newman put it, “there is no position outside from which to master or dominate this process,” the notion of ideology’s supremacy was judged untenable (p. 112). In remarks like these, participants articulated the need for a methodology that would recognize the ways in which landscape and our experience of it may

exceed cultural determination. This wasn't quaint idealism, either, but an expression of deep political necessity. If we don't have our bodies or our long desert walks to keep for ourselves, then what do we have? And from whence would we draw political alternatives? In place of the old guard's political strategy of demystification, then, something else: a new praxis that we might dub "remystification."

Jessica Dubow, an art historian of cultural geographies, summed up the appeal of this touchier-feelier, phenomenological landscape. "It's not just about an optical sight or its symbolic mediation," she said (speaking to phenomenology's opposition to a subject premised only on eyes or ideas), "but all those more hidden sensory and affective processes that allow a view to 'come into being' for the subject" (p. 104). Here, landscape is no longer what is given to an Emersonian "transparent eye," but a relational category of experience for which the proper interpretive question, *pace* Husserl, would be "how?" rather than "what?" Similarly, landscape is no longer the neutral, empty space in which subjects move and objects reside. Landscape instead becomes a relational field, innocent of all "boundaries between subject and surroundings," and replete with the "break[ing] down [of] the subject-object relation" (pp. 140, 104). What we're left with is an appreciative understanding of Anne Whiston Spirn's later observation, which now seems true enough: "Landscape is an endless, reciprocal drama" (p. 148).

Here, Spirn articulates something very close to the heart of material culture studies. At the end of his highly influential essay "The Cultural Biography of Things," anthropologist Igor Kopytoff remarks, "As with persons, the drama [of objects] . . . lies in the uncertainties of valuation and of identity," uncertain precisely because continually renegotiated "with every minor change in context."⁷⁶ Indeed, semiotic indeterminacy—the idea that "an object, any object, has no ultimate or unitary meaning"—is the order of the day in contemporary material culture studies.⁷⁷ As Bernard Herman, an art historian of American material culture, explains it: "actions reflected in the material world remain open to negotiation and multiple, intersecting interpretive possibilities."⁷⁸ What follows from this is a methodological emphasis on context and its many layers: how objects are situated in space, how they move around, how they

interact with human bodies, and how they may be used and interpreted multiply, endlessly, and indeterminately. The object world, too, it seems, provides its own endless, reciprocal drama.

In insisting on the dynamic, contingent, and relational nature of all meaning, contemporary material culture studies reveals its connections to twentieth-century theories of phenomenology. In fulfilling Husserl's directive to return to "things themselves," theorists of material culture have also tended to assume the philosopher's antidualistic approach to those things, suggesting that subjects and objects are locked in a mutually constitutive embrace. In following the Husserlian lineage, the field also joins Merleau-Ponty's project to break down "the opposition of *things* versus *consciousness*."⁷⁹ While much of the literature in material culture studies leaves phenomenology's more abstract ideas to the side (often retaining its emphasis on embodiment and materiality, but returning these categories to the dualism of body-vs.-thing), the radical foundations are still there, and still worth building upon. Thus, when thing theorist and literary historian Bill Brown admonishes us to remember William Carlos Williams's slogan "No ideas but in things," he also implicitly returns us to the roots of pragmatist phenomenology, bringing to mind John Dewey's formulation: "without relation to things . . . the self would not be realized."⁸⁰

If phenomenology arose within the context of the landscape seminar as an alternative to ideology critique, material culture studies has a long history of bringing these two approaches together in common cause. In fact, while engaging in a Husserlian field of radical semiotic contingency, material culture studies still strives to uphold the materialist responsibilities of Marxism. After all, it is only by first accepting Marx's idea that the material world serves as a proxy for cultural meaning that Herman, for example, can compare an eighteenth-century dining room table to a city landscape: "public points defined by serving dishes, candlesticks, and centerpieces" and private "place settings equally distributed around its perimeter."⁸¹ Having guests to dinner, in the context of this mercantile household, "was a scene for social relations . . . both were settings where objects were set in social motion." However, and even as they retain Marx's belief that social relations are arbitrated through objects, recent

writers in thing theory have rejected capital's iron grip on the stuff of everyday life. Bill Brown is notable in this regard, in his post-Marxist insistence on a category of thingness that is elusive to the determining procedures of commoditization: a phenomenological relationship that escapes the manipulations of commerce. Similarly, the useful anthology *The Empire of Things: Regimes of Value and Material Culture* sets out to "reevaluate the relationship between material culture and exchange theory," as a way, ultimately, to erode the commodity-form's conceptual hold on the interpretation of objects.⁸² Still, ideology as such is not eschewed, only the parochialism of an approach that would diagnose modern capitalism as the evil that infects all subject-object relations. In *The Empire of Things*, other object categories emerge (gift, art, natural resource) that promise an escape from capitalist ideologies only to erect other similarly compulsive regulatory regimes.

Some of the foregoing comments might provide comfort to those seminar participants who were hesitant to hop on board the phenomenology bandwagon. Early on, Wamberg reminded the group of the very reason that the landscape-as-ideology thesis had been so revolutionary (and useful) in its day. Landscape provides, as Wamberg provocatively phrased it, "an ideology of escaping ideology" (p. 91). Dubow also made this point, explaining that it is precisely landscape's illusory promise of extracultural purity that makes it such a potent ideological tool. It is only because landscape "outlives history," she observed, that it can be put to so many imaginative and sometimes insidious ends in the course of historical time (p. 100). Wamberg and Dubow raised important reservations about phenomenology's seeming political utility. Although it promises an escape from ideology through a return to extracultural essences, phenomenology may actually reinforce ideology, by shoring up the seemingly "natural" and "commonsensical" categories of knowledge from which ideology draws its strength. As participants considered the phenomenological turn as perhaps a way to reinterpret landscape as an intimate experience devoid of any semiotic, political, or moral determinations, one couldn't help but get a little uneasy. Was this not just politics all over again, but in the guise of neutrality? Material culture studies is certainly not immune to

this critique. Daniel Miller, an influential theorist of material culture hailing from the British cultural studies tradition, has also voiced skepticism about this brand of phenomenological optimism, calling those under its thrall the “romantics” of the field.⁸³ What this boils down to is a seeming conflict of well-meaning interests: it’s politically important to reveal ideology’s effects on lived experience, but it’s also politically important to validate experience itself as a powerful tool against ideology.

Thoreau’s *Walden* has plenty to offer in terms of standing up for an immersive, reciprocal relationship between the phenomenal subject and his wooded surroundings. However, in visiting the Massachusetts state park at Walden Pond, and by stepping inside the reconstruction of Thoreau’s modest cabin, one is struck most by inventory: by the lists provided of building supplies, foodstuffs, heating materials, books, candles, and so on. The scenery, of course, also delivers its pleasures, but the twenty-first-century tourist (at least this one) is amazed most of all by the unequal ratio of natural landscape to human things, of creatures to comforts. This brings me to what I might call the material culture of landscape.

Landscape depends on things. Its very perception, experience, production, and representation are possible only first given the presence of objects: windows and walking shoes, cameras and compasses. This isn’t just (1) a glib or pithy observation. By suggesting (2) landscape’s reliance on cultural artifacts, I mean to maintain the thesis of landscape as a cultural (and even an ideological) production. At the same time, I would like to propose that by incorporating materiality (and material culture studies) into theorizations of landscape, it is possible to maintain the deeply contextual, radically contingent nature of phenomenological interpretation.

The material equipment behind landscape’s production has already been the subject of many useful studies in art history. At their best, these texts illustrate how landscape’s varied availability to experience and representation is conditioned first of all by objects. In his history of early-nineteenth-century American lithograph workshops, David Tatham considers the possibility that the material demands of that particular printing process may have conditioned the development of Luminist landscape painting, with its “meticulously

modulated tonality, ambient light . . . [and] sharply focused middle ground.”⁸⁴ Alan Wallach has also considered landscape’s material culture, as in a study of Daniel Wadsworth’s private Connecticut gardens, where it was the presence of an especially tall tower that permitted a view of the “panoptic sublime.”⁸⁵ Similarly, Wendy Bellion has considered Charles Willson Peale’s mechanical tinkering with perspective machines as informing his pursuit of the panoramic landscape.⁸⁶ In his investigation of Timothy O’Sullivan’s survey photographs of the American West, Robin Kelsey also brings the stuff of landscape production into meaningful relief. Assimilating to the “acquisitive tenor” of land surveying, O’Sullivan actively collected countless specimens from the field: a practice that Kelsey argues directly impacted O’Sullivan’s photographic style.⁸⁷ A forthcoming dissertation in the field, by Dorothy Moss at the University of Delaware, considers the materiality of landscape paintings themselves: copied, resized, and toured around as valuable objects as much as spectacular views.⁸⁸ Works like these serve to demonstrate not only that landscape relies on material culture, but that the two are locked in a reciprocal, relational field: a field simultaneously influenced by ideology and open to reinterpretation.

In his *Art as Experience*, Dewey explained how the very process of experiencing the world transforms it into an object of artistic expression. “When [landscapes] are matter of an experience,” he wrote, “they, too, have undergone a change similar to that which the painter or poet effects.”⁸⁹ Dewey’s landscape, transformed into a work of art simply by dint of having been experienced, is not exactly an object of representation, nor necessarily an object of ideological determination. It is the peculiar moment of being present to perception: a moment, you’ll note, that Dewey is so bold as to call the “*matter* of an experience.” Admitting to the materiality of what is otherwise an ephemeral and contingent snatch of lived experience is precisely what a material culture of landscape might have to offer. Such a proposition might also be the most useful way to resolve the seminar’s unresolved debate about the relative merits of phenomenology over ideology critique. In pursuing a cultural phenomenology of the physical world, material culture studies

seeks to understand how cultural imperatives work in space, on bodies, and through things. As a result, ideology is first recognized, and then complicated: brought sharply into focus only to be left vulnerable to the indeterminacies of experience, and privy to its multiple expressions.

Robin Kelsey

*Landscape as Not Belonging*⁹⁰

Landscape has traditionally been, among other things, an effort to make the multiple singular (*scape* is etymologically related to *sheaf*, a bundle of stalks), and the title *Landscape Theory* proposes to make singular what the roundtable, composed of scholars from different disciplines, offered in several forms.⁹¹ At the outset of the discussion, James Elkins defined his ambition—prudently, I think—as one of sampling to determine the degree of coherence of landscape as a scholarly subject. But the roundtable often seemed driven to increase that coherence rather than merely measure it. Talk of “the landscape itself” and “misunderstandings of the word” worked against the dispersal of *landscape* across discourses. Although I may not agree with these strategies, I found myself sympathetic with the effort to make the term cohere. The time seems right for a monomania of *landscape*. Exalting historical specificity or differentiation per se (as if adding an “s” to every noun was a sure way to counter hegemony) has become a tired scholarly gesture. In this historical moment, the threat posed by the collusion of the plural with endlessly differentiating and politically neutralizing markets seems at least equal to that posed by the totalitarianism of the singular. The demand for differentiation, once necessary and productive, now threatens to lead us into ever-narrowing inquiries and away from meaningful intellectual exchange. Although the roundtable demonstrated yet again the multiplicity of landscape, it left me eager to entertain possibilities of imposing, albeit through a broad historical claim rather than a theory, a new coherence on some subset of its instances.

More specifically, my reading of the transcript encouraged me to consider new ways of locating that coherence in ideology. In recent decades, we have witnessed a brilliant surge of ideology critiques

of landscape, perhaps especially in the literature on English and American painting.⁹² Some roundtable participants, perhaps weary of such critiques, advocated turning the landscape conversation away from ideology, but I disagree. Jacob Wamberg trenchantly suggested the futility of any such turn when he noted the vital role of ideologies of escaping ideology in the history of landscape. Certain strains of ideology critique of landscape may have played themselves out for the nonce, but I would still look to ideology to confer coherence on the term.

A third impression: for me, the most resonant articulation in the entire transcript was a phrase uttered by Denis E. Cosgrove: "the suffocating embrace of ecology." Although Cosgrove was speaking to the difference between maps and landscapes (indicating that the cartographic tradition removes us from this suffocating embrace), the phrase itself, loosened from this context, can point toward a new way of thinking. In the remainder of this assessment, I would like to respectfully hijack this phrase to propose the sort of ideological coherence I have in mind.

Ecology is arguably the most promising matrix through which to posit a history of landscape ideology for our time.⁹³ In light of the many signs of ecological crisis, it may make sense to shift from an emphasis on landscape as an ideological distance between classes of humans to an emphasis on landscape as an ideological distance between species and habitat.⁹⁴ Although much writing on landscape already incorporates ecological ideas, I remain unconvinced that this shift has taken place in the most incisive terms.

Thus my proposed definition of *landscape*: a fantasy of not belonging to the totality of life of a terrestrial expanse, traditionally taking the form: *you belong to us; we do not belong to you*. I use the term *belong* in its everyday and etymological senses, stressing kinship, possession, and dependency. This strategically reductionist definition requires at least an equally reductionist defense, and so I offer the following claims.⁹⁵

Landscape has always been about belonging. This is true whether one considers the term in its aesthetic or geographic meanings.⁹⁶ As the name of a pictorial genre, *landscape*, I am not the first to remark, is unique in that it refers also to the genre's subject.⁹⁷

The exclamation “What a gorgeous landscape!” may refer to a painting or to a scene in nature such as one might paint. We do not call a person a portrait, or a plate of food at dinner a still life. This singularity of *landscape* suggests a special desire to treat the terrestrial environment as if it were a picture, something apart from us that we own and view.

As Kenneth Olwig has shown, however, concepts of landscape in both Romance and Germanic languages antedate the emergence of *landscape* as a designation for a painting of natural scenery. The earlier meaning in Northern Europe of the German *Landschaft* (in Danish, *Landtschap*) was overtly political and referred to the place of a polity, to a largely—and often fiercely—independent farming republic. The Landschaft of Dithmarschen was a thorn in the side of the sixteenth-century Danish king Frederick II, because it resisted forfeiting that independence to become a royal province. Landscape as Landschaft was thus about the political belonging of the people of a place to the Landschaft and not to a distant sovereign.⁹⁸

Olwig has trenchantly charted the momentous shift from this notion of Landschaft to the scenic notion of landscape with which we are more familiar. Working from Yi-Fu Tuan’s claim that in late-sixteenth-century England *landscape* “shed its earthbound roots and . . . became fully integrated with the world of make-believe,” Olwig has argued that “what was becoming make-believe through the use of scenic illusion was in large measure the imagined community of the modern nation-state.”⁹⁹ Landscape became a perspectival fiction designed to bond otherwise distant or rival communities within a national identity. By employing more categories from Tuan, one can say that belonging based on *place* became belonging based on *space*.¹⁰⁰ Spatial belonging and the cartographic imagination that it entailed later served as the foundation for modern geographic studies of landscape, which framed portions of the earth’s surface to analyze the interaction of their human and nonhuman elements.

After becoming scenic, landscape took a romantic turn that conjoined experience of not belonging with an aestheticized longing. The aesthetic delight or poignancy of the romantic landscape derived from the alienation of artist and viewer from the society of the depicted place. Ann Bermingham, in her discussion of Constable’s

six-foot landscapes depicting sites on the River Stour, puts the matter this way:

The natives of this place, whatever their thoughts, do not share our response to nature. Our awareness of an intrinsic difference re-enacts Constable's own aesthetic alienation from his homeland. Estranged from its life, we are nonetheless attracted to its beauty. Our consciousness becomes a consciousness of loss, nostalgically oriented toward what it has left behind in order to constitute itself.¹⁰¹

European and American landscapes of the nineteenth century are rife with planters, reapers, wagon pullers, hunters, and other figures doing work that defines landscape *viewing* as a form of not belonging. The transcendentalist landscape suggests as a corollary that the infinite in Nature belongs to us only through sight. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay "Nature," in which he reveled in the experience of becoming a "transparent eye-ball," characterized transcendentalist vision as a superior form of ownership:

The charming landscape which I saw this morning, is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate the parts, that is, the poet.

True ownership of the landscape, for Emerson, requires a renunciation of the self. "I am nothing; I see and possess all" is his formula for the transcendentalist moment.¹⁰²

Throughout the modern period, landscapes have organized society into various classes and naturalized allocations of power through their representations and exclusions. For example, in late-nineteenth-century France they provided a means for determining who belonged to the bourgeoisie and where the bourgeoisie belonged. "*They* are all bourgeois, whereas *my* irony is not," is how T. J. Clark paraphrased the message of the critics of the Parisian countryside in the 1870s in his discussion of Impressionist painting.¹⁰³

This bite-sized, sweeping history opens itself to all manner of dispute and qualification, but for the sake of an argument I will forge ahead. That argument is this: landscape as a site of belonging or not

belonging has historically always been (or served) a fantasy of not belonging *ecologically*. In other words, belonging to the totality of life of a terrestrial expanse has never been a possibility in landscape. Indeed, sidling up to a brilliant little book by Giorgio Agamben, I would say that landscape has been a technology to recognize our status as a species that does not belong.¹⁰⁴ Ecologically speaking, landscape has been the illusionary space that enables this misrecognition. It has been a means of suppressing, among other things, our animality. Derrida has written that men gave themselves the word “animal” “at the origin of humanity . . . in order to identify themselves, with a view to being [*en vue d'être*] what they say they are, namely men, capable of replying and responding in the name of men.”¹⁰⁵ Landscape, I am arguing, is this *view to being*, this space to define humanity as a species that does not belong.

What do I mean by a fantasy of not belonging? I mean a fantasy of being apart, fundamentally different, of not fitting in. I mean a fantasy of having other concerns, destinations, and domains. I mean a fantasy of being insulated or buffered from the effects of our actions on other terrestrial beings, of being free of obligations to them. The most vivid account of the fantasy of not belonging that I have read recently is ascribed to a tortoise named Timothy:

Humans repose in the distinctness of their being. . . .

Nothing quite real until they see its reflection. They mirror the out-of-doors in their minds. Hold it up to the glass as a way of holding it apart. Framing it. Giving it perspective. Keeping the world at a murmurous rook-distance.

. . .

Every accoutrement divides them, in their own minds, from the kingdom of other creatures. Every practice, every artifice. Pencil of Rubens. Use of Florence-oil. Pepper. Spinning of wool. Art of tea. Shaving. Pounds and shilling and pence. Bills of exchange. Notes from abroad. London. Hymns of the prayerful. Songs of the drunk and bawdy. Tompion clock. Guinea subscription for the sick and lame in the county hospital. Silver spurs. Pinchbeck seal.

Separate in the curious act of reading. . . .¹⁰⁶

In this last line, the author of the passage, Verlyn Klinkenborg, wryly acknowledges that the fantasy of proximity between human and tortoise that his text spins unravels into yet another occasion, in the reading, for the fantasy of not belonging.

Historically, the fantasy of not belonging has taken many forms, including mystical (we belong in a spiritual realm), humanistic (we belong in a world of arts and letters), futuristic (we belong to a distant—extraterrestrial?—tomorrow), unilateral (the earth is obdurate and resilient, so our belonging is not required), romantic (we long to belong, but don't), and the nostalgic variant on the romantic (we don't belong but once did and long to do so again). Needless to say, these fantasies have mingled, contradicting, reinforcing, and overlapping one another.¹⁰⁷

Although some scholars have found inspiration or hope in the early modern versions of landscape as an embedded polity or place of customs, with respect to ecology we must bear in mind that the theater of the Catholic Church, with its subordination of terrestrial matters and its myth of eviction from natural harmony, preceded the theater of landscape.¹⁰⁸ In early modern Northern Europe, *Landschaft* may have bound political communities and places, but those communities believed that the *Landschaft* was a pale shadow of the place to which they sought to belong.¹⁰⁹ Salvation and divine intervention were the organizing principles of belief. Bread and wine were profound not because they were part and parcel of a terrestrial ecology but because they could be transformed into the body and blood of Christ.¹¹⁰ The romanticism embedded in later notions of landscape stemmed from the loss of these assurances of divine correspondence and transubstantiation. Romantic longing was predicated on a fantasy of not belonging merely to the material as such.

Each version of the fantasy of not belonging requires suppression. The mystical fantasy suppresses the paucity of evidence for spiritual realms and the qualities of any that might exist. The futuristic fantasy suppresses the trajectories of history and the propensity of humans to move their mistakes from one location to the next. The unilateral fantasy suppresses the mounting evidence that our ecology is delicate relative to our patterns of consumption. The nostalgic

fantasy, many studies have suggested, entails habitual dishonesty about the ecological insensitivity of ancestors.¹¹¹

But what suppression facilitates the romantic landscape fantasy *tout court*, which arguably dominates all others in the literature on landscape? To my mind, it is a suppression of our desire not to belong. In other words, an ostensible *longing to belong* is integral to landscape ideology. By suppressing recognition of the desire not to belong, the romantic fantasy leads to a construal of landscape ideology as forgetfulness or cognitive error or spiritual waywardness, to the assumption that landscape theory can heal landscape. If we would only attend to the phenomenology of our experience or to the history of the term or to the signs of our connectedness, then we could shoehorn ourselves back into the picture. The trouble with the romantic view is that we like it because it is a view, because we are not in it, *even if it is a view that ostensibly includes us*. The problem of landscape, in other words, is not a matter of getting the right image of belonging; it is a matter of trying to make belonging happen in a world of images.

Jessica Dubow says in the roundtable that “landscape is the conceptual problem of perspective.” This may be so, but the ecological matrix would demand putting the perspectival space of landscape in perspective. That is to say, it would demand apprehending the perspectival space of landscape as one species of fantasizing distance among others. This is why I do not see a phenomenology of landscape as answering the ecological demand. The phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty promises to embed the seeing subject in the fleshy world of things:

If [the body] touches and sees, this is not because it would have the visibles before itself as objects: they are about it, they even enter into its enclosure, they are within it, they line its looks and its hands inside and outside.¹¹²

But phenomenology always comes to experience in its writing, with all the belatedness and deferral thus entailed. As Derrida noted in his critique of Husserl, phenomenology cannot accommodate the trace, the “past that has never been present.”¹¹³ Phenomenology is about writing about belonging to the perceived *and* about the fantasy that

writing does not retrospectively concoct this belonging within itself. The belatedness of phenomenology may mark an ecological advance over the perspectival distance of landscape, but Timothy the tortoise reminds us that both the “murmurous rook-distance” and the “curious act of reading” promote the fantasy of human apartness.

The romantic fantasy of landscape imagines that the ideological distance we need to cross occurs within our image of what landscape is. With respect to ecology, however, that distance is the gap between our knowing and our doing. Slavoj Žižek has argued that users of money are “fetishists in practice, not in theory,” and the same can be said for human inhabitants of ecosystems.¹¹⁴ It is in doing that the fantasy takes hold.¹¹⁵

Why, if we know we belong to nested or overlapping ecosystems, do we act as if we don’t? Presumably, because ecological belonging entails limits and responsibilities. Knowing that my consumption patterns are altering the global climate costs me relatively little. Acting on that knowledge—refusing to fly, living in a cold house, driving rarely, eating only local food—would cost me a great deal. But what if I acted with consideration not only for the human interest in a temperate planet but also the manifold interests of nonhuman beings? If I belong to nested or overlapping ecosystems, then surely the other denizens of these systems, especially those that suffer, have a right to make demands on me. If the 40-odd percent of my income that goes to taxes covers only my fiscal responsibilities to the human associations to which I belong (with a pittance going to preserve endangered species and small wilderness areas), what percentage would be necessary to cover my associations with nonhumans? How could I foot the bill?

In *Politics of Nature*, Bruno Latour imagines a new republic of hybrid things, combinations of human and nonhuman actors, which he terms *matters of concern*.¹¹⁶ This project is a recent installment in a longstanding effort to break down a politically troublesome and philosophically indefensible rigid boundary between the social or discursive and the natural or real.¹¹⁷ Breaking this boundary down, Latour claims, will greatly enlarge the set of political actors: “[I]n passing from modernism to political ecology, we pass from the imprescriptible right to ignore the majority of beings to the necessity

of excluding none of them.”¹¹⁸ While Latour acknowledges the unavoidability of framing matters of concern, he proposes to make the resulting exclusions momentary, so that anything excluded in one round of parliamentary negotiation may have its say in the next.¹¹⁹

You want to save the elephants in Kenya’s parks by having them graze separately from the cows? Excellent, but how are you going to get an opinion from the Masai who have been cut off from cows, and from the cows deprived of the elephants who clear brush from them, and also from the elephants deprived of the Masai and the cows?

What is missing in Latour’s brilliant account, it seems to me, is any adequate acknowledgment of the loss of human power in such a sharing of politics. Redistributing social power to assist under-represented groups such as the Masai is on every progressive person’s agenda, but if we bring nonhuman actors to the table, then the proportionate representation of human interests declines. Who knows what demands marmots and their field biologists (aka field biologists and their marmots) would issue under such inviting conditions?¹²⁰ I am certainly inclined to give voice to the interests of marmots, but I think we need to face the stakes of doing so—and our ambivalence about doing so—squarely. Putting distinctly human interests at the center of politics has not been a matter of cognitive error but of desire.¹²¹

The distance between knowing (or saying or envisioning) and doing, which is the distance defining landscape as an ideological fantasy of not belonging, structures even green landscape practices. Consider the marvelous art of Andy Goldsworthy, who enters the landscape (a familiar phrase so telling in its through-the-looking-glass quality) to fashion elegant and ephemeral constructions from natural materials found *in situ*. His works are the very image of ecological sensitivity. But therein lies the problem. Like countless others, I know his work through the glossy books depicting his sculpted icicles, woven twigs, and balanced rocks. The production of these books and its ecological effects is nowhere visible within the images of landscape they contain.

It may be worth noting in passing that the wilderness excursion, which has been critiqued as the fantasy of belonging par excellence, can more properly be understood as a profound fantasy of not belonging. Enthusiasts of canoe, kayak, or backpacking trips routinely extol the integrative bodily pleasures that such excursions afford: lying on a sunny rock and listening only to the wind, frolicking in a bosky rapids, having sex amidst mountain wildflowers. These pleasures seem to inhere to the places that afford them, and many of us have seen—or imagine that we have seen—turtles, otters, and warblers enjoying the same. In the recesses of our wilderness parks, arguably the deepest pleasures our ecosystems provide to humans as ordinary animals are there for the taking. But what makes the taking so delightful is precisely that everything outside these pleasures signifies we don't belong. Our brilliantly colored plastic tents, backpacks, and parkas, our portable stoves, our excessive noise, our fearlessness, our freeze-dried food, our maps and compasses, our relief at *getting away from it all*: these things all speak to our belonging elsewhere. We are just passing through and will do so again. These mountains and lakes belong to us but not we to them.

Landscape has been a way of managing our contradiction between knowing and doing, and the strain of this management will only get more difficult in the years ahead. The alarming signs of our ecological disruptiveness are becoming ever more salient, intensifying the pressure of our knowing.¹²² At the same time, social activity—particularly that of the young—continues its quick turn to the Internet, arguably the most compelling fantasy of detachment from ecology yet. AT&T's new slogan is: "Your world. Delivered." As the evidence of our belonging grows ever greater, the social reality of our insularity becomes more extreme.

The challenge posed by this rift is profound. Heidegger observed that unlike "animals" we do not exist in a state of captivity.¹²³ But it is becoming increasingly clear that we are nonetheless ecological captives. To survive in our state of belonging will require a painstaking monitoring of our animality and a subjection to its requirements. The ways in which we have distinguished ourselves from other creatures will need to be mobilized and transformed to manage our commonality with them. Derrida has suggested that Jeremy

Bentham altered the entire discourse on animals when instead of subjugating them on the basis of their limited powers he asked: "Can they suffer?" Perhaps the most pressing question now is not whether animals suffer, but whether we can act on the knowledge that we suffer the conditions of animals. As Agamben has argued, "the total humanization of the animal coincides with the total animalization of man."¹²⁴

Meeting our animal conditions will require recognition of our desire not to belong. It will require us to acknowledge, in the phraseology I have lifted from Professor Cosgrove, "the suffocating embrace of ecology." Such an acknowledgment might enable us to approach a reconciliation of our knowing and doing—that is, the end of landscape—more effectively.¹²⁵ It might enable us to lessen the joylessness, forced exuberance, and righteous anger of so much ecological advocacy.¹²⁶ It might also enable us to be more compassionate. Belonging to the earth's ecosystems may beat gagging on Neptunian methane, but it is far from ideal. From death to mosquito bites, that belonging imposes limits, irritations, challenges, and risks. Is it any wonder that we prefer fantasies of not taking part? That we love landscape?

Malcolm Andrews

Landscape Conversation

Landscape is, as chair James Elkins warned at the outset of the conversation, a desperately confused subject. The conversation itself, like many such endeavors, academic and "lay," found it hard to determine its coordinates, let alone focus definition on the key term. The etymology is complex and confusing, as Anne Whiston Spirn illustrated; landscape's relationship to "nature" is indeterminate and even more confusing ("best to avoid using the word 'nature' without defining what you mean by it" was a forlorn and disregarded caution). The conversation was multidisciplinary without quite achieving interdisciplinarity. It ran for a while as a historiography of landscape aesthetics and conceptualization, giving short exercise-runs to a range of theories before corralling them. It was, nonetheless, a stimulating read. Now and again the stocktaking became a rather airless

hothouse of academic theorizing, and left one pining for the “real” landscape into which the chairman finally released the participants. All in all, for better or worse, it admirably dramatized the elusive nature of this chimerical beast.

“Where now?” was one question left in this reader’s mind. Another query was over the puzzling omission of current environmentalist inflections of landscape issues. Let me offer some thoughts on these two.

Landscape is surely over, in certain significant ways? The contention that in Western thought at least landscape emerged from the division between aesthetics and utility (p. 127), and the separation of production and consumption (Raymond Williams), to become part of art history raises the question as to how far those divisions still control our landscape sensibility, and whether we can any longer conceptually, imaginatively, sustain that division and separation. In an age of acute environmental anxiety surely we cannot? There are two issues here. First, the sites and circumstances of food production, its additives, its marketing manipulation, become increasingly visible for the consumers as their lobbying groups insist on full transparency. The more that happens the more threadbare the veil of Pastoral becomes. Land-scape is not e-scape any longer: that is, landscape in the dominant, formalist, picturesque tradition, requiring a suspension of the moral sense to maximize the freedom of the aesthetic sense, is unsustainable. What is the impact of this on current landscape art? What artists are responding to it?

Secondly, landscape has traditionally made a kind of *nature morte* of the living rural environment (that was an interesting spat on whether or not landscape painting is “always arrested time” (p. 105): well worth pursuing that). But surely that rendering is now under pressure, the more we are aware of the planet’s ailing ecosystem? TV natural history programs—nowadays among our chief “viewfinders” on the landscape—keep emphasizing the “living planet” as an organic body with greater fragility than hitherto suspected, and with a longer etiological history than we had thought. We can’t detach a section of that body and view the surface in isolation, suspending this new holistic awareness in favor of formalist delight. Exactly two centuries ago, the English romantic poet Robert Southey wrote:

within the last thirty years a taste for the picturesque has sprung up . . . a new science for which a new language has been formed, and for which the English have discovered a new sense in themselves, which assuredly was not possessed by their fathers.

The framing off of the view and its aesthetic evaluation according to artistic criteria ("side-screens," middle distances and foregrounds, mountain masses, tonality) took possession of landscape. A century later, this had palled. "Today our sight is a little weary," said Cezanne, "burdened by the memory of a thousand images. . . . We no longer see nature; we see pictures over and over again." This sense is echoed in James Elkins's asking the panel if any of them had "the capacity to imagine landscape outside our experience of painting, photography, film, and other arts": the challenge wasn't really met. Now, a century on from Cezanne's remarks, we have another "new language" for landscape, pressing against the old aesthetic evaluative vocabulary and, it seemed, in some tension with much of the kind of academic discourse evident in the conversation: ecology, sustainability, renewability. Another such conversation on landscape in a decade or so will be drastically nuanced in a way unlikely to affect any other art history topic.

Denis E. Cosgrove remarked that landscape was one of the media through which the question of our relation to the external world, and our presence in it, are put in play. Others pointed to the problems of a binocular perspective on landscape—landscape as a shaping of the natural materials and landscape as a detached viewing. Quite so, on both counts. It was surprising, then, that the work of the earth art or land art practitioners wasn't more prominent in the conversation, given their radical intervention in the history of landscape. As hands-on shapers of land as well as shakers and movers of the art gallery world, the work these artists over the last forty years have been doing in terms of, for example, landscape installations (Christo, Drury, Penone), the sculpting of land (Heizer, Smithson), the minimalist, ephemeral interventions in landscape (Long, Goldsworthy), or the politicized landscape art and reworking of natural materials (Kiefer, Nikolaus Lang) was unrepresented in the conversation (apart from a fleeting reference or two to Long and land art). As a result,

landscape *now* (reality and representation) was hard to focus. These artists have been engaging in the landscape debate materially and theoretically for some time, absorbing environmentalist concerns into their work, relating “landscape” to one of the major debates of our time.

Blaise Drummond

I think there is no turning back. The anxiety about landscape and authenticity or of returning to a natural state has to do with our contemporary consciousness, and with a sense of loss. We never can go back.¹²⁷

What was going to the moon all about? It was about leaving.¹²⁸

So we can't go back, going forward has proved disappointing and leaving didn't get us so far either. It puts us in a kind of a bind. Stuck between the push of progress and the pull of nostalgia. The urge for a return to the garden, when God was in his heaven and all was well with the world, seems to be hardwired into our systems. And all around us are poignant little reminders. To take a local example, here on my desk in the studio a book called *Trees on the Farm* (published in 1992 by the Tree Council of Ireland in association with ICI Agrochemicals) states plaintively that “Little remains of our once extensive oak woods but even the scattered remnants indicate the extent of our loss.”

Whether the urge to retrieve some edenic state of innocence manifests itself as gardening, as suburbs, as mountaineering, as eco-terrorism (so-called) or as James Elkins's late-romantic mode of landscape painting enduring in the regional and city galleries of the world, it amounts in the end to the same thing.

For me the most compelling thing about landscape is that not only is it the place where we humans live but it's also a medium of expression in which everyone engages. Landscape is pragmatic, poetic, rhetorical, polemical. Sometimes these expressions are a form of art. I believe landscape is also a form of language. Through it, humans share experience with future generations, just as ancestors inscribed their values and beliefs in the landscapes they

left as a legacy, a rich lode of literature: natural and cultural histories, landscapes of purpose, poetry, power, and prayer.¹²⁹

It strikes me that the above is true and as an idea it certainly has its charms. There's an appealing fait accompli aspect to an argument that is constructed out of the stuff argued over. However, using landscape as a medium of expression I imagine is a lot more work than painting. For me, as an artist (and a gardener short on time and energy), a painting often presents itself as a more manageable arena for discourse. You can stay warm and dry and comparatively clean in your studio whilst inscribing all sorts of thoughts and beliefs about the world with relatively little exertion. Portable, too, when it's done—you can bring the mountain to Muhammad. With its emphasis on unique and original marks and its extensive back catalogue of landscape-related ideological baggage, painting seems to be still a particularly effective tool for exploring ideas of the natural. And in these are contained almost everything. Painting is more portable than Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park and Back Bay, and you could argue it might be the epicenter of the constructed natural. The manner in which painting can operate in this way, at least for me, is discussed in the following extract from an interview with art critic Clara Young, which I'm cutting and pasting (at the risk of confirming the reader's suspicion of idleness) from *By the Shores of Lake Eden*, a recent catalogue of my work.

CY: When we talked some time ago about your show in Paris [*Garden City* at Galerie Loevenbruck, September 2004] you spoke about the poured and dripped paint and how you would splatter paint and sometimes then, using a kind of carbon-copy technique, reproduce that paint splatter. Once this accidental mark is reproduced within the painting it becomes a controlled element with the graphic appearance of something that was accidentally produced. The technique you used, which I would like you to elaborate on, certainly feeds into ideas that you probe in your paintings: of "uncontrolled" nature and man-made architecture. The juxtaposition of nature and urbanity is a tension-filled leitmotif; perhaps best encapsulated by the suburbs you grew up in. Your allergy to impasto is also interesting

as well as references to Brueghel in particular. What is it about an obvious painterliness, brushstrokes etc, that interferes with your vision? Your work is neither silkscreen, nor totally painting, nor architectural renderings nor photography but it has elements of all those pictorial disciplines.

Last thing: Brueghel is documentary; Friedrich is metaphysical. In both these painters, as well as in your work, there is a static, suspenseful quality (but I suppose that just might be a condition of painting in general). Where does your work lie between the documentary and the metaphysical? Is it utopic? What is the spiritual element? And what exactly is going on in those damn houses?

BD: One of the things that I like about painting is how it can act as a microcosm of the wider world. At the outset maybe you are like God furnishing the void with stuff and then you have to deal with the troubles this brings. The little things in your little world might just be small examples of bigger forces—a drip or splash of paint maybe isn't so far in essence from a river or the oceans and so on. Given this then, celebrating and manipulating these little liquid events comes to have resonance with our interactions with the world in the widest possible sense. A drip of paint across a canvas seems to be allowing nature and chance into the heart of civilisation's project. The opposite of order, control, manufacture. And yet it's so contrived really. Carefully mixing the paint to exactly the right viscosity and tilting the canvas to control the direction of flow. To then go to great lengths to copy an existing "real" drip or splash pushes this contradiction still further. (I trace them and photocopy the resulting drawings to the scale I want and then transfer and paint them carefully back onto the canvas. Sometimes I use drips that are real elsewhere within the painting, which allows the viewer the extra possibility of detecting the conceit if they were to look hard enough. I also tend to leave the outline of the carbon transfer paper, which gives the painted drips an additional odd, ersatz quality. Other times I use drips copied from other paintings or from a stock of them that I have on file.)

Maybe there's a relation here to activities like gardening and, for example, the faux natural landscapes of Capability Brown and the British landscape tradition—employing such enterprise (moving full grown trees, building hills, digging lakes etc) to create something apparently unartful. Drips are probably like snowflakes, zebras and fingerprints. In God's good universe no two are the same, until we came along with our funny little ways.

It's funny sometimes the things people buy, you know. Everyday I drive past a suburban fence made of painted concrete cast to resemble a very rustic arrangement of chopped logs. Presumably this is manifesting some desire on the owner's part for rusticity, that is at the same time refuted by their choice of a laboriously mass-produced imitation in cement. Obviously this is an absurd and extreme example of this tendency, but it is a tension that I think underpins all our activities in one way or another. The desire for order alongside some deep seated nostalgia for a lost Eden. The idea of suburbia is an architectural encapsulation of this, as you suggest.

As well as echoing the forces at play in the wider world, which has some metaphorical purpose in the paintings perhaps, there are other useful correlations. It is handy that there is a not-coincidental relationship between the movement of paint down the canvas and the movement of water through a plant's vascular system, for example. The effect that this has on the resulting form, means liquid paint under gravity can do a pretty good job at portraying an image of tree-ness, for example. Probably a better job than I could do. An increasing reliance on this convenience in the studio over the years has probably led to a parallel aversion to the painted mark. I like that those marks are kind of a given. I don't have to worry whether they are well done, or good, or whatever. They are what they are and maybe not entirely my fault. It has become so extreme that I noticed I was finding it a bit of a strain when I had to modulate a couple of areas of colour within two of the paintings, so unused was I to such flights of lyrical painterliness. They are in *Better Prospects* and *And Maybe We Could Dance*. Apart from those instances, any areas of the paintings that are actually painted rather than

poured, are of a single flat colour. A large part of the appeal to me of the collaged parts of the paintings lies in a similar aspect of being given, rather than created I think. It's not my fault, and perhaps not entirely to my credit either.

The quality of a moment frozen that a drip records on a canvas is something that undoubtedly intrigues me. A liquid event of a few seconds leaving such a "permanent" trace of the complex and universal forces that determined its progress. Even at that level, it seems to hold a certain poignancy. I find almost any painted thing seems to generate this static quality you speak of, and it's a quality I like—sort of funny and sad, a bit ridiculous. There's something of this in Friedrich and Brueghel in particular I think. But probably the quality in Friedrich that I find most alluring is the contradiction between the heightened spiritual yearning within the paintings and the very cool manner of their execution. If I can get a painting to do something vaguely like that I'm happy. With the years and everything that has come in between, obviously there is considerably less spiritual fervor in my work. I would like to think though that there's an element of it underpinning the work at some level. Sort of anti-romantic romantic paintings. They are ultimately all about some idea of a better world I suppose, maybe slightly pessimistically utopian—if you can be that.

Landscape representation, and references to it, might be like sugar: a sweet leftover from the romantic tradition, which can be mixed in with other things. If you don't use too much, it can flavor the work. But then again, maybe landscape representation is like strychnine: even a little bit of it is poison.¹³⁰

In the light of this I guess I'm hoping that the small admission above of secret underlying romantic leanings in my own work relates more to the sugar bit than the strychnine. I'm not sure about that but I do have a suspicion, a theory even, about the persistence of the entirely unreconstructed romantic mode that James Elkins observes. It seems that, despite the rejection within modernism by people like Smithson and Duchamp of the kinds of representations associated with romanticism, the late-romantic, Western tradition of painting

and photography endures. As Elkins puts it, “every country that I know of has ongoing, belated landscape traditions in painting and photography. Sometimes they are abstract, and some are even conceptual, and those press forward into the twenty-first century” (p. 120). If Thomas Cole was bidding artists nearly two hundred years ago to “Get out into nature quickly, before it’s gone,” consider their situation now. What have all the cartographers and parallel projectionists, the gridgers, mechanicals, and empirical measurers brought them? Only melting icebergs, tidal waves, and fish-flavor tomatoes. Is there anywhere left to look that doesn’t recall this uncomfortable reality? Maybe it’s more comfortable not to look too closely. Avert and unfocus your gaze. The fuzzy-edged misty blurring of the semiabstract expressionist landscape mode is a myopic vision that avoids the uncomfortable realities on the ground. Perhaps you may even go as far as to suggest that the fact that we are still beholden to the late-romantic tradition, to the “second- and third-generation, regional, local, and belated romantic Western landscape painters” (p. 143), actually enables us to continue to dwell in the self-destructive way we currently still do.

Perhaps also the fact that the contemporary art that deals in landscape less nostalgically (less belatedly?) often exhibits a relation particularly to the work of Friedrich should also not surprise us. The self-consciousness of his work, the “hyperreal, ‘simulated’ quality” that Michael Newman speaks of, the cool remove in tandem with the yearning, strikes me as a pretty contemporary condition: a reasonable sort of response to the place we find ourselves, if we are prepared to put our glasses back on.

Hanna Johansson

The Revival of Landscape Art

It is important and necessary to separate the different uses, contexts, and meanings of the notion of landscape. There are surely three, four, or even more possible meanings of the word, but in my essay I will follow only one of them. In the context of the Art Seminar conversation the category I propose to discuss is landscape as a historical representation, landscape as a “genre” of visual arts.

I will suggest that there is a return of landscape as a “genre” after it was superseded by several other “genres,” -isms, or media during the twentieth century. In the Art Seminar conversation this topic was mentioned several times, both in the sense that landscape as a progressive art genre faded at the end of the nineteenth century and in the opposite sense that it continued to live through the different phases of abstraction and even into the postmodern period. I agree with both of these opinions. I would like, however, to add some ideas to the conversation by pointing out some of the changes both in the discourse and in contemporary art that allow me to speak about the revival of landscape art.

By saying that landscape as a genre has been superseded, forgotten, or buried under more current art movements, I do not mean that the theoretical discussion of landscape has disappeared. As the Art Seminar conversation proves, it has recently become an innovative and initiative concept that has made possible both abstract and concrete renewals, for example within the fields of environmental aesthetics and environmental architecture as well as cultural geography.

The challenge is to elaborate on why there suddenly are a number of exhibitions that deal with the idea of landscape. This certainly is the case with the art scene of Finland, which is the most familiar to me. For example there are numerous young artists, often women, who are following Casper David Friedrich’s example, copying the composition of the *Wanderer above a Sea of Fog*. Maybe the most famous of these, Elina Brotherus, has even made a series of work entitled *Der Wanderer* (2003–04). What strikes me in these works is that they show the European natural landscape, as it was during the past centuries: ideally pastoral or untamed without any cultural or natural changes.

On a more general level I have noticed at least three different ways of how landscape appears in today’s innovative art. The first I would call political landscape art, which includes that dealing with gender issues, the second I would call medium or technological landscape, and the third would be landscape of closeness and landscape that challenges the limit of representations. A certain consciousness about the tradition of the genre as well as the will to dismantle it joins the three categories together.

The emphasis here on new landscape art and discourse does not mean that there has been no landscape art in the twentieth century. In Finland, before modernism, in the late nineteenth century landscape representations became a powerful symbol supporting the development of the nation state. But landscape survived also through modernism; it was even included in the vocabulary of abstract painting even if it was not an essential or innovative subject as such.

However, the question I want to pose is whether the work of art responds to the history of landscape representations or whether it transforms its own tradition. I therefore want to present some routes to the landscape: how it was enacted simultaneously as an object of art and an object of material environment.

"Yet of all the '*genres*', which the sixteenth-century '*specialists*' began to cultivate in the North, landscape painting is clearly the most revolutionary."¹³¹

In the history of Western art, landscape has been called a "child of history" because it has arisen so late. Indeed this child has had a "short and fitful history," as Kenneth Clark says, since it emerged as an independent motif at a relatively late date, around the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹³²

The reason for the lateness of landscape art has been explained in several ways and different tones. The explanations are based mostly on the history of representation and human beings' self-understanding and the history of the relations between humans and their environment.

According to Gombrich, in sixteenth-century paintings of landscapes we are not seeing views but largely accumulations of individual features. The meaning of the features was mostly allegorical or symbolic or based on religious topics. Still Gombrich insists that the process of "Art into Landscape" had begun as early as the sixteenth century. For him it was the idea of the picturesque that made possible the development of landscape art as such, because scenery was called picturesque if it reminded viewers of a painting they had seen, and to become a "motif" it had to be possible to be assimilated into the vocabulary the artist had already learned. In other words it was only through tradition that landscape became a genre of its own.¹³³

Edward Casey has suggested that the late emergence of landscape art was due to the history of perception and representation. Casey's point is not to argue that landscapes would not have been perceived or appreciated before the seventeenth century, but the fact that the suitable means for representing landscape were as yet lacking. There is always something in the environment that prevents its becoming an object, an object for representation.¹³⁴

The development of landscape painting as a distinct genre was indeed a result of seventeenth-century scientific revolutions in thinking and a new worldview, coupled with the mechanistic view of nature. This was also the moment when the modern self-reflective subject was born, as well as the "age of the world picture." These two concepts evoked representations of landscape. When the world was understood as a picture, which a man can observe from the outside, distanced observations of it were also suddenly possible. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, ideas about perception and representation of landscape shifted away from the notion of a multi-sensory process toward optics and individual views detached from the whole. Eighteenth-century landscape paintings were informed by a worldview that, instead of being eternal and unchanged, was an object of manipulation. It is therefore quite natural that, as landscape painting became more independent, another convention for depicting landscapes, cartography, quickly developed to an unprecedented height of precision.

Only when you are no longer subject to nature by virtue of your occupation can you establish a distanced relationship to it, watching it from afar. This change in relationship between man and his surroundings, along with the theological, political, economic, and moral registers, is at issue in the short essay "Uncanny Landscape" by Jean-Luc Nancy.

He elaborates the idea of landscape as opposite to country (*pays*). Whereas the country manifests itself as something based on a belonging, a belonging that can only come from one who belongs insofar as, and because, he is related to what he calls his "country," landscape opens onto the unknown. "It is, properly speaking, place as the opening onto a taking place of the unknown."¹³⁵ The countryman or the peasant is someone whose occupation is the country. He occupies

(*capio*—"to take, to grasp") it and is occupied with it. Nancy defines a peasant as not only a producer, but also a cultivator, someone who makes something occur and grow.¹³⁶

If we listen to the word "peasant" carefully, it tells us that it also means a pagan. Both the words "peasant" and "pagan" refer to the single word *paganum*. It is here that Nancy's ideas of contradiction between country and landscape become clear. As a pagan, the peasant worships but also occupies the gods of the country, as well as the land itself. According to Nancy there is a presence that acts at every level in the life of the peasant as a pagan. This presence is nothing but the earth itself as an inexhaustible reserve of presence and presentation. The crucial moment of change happens when the country is transformed by industrialization and urbanization. Then the divine withdraws from the presence and gods disappear. There opens another regime, which Nancy describes as "suspended between pure absence and infinite distancing." The new regime entails estrangement, and it is at that moment that the question of landscape occurs. Landscape is born. But according to Nancy this new concept landscape "is the land of those who have no land, who are uncanny and estranged [*le pays des dépayés*]." ¹³⁷ Nancy's idea of landscape is reminiscent of Casey's argument about landscape representations that are possible only where a certain conceptual distance between man and the world occurs.

Following these scholars we can say that the first seed of landscape art or landscape painting as an established and recognized genre of art was laid down during the Renaissance and was really established in the next century in the Netherlands, France, and England. Even in the seventeenth century the subjects of landscape paintings were found in historical events or mythic stories. Landscape became the "proper" function and the future of painting only during the eighteenth century. Within this time landscape evolved into the ideal subject matter for art in Europe, and in the nineteenth century it became a dominant genre when urban artists went on painting excursions to nearby areas of natural beauty. However, even by the early twentieth century, after its apotheosis in Impressionism, landscape art had acquired a pejorative or anachronistic connotation.

Landscape as a genre of visual art does not only concern the history of art but, as became evident above, it is hard to divide the history of representation from the history of perceiving the landscape.

The adequate example of the reciprocal relationship is the word "picturesque," which, according to Gombrich, was first formulated by the middle of the sixteenth century¹³⁸ but more extensively used only in the eighteenth century, especially through the writings by William Gilpin. "Picturesque" is a term used for beautiful landscape views that lend themselves particularly well to painting. There is a reflectivity between the representation and perception of landscape. Gombrich condenses the meaning of this relationship: "The origins of landscape painting cannot be understood without the constant awareness of this truth."¹³⁹

With the ideal of the picturesque, natural views began to be looked at from a painterly perspective, and the general ideal of nature also became "wilder." Gilpin's eighteenth century was when many ideas relating to natural beauty and ideal landscape that still implicitly govern the evaluation and "seeing" of nature today emerged. One can say that the history of the mechanistic worldview has produced not only landscape art but also

bleak topographies of the twentieth century: drained wetlands and deforested hillsides; fertile farmlands made arid by industrial agriculture; sterile suburbs and squalid ghettos and shanty towns; poisoned air, lakes and rivers. . . . At the same time modernist landscape discourses have produced other topographies: national park systems, scenic highways and signposted roadside "view-points"; summer cottages etc.¹⁴⁰

Landscape representations and discourses grow side by side with the modern ideology of nature, which, as Raine indicated, consists of contradictory elements. Eighteenth-century aesthetics of natural beauty as well as representations of landscape were also governed by a sort of fear of the body. The aesthetic appreciation of the landscape was above all visual, bypassing more bodily modes of perception. Even though walking tours in the landscape were appreciated, the discourse was of "views that strike the eye" and "point of view," and

the contemplation of landscape was described in metaphorical phases like “hunt after those various beauties”¹⁴¹ or “capturing wild scenes,” which associated the contemplation of landscape with masculine English hunting culture.¹⁴² All these above-mentioned aspects show how representations of landscape are ideologically saturated.

It is often suggested that landscape painting died because of the camera, abstraction, and the neglect of the illusionist subject matter. It can also be argued that the characteristic feature of late-nineteenth-century painting, the increasing focus on materiality in painting, was also one potential end of it. Danish scholar Klaus P. Mortensen writes that:

in the works of these painters, characterized by their interest in the materiality of their subject matter and the painting itself, the genre seems to be on its way to rejoining the nature that landscape painting originally separated itself out from.¹⁴³

The interesting aspect is that after modernism, around the mid-twentieth century, “reality,” life as well as vegetation, became the focus of artists through conceptual as well as time-based, body, and environmental art. It was materiality that the artists were working with and often in the form of abstraction. These works were dominated by indexicality. They remind me of what Michael Newman in the seminar calls “indexical abstractions”: they are mere traces of the landscape and the artists’ movements in landscape. But the word “landscape” was not commonly used in these works. I think it is possible to call into question whether the land art movement was about “return to landscape” first and foremost, as John Beardsley has insisted.¹⁴⁴ It has been, anyhow, more common to speak of land, environmental, or nature art, than landscape art, even though the matter of the works was, as Beardsley says, basically *landscape*. Landscape seemed to be still largely negatively loaded or at least too scattered a notion to be profitable in the new art practices that have evolved since the 1960s and 1970s.

If I were allowed to generalize, I would say that it was photography that inflicted the vanishing of landscape painting from the late nineteenth century on. But at the same time I am fascinated by the idea that it was actually the technical media, mostly photography

and video, that also made possible or almost obliged the return of landscape art.

The observation of landscapes has changed over the centuries along with the development of visual means and devices used to represent the landscape. Various optical instruments, such as the Claude glass and other reflecting surfaces, as well as the camera obscura, were early aids for the contemplation and presentation of landscapes. And they are still used.

The way in which contemporary landscape artists operate with these devices binds them to the history of the genre. By moving between different forms of observation and technical devices these works of art place themselves within the history of landscape art. But, by doing so, they also challenge the history of observing landscape and the position of both the artist and the viewer.

A good example of the way multiple levels of using the media one upon the other is a diptych *On the Spot I* (1999–2000) by Marko Vuokola. The work occupies a space between painting, photography, and reflection and even includes abstraction within landscape art. The work is composed of two large yellow surfaces, one painted, the other a photo taken of the painted surface. The pictures are just two yellow surfaces. What have they to do with landscape? One possible view opens up when one allows the eyes to rest on the two yellow surfaces. In the midst of the mass of yellow the viewer suddenly perceives his or her own image, but the yellow surfaces also reflect the work on the opposite wall, entitled *Flow* (2000): two TV monitors showing two almost similar films of a lake landscape. Only the different rocking of the boats, from which the films are taken, causes a slight observable difference between the two images.

Many of today's landscape works seem to be about deconstructing the mode of representation based on the disembodied gaze and taking it in a direction where the visuality of the work is meant to transcend or break the structure of representation. In Santeri Tuori's video projection *Waterfall* (2005), which is a close-up look at a waterfall on an island, the power of representation implied by landscape art starts to crumble. The subject matter of the installation work is a distinctive element of ideal landscape painting. But Tuori's work is about water as a falling, stormy, and energetic element. He turns the

landscape from a distant image toward the viewer. The viewer is actually taken inside the landscape, to the surging waterfall recorded by a video camera, surrounded by its sounds. The technical reproduction of the sound causes a vibration and turns reception into a bodily experience as the viewer sits on a bench.

In this context I see no reason to present further landscape works. I can say, however, that in many cases the “meaning” of these works is in the above-mentioned repetition and variation of the characteristics of landscape art.

Contemporary landscapes made by technical media seem to overflow their own edges, as it were; the picture does not resolve itself into an object, and in that way landscapes surely have a shared intention with romanticism. But their characteristic aspects are that the viewer is confronted both with the representation of the real landscape and also by the materiality of the medium, as if nature itself were flowing out of the picture. This could be called a new type of realism, one that might haunt the surfaces of videos, like a ghost in a mechanical machine, refusing to settle down for close observation.

Contemporary art has shifted the landscape from the panoramic seen “military landscape” into the touched and material, and shifted the focus to the blurred.¹⁴⁵ What the meaning of these changes will be for the understanding of landscape art, or landscape in general, remains to be seen. For me this new coming of landscape art has made room for the future of the genre but also created an opening to look at earlier decades’ conceptual land art as parts of the tradition of landscape art.

Annika Waenerberg

From Landscape Talk to Sustainable Landscapes

History and analysis of the concept explicating landscape theory

The earth with its formations and elements—waters, mountains, hills and plains, plants and other living creatures, built environment, and atmosphere—we may explore, use, or protect. The earth will, however, have some kind of a lifetime or development whether we are

there to state it or not. Not so “landscape”: it is a concept, applied to the character of these formations and elements, their use and their representation. This means that “landscape” has only as much and as wide a meaning and history as we give to it. Giving meaning and context to “landscape” happens in many ways and on several levels; “landscape” is a concept with links to history, having been grounded mostly in social, cultural, and ideological maintenance, geography and natural sciences, and ideas on art and nature.

Unlike the species of nature, which may become extinct for good, cultural concepts may absorb and thus also revive long-forgotten or abandoned aspects of ideas and models. Investigating historical or etymological meanings of a term often seems to supply a concept with fresh ideas. The medieval connotations of “landscape,” linked to shaping and a social community, are, in this sense, surely invigorating for the whole concept. Respectively, invigorating connotations can be helpful as soon as a concept has become a nuisance by being applied too often and in a too broad context and because of this is felt to have lost its “deeper” sophisticated or poetic power. This is true, for instance, for the categories of the beautiful, the sublime, and the picturesque, having, within the last couple of decades, been in heavy use in the exhibition branch all over the Western world in museums and galleries.

In order to be able to explicate landscape theory it is necessary to keep in mind the different historical backgrounds of the term “landscape,” that is, the territory, region, or province (*landscepe*, *Landschaft*, *landskap*¹⁴⁶), the view, scenery, or perspective (landscape imagery), plus the subject experience (landscape experience, *Seelenlandschaft*, mindscape) and, last but not least, the environment (sustainable landscape). In my opinion, more than this strict categorization, questions need to be raised that connect with or come from factual material situated in both the historical development and the contemporary context. This is why, so far, I restrict the formal concept definition of “landscape” to three categories as an aid for analysis: first, referring to the actual piece of land, region, territory, or environment, which one can use, farm, investigate, wander upon, or fly over and which one can see, admire, and look at as a view or as scenery or feel part of; second, the tradition of the “landscape” as a frame, scheme, or model through

which we look at our environment or its representations; third, the visual tradition, including not only art but all visual culture. Obviously, these aspects are intertwined; we cannot mention one without implying the other. Still, one might well ask why an art historian itemizes art in third place while positioning the piece of land in first. This is simply because I judge it as more important in contemporary art history. Further explanation will follow, embedded in description of the remarkable changes in the research environment.

From national iconology to humanistic landscape research

New connotations supersede aspects or concepts that have become clichés or seem to have lost their future perspectives; “national landscape” is one of them. In 1980, when moving to the province of Northern Karelia, Finland, I got personally acquainted with one of the most important national sights of the country: the 347.2-meter-high hills of Koli at the 100-kilometer-long lake Pielinen (previously called Pielisjärvi).¹⁴⁷ In those days, a rare resource in that province, art historians were fervently expected to praise the pictures of this landscape. Of all those pictures the oil painting *Autumn Landscape from the Lake Pielisjärvi* (1899; Ateneum, Helsinki) by Eero Järnefelt (1863–1937) was seen to extol the national landscape at its best and at the same time be a witness to the patriotic and political will of Finnish artists striving for the autonomy and later the independence of the country around 1900. The landscape picture and the site itself were both impressive, but writing about them hardly seemed inviting because of the almost predestined expectations connected with the picture and the site as national, political, and patriotic icons.

The real and the painted landscape were melting into each other, pursuing the same goal: “nationwide significance.” In a country where in the nineteenth century the very life of art was founded and (still is) remarkably supported by the state according to the Hegelian idea that no nation would be a nation without a living art life, in which its own history would be reflected, “national iconology”—without ever having been called so—was of course an important starting point for art historical writing. When the national was

being replaced by the local and the global, and the “nationwide significance” with the “worldwide” one, only then was the self-evidence of the nation put into question.

During those two decades that were needed to change the research climate (and in my opinion) not too much happened on the original 1,125 hectares of land around the Koli hills that had been appointed a nature park in 1907. Everything around, however, seemed to change remarkably: farming was suffering and farm fields were “parceled up” and reforested, while grown forests were threatened with soil-exposing cutting, traditional farming was replaced by more or less energetic attempts at tourism, geographers and biologists got interested in documenting the changes in the area, the environment protection movement was growing, landscape art turned into conceptualism, and performances and installations on the sites themselves were arranged. Sites of previous “nationwide significance” were applying for a Europe-wide or worldwide status.

Even art history was not what it used to be anymore. Its conceptual boundaries were transgressed at the same time with deconstruction of established attitudes and ideals. Above all, cultural geography, anthropology, visual culture studies, and gender studies became interested in revealing cultural hegemonies and focusing on phenomena at the margins; art historians were into all those fields. Art history and also the academies and universities of art and design introduced research activities and meddled in this multidisciplinary research landscape by emphasizing the same viewpoints and subject areas: all were broadly focusing on contemporary visual culture. The art sections worked on producing landscape art—paintings, photography, installations, performances, and different kinds of conceptual works. An affinity with the German early romantics was clearly perceivable during the last decades of the twentieth century in Finland, the artist Lauri Anttila (1938–) at the Art Academy in Helsinki being the theoretical head of the movement.¹⁴⁸ Photography sections at art schools became especially active with research on historical and contemporary landscape documentation and landscape photography ranging from studio work to snapshots.

At the end of the 1990s, this development created a precondition

for the formation of humanistic landscape research, with art historian Maunu Häyrynen leading the planning. Humanistic landscape research began as a multidisciplinary cooperative network, consisting of a variety of researchers: art historians, historians, ethnologists, archaeologists, aestheticians and philosophers, cultural geographers, natural scientists, and tourism researchers. National landscape representation in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Finnish photography and pictorial art finally began to gain critical attention.¹⁴⁹ It has consisted of, above all, collecting and invading the landscape imagery and its development through reproductive landscape imagery, popular illustrations, advertisement, all kinds of photography, and further case studies of landscapes and their history. Authentic landscape experience considering all senses (soundscape, smellscape, and so on) became an important subject in gender studies and environmental aesthetics.¹⁵⁰

This fusion provided new perspectives for landscape research of Finnish art historians. Previous national-ideological, biographical, and aesthetic questions were leading into a broader context of discussing cultural identities, industrial development, representation, and artists' minds in the research "From Finnish National Landscapes to Mindscales" of Ville Lukkarinen and myself.¹⁵¹ Even if paintings were still a starting point of research, landscapes obtained a history that went beyond the previous art historical model of presenting the past of the landscape reflected through works of art. Among them were now also the Koli hills in Northern Karelia, where the investigation from the time period before the notorious climbing on these hills of the "first artists" in 1892 showed that the landscape had, even before landscape art, its own relevant history, concerning visual observation and visual commentary. Artists were generally not, as was always maintained, the visual pioneers in this landscape, but instead people like civil servants and officers, clergymen, miners, doctors, and topographers. Educated young people also used to wander into the eastern and northern parts of the country, to get to know the people in the remote countryside, their culture and also their language, Finnish (Swedish being used by the educated class). Early tourists, too, at the time of the foundation of the Finnish Tourist Association in 1887, were fond of the new activities like

hiking and paddling, with this preparing ground for artists' arriving in the "wilderness."

A lot of attention in this research was paid to the shift from national landscapes to "mindscapes" and their preconditions. The results made clear that, in spite of Finnish artists having been known as patriots during the years 1890–1917, political and patriotic reasons did not appear to be the most interesting vehicle for the artists' landscape pictures after all. A keen interest in European art trends was more effective; but the most intriguing motives focused on landscape art could be seen in self-reflective actions. For instance, the continual travels of Järnefelt to the very same landscape over a period of forty years witnessed this kind of self-reflective function of gaining insight into oneself and the development of one's personality and actions. In other words, the landscape before Järnefelt's eyes was changing and his pictures of the landscape were changing, because he himself was changing. Further, this urge toward continual landscape observations was leading to an insight into the universal character of all landscapes (all the elements being the same in all landscapes), which merely changed the relation of the different elements—so coming close to the Humboldtian landscape physiognomy.

These kinds of cognitive perspectives or universal mental functions of art (art writers included) might become one main strand of future critical landscape research. What, for instance, is behind the landscape compositions of young photographic and pictorial artists of today? One of them, the Finnish photographic artist Elina Brotherus (1972–), has recently presented the photographic work *The New Painting*, which also includes her work *Der Wanderer 2* (2005), a photographic paraphrase of Caspar David Friedrich's painting *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer*.¹⁵² Background to this kind of phenomena may be found, at least loosely, in Robert Rosenblum's suggestions about or Lauri Anttila's profound insight into early German romanticism. This background, however, does not yet explain the core of the phenomenon. Rather, one would think that postmodern irony is here turning back into the irony of the early romantic era. There is no need to proceed any further on this question here, but my conviction is that landscape theory could be

well promoted in workshops on this and similar kinds of questions and themes—of course with pictures at hand.

The visual of landscape

Most of the traditional definitions of landscape are firmly rooted in early topographical documentation and landscape art; hence the visual aspects of the concept often dominate. This is strongly mirrored by the definitions of landscape through a wider public. Young individuals who do not have a professional background, when asked about the term “landscape,” define it mostly as a kind of “wider view,” but even as “a background, with life in it, involving some kind of active spectatorship.” However, long before a visual history, landscape has developed its social and literary history, the literary history being in its origin oral, consisting of words or music or both—the local folklore of a more lyric kind containing lots of allusions to the “bluish” landscape in the distance. These verses and tunes are visual in the sense that they evoke mental images, carrying a rich scale of different sensations with them. In one writing published in 1884 on the Koli hills, one can follow how the evocative local folklore telling of the animated nature and magic formation of the landscape elements was being replaced by modern visual admiration of the hill view itself.

A further question on the visual: Could you say whether the forest in front of you is “wilderness” or not? No. Because first you have to define which wilderness is at stake, that of a farmer, a forester, a local tourist or a tourist from far away, or a writer immersed in the idea of “holy wilderness”¹⁵³ following writings and works of artists, nature philosophers, and others. Different images of wilderness exist. A visitor from a city can have a feeling of authentic wilderness where the local folks see only a cultivated piece of land. In the same way, for instance, on the campus area of the University of Jyväskylä visitors from Central Europe admire the forest while the locals think about it as a park, a garden, or a couple of trees in an urban environment. In urban “jungles,” tables are turned.

Where illusions of authenticity are accepted, one picture will function better than a thousand words. Again, seeking for examples,

I am depending on the slopes of the Koli hills. A handmade copy of the famous landscape painting by Eero Järnefelt from 1899, the property of a forester, became the inspiration in 1906 for the State to found a national park on the spot. This saved all the birches at the Pielinen lake from being cut, and the view shown by the painting was preserved. The birches were actually a result of the old and already forbidden slash-and-burn method of farming, but the landscape view in the painting was still seemingly "untouched," without any buildings, fields, roads, people, or traffic. By the time of its making, a friend of the painter, Juhani Aho (1861–1921), had published his writings about the common journeys to these hills, reporting, on the contrary, about a Janus-faced landscape with a stern eastern slope, and only water, hills, and forests as far as the eye could see, and a cheerful western slope, with houses, cattle, fields, meadows, and small spots of forest, a pattern reminiscent of a patchwork quilt. The cheerful side was Aho's favorite, representing a past landscape ideal of *buon governo* or idyll, a serene life of nature and man together. In spite of this, the stern side has been chosen ever since; it covered the new need for the illusion of untouched wilderness.

As a result of the subsequent agriculture and forest policy the cheerful view too grew trees. The environment turned to match the chosen image, and those writing on art that has been done on the spot could see untouched nature with their own eyes and contribute to the illusion and the perseverance of the myth of untouched nature. This phenomenon, of course, results from more than one cause. It might be more fruitful to analyze these kinds of myths from a social or mental rather than a national point of view, that is, where illusions function as a support for the desire to be all by oneself, away from people and the urban milieu, seeing and hearing only nature. A few years ago new summer cottages and saunas in Finland were forbidden at the water's edge; they had to be drawn back among the trees in order to preserve the view untouched—at least the illusion of it.

Toward sustainable landscapes

It was interesting to see what kind of more general intentions the arranged landscape discussion would raise. There was among others the wish to discard a merely ideological reading of landscape and the wish to bring the landscape experience into the landscape, or to read landscape through the subject. In this essay I have participated in the discussion on some of these questions; mainly, however, I have tried to describe those spots on my own path in landscape studies that have created possibilities for new strands in landscape research and those that I would try to keep for the future.

As to landscape research, it is evident that my starting point has been in case studies. I have been using local examples, most of it referring to a large North Karelian case study well known to me. Case studies on local material—wherever it is—are an important way of gathering questions, opinions, points of view, and insights. They also provide us with surprises or failing results that keep the research situation from becoming too self-evident or from being too deeply entangled in theoretical speculations leading only in one direction while the material situation is suggesting another. To get from the local level onto a global or Western one, I recommend the discussion of different case studies, your own and those of others. It seems to me that similarities in research questions are often concealed by local circumstances and a different historical development. These questions I have to leave for the next occasion. So far I have been interested in the affinity between the landscape in Northern Karelia and Tuscany; my next larger case study, begun in summer 2006, will hopefully continue in Russian Karelia. And as to previous theory or, rather, other theoreticians, no time was available for them here either. While waiting for a chance to look at others' writings I am also hoping for opportunities to discuss the analysis and the history of concepts; they are a good vehicle to bring researchers to the same table in spite of eventual scholarly or methodological differences.¹⁵⁴

At this moment, in my opinion, perspectives for a relevant landscape theory seem to consist of defining and formulating relevant new questions. The most relevant of these questions appears to be sustainability in landscape. Sustainability is a complicated subject

that raises questions of ecology and economy at the same time, on the same spot—and almost always in difficult contradiction with each other. Criticism has been focusing, among other areas, on landscapes that are preserved or “musealized” without sufficient economic preconditions for their maintenance. It is, however, not always easy to see where the possibilities for maintenance lie; sustainability can mean both preserving tradition and promoting dynamic change. One crucial question is the role and the opinions of the local people in creating sustainable landscapes. The balance between traditional forms of living and tourism is often extremely sensible in northern regions, for instance in Lapland. It is maintained that the traditional environment will be destroyed if traditional forms of living disappear—as was recently happening to a large extent. And yet, in Lapland, both local people and tourists would preserve the traditional environment, if possible, even if the previous forms of living, for which the traditional environment was relevant, no longer exist. Sustainable landscapes need “sustainable” methods of analysis, not only for the economy or nature, but also for a culture with its collective and further mental attitudes. And people’s aesthetics should be investigated in their own right, concerning their purposes apart from scholarly aesthetics. In addition, we ought not to leave behind questions concerning ideologies, mainly because those values are still held by societies and communities.

And, finally, sustainability of landscapes raises the question of the researcher’s position. What is the relationship between the researcher’s “objective” and landscape ethics?

Stephen Daniels

Landscape and Narrative

I want to take up some points made by roundtable participants about time, history and historical representation. These points are not much developed in the transcript, even in potentially promising exchanges like those over the extent to which landscape “arrests” time, “absorbs” events, and “outlives” or “surpasses” history. This is puzzling. As some of the participants are clearly aware (and as they may have discussed off the record), issues of temporality are

informing current theoretical writings on landscape. The present practice of landscape art, in traditional two-dimensional forms as well as more innovative performative modes, is highly sensitive to time and history. Moreover studies of temporality in a number of multidisciplinary fields including memory, narrative, nationality, and biography are being framed in terms of spatial fields that include landscape along with cognates such as place, site, and environment. In a meeting in the West of Ireland, which involved tromping as well as troping, I would have expected such temporal fields to be brought to the foreground. Some are in the background or there by implication. Many of the extended discussions are predicated on some well-told stories of the historical development of landscape as an art form and ideology; to be sure this was part of the seminar's search for common ground but it is nevertheless surprising that it prompted scarcely any critical reflection, particularly in the light of Tom Mitchell's well-known introductory essay to *Landscape and Power* (1994), which drew attention to the persistence of certain plotlines in landscape historiography, particularly the linear "rise and fall" paradigm, and suggested more geographical narratives of cultural exchange.¹⁵⁵

In this commentary I will focus on questions of narrative in recent work in English landscape archaeology and landscape photography. These works are about particular variants of landscape, both regionally, on the ground, and stylistically in terms of their operative genres, of both picturing and writing. What interests me is the way they deploy and develop traditional landscape genres, which are often, in the prevailingly progressive discourse of landscape theory, regarded as restraining, sometimes reactionary, forms of representation. They rework topographical traditions that are sometimes seen as merely matter-of-fact, or oppressively empiricist. Neither author might thank me for seeing these works shadowed by another genre, which has an even worse press, the Picturesque, for being a superficial, tourist view and at worst an escapist fantasy. But then much of my own work in cultural-historical geography has been to redeem both picturesque and topographical landscape as genres that have potential and limits like any other, and have much more cultural capacity and complication than is often recognized.¹⁵⁶

Telling, or retelling, these topographical tales should not be seen as a peculiarly English pastime. They should be seen in terms of a broader frame of cultural analysis, which includes Bill Cronon's work on narratives of environmental history (including their visualization in maps, graphs, and panoramas) at both a continental and a global scale.¹⁵⁷ While I understand some of the concern in the roundtable to ringfence landscape as a concept, it seems to me vital that it should be understood relationally in terms like space and environment. As such, I hope my commentary will open an international dialogue between this seminar (in its extended form as a book) and the program on Landscape and Environment I direct for the UK Arts and Humanities Council, which has historical representation as one of its core themes (www.landscape.ac.uk).

Matthew Johnson's *Ideas of Landscape* (2007) addresses a consciously English tradition of landscape archaeology "firmly in the grip of the most unreflective empiricism in which 'theory' is a dirty word and the only reality worth holding onto is that of muddy boots—a direct, unmediated encounter with the real world."¹⁵⁸ In the process he recovers the dirty secrets of this tradition, its "habits of thought" as it moves between theory and practice, ideology and technique. Raymond Williams's term "structure of feeling" would be equally appropriate, for the book situates landscape archaeology within a broader literary-historical tradition of landscape writing, in particular its strain of romantic aesthetics. The book centers on the writings of W. G. Hoskins to recuperate them from the charges of unreflective empiricism. Hostile to academic theory of any kind, especially as a badge of international professional advancement (his book *The Making of the English Landscape*, he said, might have made a greater impact if it had been called *The Morphogenesis of the Cultural Environment*), Hoskins's writings are structured by a romantic, sometime militant, particularism, consciously so when he launches attacks on the powers in the land that destroyed the local livelihood of peasant cultures. Perhaps inevitably Hoskins's landscape narrative is an elegiac one, in which the landscape historian using various techniques (field work, aerial photography, line drawing, fine writing) works against the grain of processes that erase this collective memory on the ground.

Jem Southam's *Landscape Stories* (2005) anthologizes some of his works as a photographer and writer over the previous fifteen years.¹⁵⁹ His photographic work is in color, often using a large format and long exposures; most is close to his home in south-west England and based on walking and rewalking the ground. *The Red River* is a sequence that charts a seven-mile stream in Cornwall, tinted red by pollution from tin mining, from source to sea, and *Upton Pyne* a series of photographs over a number of years of a pool, variously developed, on the site of a disused manganese mine. Both works revision traditional landscape genres; indeed the ghost of Constable hovers over them, not the lifeless artist (quoted from a hostile exhibition review) in the roundtable transcript but the painter of wetlands. Many of Southam's works explore watery places, liquid landscapes where solid ground gives way, with even the earth itself, seen over time, in a fluid state. The images are intersected by a series of stories, of varying duration and velocity, in which nature as well as culture takes on narrative agency: sudden cliff falls and slow erosion, a few seasons' gardening and centuries-long economic decline, the traditions and legends of a place. Such narratives open up in Southam's words the "imagined space" of landscape. This is landscape as a dense ecology of habitation framed in terms of wider processes and networks of change; the photographs develop the tradition of landscape art to look at the overlooked, and see the epic with the everyday. The term "plotting," as both a spatial and a temporal strategy, makes sense for Southam's landscape stories.

Narrative interpretation in landscape study is not just a matter of reflecting on the way we were, but I would insist (against the tendency in some recent cultural geographical claims on narrative) that it can never be a matter of isolating moments of "becoming" from the matrix of a story. To do so would be losing the plot. "We tell stories," notes William Cronon of environmental narratives, "to explore the alternative choices that might lead to feared or hoped-for futures."

Dana Leibsohn*On the Limes of Landscape*

In a recent meditation on miasma, Michael Taussig suggestively inverts the usual queries about landscape. His focus is the play of interest and disinterest that binds land, language, and daily practice, yet he does not ask what kinds of landscapes such labors beget. Instead Taussig plumbs the meaning of nonland, territories that might well be or are on the verge of becoming wastelands.¹⁶⁰ The geographic spaces that mesmerize Taussig are swamps and bogs, landscapes in which the score remains unsettled between productive earth and primordial ooze. As he traverses the realms suspended between solid ground and water, Taussig wrings significance from performative metaphors and historical events, economic facts and philosophical texts. His evocative sketch of the murky spaces of Western geographic imagination and desire is an assay of sublimity. Even so, Taussig's reflections do not simply nestle in a familiar sense of the sublime; rather they insist upon theories and practices that traverse the formed, the unformed and whatever semi-earthly matter lies between.

As I've reflected upon the depth and range of the roundtable discussion in Ireland, what seems most unresolved is the breach between landscapes that are comfortably recognizable as such and those more difficult to assimilate. James Elkins presciently opened the seminar with the observation cum proposition that no landscape exists apart from ideology. This may well be an axiom of the historical present. Yet even as we acknowledge a fundamental interdependence between landscape and representation, there are territorial locations so marginal and conditions so ephemeral they seem nearly impossible to describe: rivers we cannot name will shift course; cliffs so vast and riven we will never walk their edges will, nonetheless, crumble; tectonic plates whose mass we can barely discern will inexorably grind against one other. And so the crucial puzzle of this volume seems less a conundrum of place than one of discursive containment: just how much elasticity can, and must, befit a landscape?

By way of background, I offer that the histories of land I find

most provocative are those produced at cultural and temporal edges, where familiar practices press against those considered alien and foreign. Landscapes defined by early modern colonization—its religious and political industries, its imaginary and commercial enterprises—weigh heavily on my engagement with territory and terrain. So too do hybrid representations. And so, in the paragraphs below, I consider two evocations of territory that did not fully surface in the Ireland seminar, and that do not easily align with or fit within conventional considerations of landscape. In juxtaposing these particularly disparate settings, one from long ago and one from the immediate present, I seek to underscore the liminality and agility of landscape. By skirting the edges of this connotative field, I wish to suggest that the limits of landscape—and thus our theories about it—are both more and less flexible than we usually suppose and, perhaps, ever wish them to become.¹⁶¹

Others' landscapes

In the year 1546, in a small town in New Spain, indigenous leaders mustered their territorial woes and marched them to Mexico City, to lodge a formal complaint with colonial officials. At issue was the authority of boundaries set out by the then-defunct Aztec state, under the aegis of a consummately land-hungry ex-ruler. This local boundary dispute, which pitted the indigenous town of Cuauhtinchan against its neighbors, emerges from archival documents as a boastful fragment of internecine history.¹⁶² Its resolution would change lives, but only in circumscribed ways. Of course we now know that the pathos of unfolding colonial legacies—not only in early modernity but across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—has subsumed thousands of such incidents, rendering them so humble of scope they appear nearly inscrutable. Yet the implications of Cuauhtinchan's land reckoning deserve scrutiny, especially if we wish to underscore the suppleness as well as the inelasticity of contemporary tropes of landscape.

Across the sixteenth century, hundreds of native communities in New Spain struggled doggedly with the boundaries and encumbrances of land: what was proper or unsanctioned, what represented

rightful possession and unjust dispensation.¹⁶³ Territorial tensions boiled over as Christian and European practices took root in Mexico, and as terrain was vacated in the wake of diseases that ravaged indigenous populations. Yet anxieties were not riveted only by the habits of European settlers. Much of the disquiet in indigenous communities had intractable pre-Hispanic roots. And more than one ancient claim was reanimated when colonial courts—as new venues for adjudication—opened their doors to indigenous plaintiffs. Such was certainly the case in Cuauhtinchan.

What distinguishes this community's experiences from so many others is the abundance of painted histories and prose writings, in both Spanish and Nahuatl, that adumbrate the territory community leaders traversed in their quest for arbitration.¹⁶⁴ Comparison of these accounts suggests this was a complexly nuanced landscape—although no one in Cuauhtinchan would have described their world in such terms, or necessarily acknowledged the contours of such a highly Europeanized concept. Landscape, in other words, is what others make of the territorial ambitions unleashed in, and across, central Mexico. And we would hardly be wrong to view this transformation of indigenous *mise-en-scenery* into landscape as one yet to run its full course.

The rituals of travel from colonial Cuauhtinchan to the capital led across ordinary, if sometimes hostile, territory punctuated by small towns and fecund pastures. Had it been possible to tramp beside indigenous leaders, the journey would have traced a skein of paths through newly congregated towns and recently built churches; the intrepid would have encountered wheeled carts, fields of wheat and corn, and meadows studded with livestock. The economies of exchange at work upon these lands were far from simple and, for those who remembered the material and ideological practices of pre-Hispanic times, the habits of the 1540s would have seemed like a second world cast upon, but also fashioned from, the first. Despite this hybridity, the workaday qualities of this landscape would have remained comprehensible to anyone who cared to know them.

Yet even as the faithful convened for prayer in their freshly painted churches, and goats and sheep overclipped their grassy pastures, a deep and sacred history infused indigenous lands, imbuing

them with almost enchanted significance. Seminal landmarks played roles at once profane and ancestral—the towering mountain of La Malinche, specific promontories and rock formations, particular rivers and streams all signaled the historical warp and woof of the region. Even so, the landscape of daily colonial experience did not benignly intersect with ancestral plains. The ancients' territories were not merely grounds unpocked by the imprint of monastic complexes or the tracks of cloven hoofs. These were mercurial places, geographies of fate and destiny that could be fraught with anxious surprises.

In antiquity, boundaries held extraordinary significance for community identity, but these were protean and could shrink to near invisibility or grow immanent at key moments. Lands traveled on pilgrimage remained physically charged in ways akin to springloaded traps, capable of consuming hapless ancestral figures. Depending upon the moral sanctity and ritual purity of the traveler, sites of human sacrifice might quicken to life, or the insides of mountains might open to view. Only slivers of documentary evidence reveal how challenging it might have been in the sixteenth century to negotiate this mixed landscape—the fields and valleys that were, as well, layered sites scarred by ancestral deed and plow alike. Nor is it clear that everyone would have been privy to the sacred topography of central Mexico. Cuauhtinchan's records leave little doubt, however, that all these kinds of territory, and the recollection of their traverse, were held dear.¹⁶⁵

For some in Cuauhtinchan, this ancestral territory must have seemed originary, if not utterly autochthonous. Narratives of ancestral figures migrating from afar, long before any colonial horizon, did not undermine this sense: when the elders arrived, history started—this was the indelible legacy of ancestral labor remembered, recorded and oft reperformed. It would be a mistake, however, to presume that the model of world making at work here was simply that of a palimpsest, with originary landscapes being remade first by immigrant ancestors and then by colonial settlers. Admittedly, from the vantage of the present, we will never know precisely how the sacred enlivened the mundane or the quotidian anchored the ancestral, but it is clear that, in the mid-sixteenth century in Cuauhtinchan, the pragmatic sense

of territory necessitated a fluidity of practice that could accommodate the transformative rendering of one form of landscape into another, time and time again.

Across the last two centuries, historians and anthropologists have described communities in Europe and Asia, Africa and Oceania—both past and present—whose instantiation in landscape was at once profane and sacred. The particular sacred histories re-enacted in Cuauhtinchan's environs may be unique, but the habit of re-enactment hardly so. This should make the indigenous landscape of central Mexico less unexpected, but it also renders more complicated the implications of its otherness. And it is on this point I want to dwell. At their simplest, Cuauhtinchan's territorial practices throw into relief how restricted in genre are the landscapes with a deep hold on contemporary imagination. I feel quite safe in proposing that few readers of this volume (if any) will call colonial Mexico to mind, first and foremost, when they scan the term "landscape." If this point appears facile, it is worth making nonetheless: when we theorize landscape (whomever we fancy ourselves), we are not theorizing "all possible landscapes," but only a partial and poignant selection of handpicked sites and experiences.

Yet simple inclusiveness has come to strike me as overrated. Postcolonial and anthropological critiques notwithstanding, I remain unconvinced there is much to be gained by insisting upon ethnographic repleteness. It is true, the phrase "others' landscapes" exposes the temporal and ideological thumb prints of high modernity and its desires to make the familiar strange. And that is not nothing. To end the discussion there, however, misses a crucial epistemological point. For the most interesting complication that early modern Cuauhtinchan (or China or Benin) introduces into landscape tropology is not how varied landscapes might otherwise be. Rather these counter-instances are compelling because they call into question the limiting instances of landscape. These places impel us to follow Taussig and ask: Is there any place, or historical condition, so remote or so dry that landscape cannot happen?

More landscape

In the year 2007, in *Second Life*'s virtualized landscape my avatar treks for pleasure. Its pixel-prim body strolls along the canals of virtual Amsterdam, passing quaint shops and canal boats, navigating past solicitous streetwalkers. Longing for a more isolated setting, I teleport through public parks with flowering trees. When we reach a canyon where my avatar can splash amidst a rushing stream and scramble over boulders, we linger. My *SL* day concludes with a visit to a secluded teahouse perched atop snow-crested peaks. To be sure, *SL* has a well-deserved reputation for profligate gambling and virtual sex boutiques; however, there are also chic gallery openings to attend and shopping urges to be consummated, but what my avatar and I seek is the landscapes.¹⁶⁶

Pixels and vector-traces may be weak signifiers for mountain vistas, but so too are the silver-salt grains that constitute photographic surfaces. Yet few today would deem the Ansel Adams images of Yosemite "insufficient" as landscapes.¹⁶⁷ While I make no claim that *SL* or any other virtual earth map will greatly disturb the meanings of landscape, collectively these digital cynosures are, already, exerting a strong pull upon the lived world. And so, taking a lead from (and a bit of liberty with) Tim Cresswell's argument that landscapes are never strictly physical objects or visual experiences, but rather "practiced environments,"¹⁶⁸ I want to entertain the practices of one virtual landscape, and ask what its relationship to other lands might be.

As was the case in sixteenth-century Mexico, vocabularies for describing local territory in *SL* do not privilege the term "landscape." "Sims" would be the most accurate idiom, yet I would confuse no one to observe that, much as in the ancestral environs of Cuauhtinchan, landscapes in *SL* can appear both utterly mundane and eerily animate. If there is a comic book quality to *SL* (and I mean comic book in the best sense of that genre), waters are nevertheless azure blue, grasses verdant green. The sky and scudding clouds appear just where one's worldly sense expects them, and likewise the pathways, trails, rocks, and solid turf. But permanence is not necessarily a virtue in *Second Life*. So vanished virtual Amsterdam: one afternoon my avatar

strolled along canals; the next, Amsterdam was gone.¹⁶⁹ In contrast to the first world, where catastrophes might obliterate a town, in *SL* obliterated monuments leave no visible detritus. Mary Lucier's video project *Noah's Raven* (1992–93) takes its power from the metaphor of scarring, using film to trace the traumas cut into human flesh and earthy lands.¹⁷⁰ In *SL*, any such traces—left in code or computer memory—fail to surface. Urban decay does fill the simulacral junkyard of The Wastelands, but by and large the landscapes of *SL* are pristine and uncluttered.

This is not to say *SL* is a free and easy place. Territory in *SL* has gone heavily in a commercial direction, with beachfront parcels and virtual islands currently commanding high prices—in the peculiar monetary token of *SL*, the Linden dollar. There also exist safe spaces where murder and mayhem are forbidden, although elsewhere, for a (relatively small) price, nearly anything goes. As a person whose childhood in first life involved an astringent relation to video gaming, I find the ease with which avatars buy the pleasures of simulated combat as remarkable as it is perverse. No less notable is the placid notion of sublime landscape that holds sway in *SL*: for the fee of an Internet connection and the will to spend one's leisure harnessed to a computer screen and keyboard, one's avatar can hike through pretty parks, or sit contemplatively and listen to rustling wind.

As one passes through these micro-environments, even for the first time, their familiarity is striking. The *SL* program permits considerable latitude in behavior, including the rendering of topography and landscaping, yet “nature” in *SL* cleaves closely to bourgeois ideals of edenic gardens and bucolic parklands. This should not really surprise; as has been aptly noted by many, the kinds of beauty sought in landscapes are hardly immune to hegemonic ideologies. Nevertheless unsettling disjunctions separate *SL* landscapes from those of the first world. The most pronounced of these, at least to my eye, adheres to the surrogacy of the avatar.

In *SL*, as is standard in so many game environments, avatars routinely fly—no special equipment necessary. The degree to which my vision overlaps with and replicates that of my avatar seems capricious and partial. I see both more and less than she does. And rightly so: such is one of the uncanny allures of interactive games.

Avatars can also stroll or run through *SL*; they may swim and walk through water. And they can be teleported from one setting to another, compressing a multitude of in-between spaces and incidental landscapes into a few seconds of stillness. Because bandwidth remains so limited and finite, an avatar tends to “arrive” at its digital destination before the virtual environment gets sketched in. This is an unintended effect of current technological latency, not an effort to expose the anatomical underlyers of the mise-en-scene. As any practiced semiotician knows, however, sutures in the fabric of representation are not necessarily devoid of meaning—in fact, quite the contrary.

From one perspective, occupying a landscape—even virtually so—that requires “catch-up” to transpire in order to “enworld” one’s atavistic double is a transitory technological predicament. By the time bandwidth increases and this anomaly becomes an artifact of paleotechnology, the possibilities and conditions of landscape will surely have changed. Until then, however, it is requisite that one endure the linear and numerical geometry of computer design as it assembles the *SL* landscape. As polygons and pixels coalesce, blocky shapes become defined and differentiated, and the blurry and unfocused are overlaid with texture maps. The landscape created may be visually recognizable, but, in the process of landscape-becoming-landscape, the conventions of first-world phenomenology grow unstable. In *SL*, an environment is summoned into existence by dint of the avatar’s presence, but the forms of that landscape are predetermined, already cached until required. To take a page from Heideggerian phenomenology, in *SL* one’s being “shows up” fashionably early for everything. Well before an enveloping landscape materializes, the avatar is restlessly pacing the perimeter, looking for action.

It is still early days for virtual landscapes, and much about their viability remains tentative and fragile. Nonetheless, from the writings of Marshall McLuhan to those of Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour, we have become well schooled in the complicated (and complicating) lives of technologies; we know their intersections with daily experience can be highly unpredictable, their meanings unstable. When a book serves as a plant stand, it has not become

obsolete but is it still a viable technology of literacy? Or, more to the point, when photographs in *Google Earth* assist real estate ventures is this more properly their calling than when, as recently documented in Iraq, they map targets for political insurgency? Fluidity of use and consequence, historians of science are right to insist, lend technologies their elastic potency and sway in the world.

As of this writing, the spaces and habits of *SL* have deeply insinuated themselves in first-world activities that are financially profitable, academically sanctioned, and socially complex.¹⁷¹ Yet the boundaries between first and second worlds, particularly the porosity of these borders, still present surprises. Indeed, whether of a utopian or dystopian camp, much of the writing on virtual landscapes continues to elevate the materiality of the first world at the expense of the second.¹⁷² But what ontological markers hold digital and first-world landscapes apart? Are they the same as, or even similar to, say, those of photography or video? Or perhaps this is the wrong tack. Perhaps, instead, there is something to be gained by listening to those who espouse worldviews in which on- and offline constructions are continuous and mutually sustaining rather than mainly parasitic.

In her essay "The Patent and the Malanggan," Marilyn Strathern argues that certain forms of modern, Euro-American technology do not merely define nature, they transform it in ways that allow nature to grow in kind and scope.¹⁷³ For Strathern, this is possible because of a Euro-American conviction that technology is decidedly not nature—the two are distinct, yet part of a whole. Admittedly Strathern analyzes quite particular technologies, but her larger point is apposite here. Technologies define themselves in opposition to nature, and thus depend upon nature for their vitality. The game is not zero-sum: as technologies become more diffuse and expansive, so too does the stuff against which they define themselves. Folding this into landscape theory, I suggest the reason landscapes like those in *SL* start to matter is not because they threaten (or even promise) to become more convincing simulacra—although they no doubt strive in this direction. Nor is it because *SL* landscapes prey upon those of the first world—which they will also continue to do. Rather, these virtual spaces warrant theoretical engagement because, as they grow and change, the technologies that make them possible press upon the

very concepts that allow landscapes to show themselves. And, in so doing, they insist upon a persistent redefinition of that which is “natural,” that which vision makes knowable, and that which we recognize as the phenomenology of place.

Of limes and landscape

At the limits of all our landscapes hover those other scapes. For some, among the most powerfully evocative are oceans and seas, and the lairs of pirates and sailors and other seafaring peoples. No less prominent in the realm of fluid forms figure landscapes of memory—the ebbing and flowing of thoughts and sensations that allow us to remember places we have been, their scents and sounds lingering even after many years. At the far end of the spectrum stand the obdurate “immigrant rocks” described by Doreen Massey, lithic forms that settled into place so deep in geologic time they have gone native; their arrival from elsewhere and displacement of previous matter is a history that has nearly evaporated.¹⁷⁴ Just as extreme are exhausted and wasted lands—places of such extraordinary destruction and trauma as to be beyond recuperation, even by a radical aesthetics of violence. Crude though this inventory may be, its contours reveal how relatively few in number and predictable in form are the landscapes that seem most apt and beckoning (no matter what our cultural predisposition). Maybe this is as it ought to be. In closing, however, it is worth underlining this axiom: every strain of landscape is haunted and fed by its exclusions.

This is not to say that landscape and its theories eschew universalizing ambitions. In fact, just such a conception of landscape is relatively easy to conjure—while the territories of Cuauhtinchan and *Second Life* have not yet staked a claim upon the conventional supports for landscape, the stretch would hardly be extreme. Perhaps, however, the most compelling aspect of landscape does not lie in its potential elasticity, nor in the flexible nuances of its sustaining ideologies. Even the representational props that lend landscape so much potent afterlife—paintings and photographs, installations, films and second-lifescapes—can collapse to the curious condition of a vanishing point, extinguishing what seemed so evident moments

ago. Instead, far more binding might be an explicit recognition of what landscape has not yet, and will never, become. A certain permeability at the boundaries is to be expected, and what lies beyond—in that placelessness that is at once nowhere and nearby—can be threatening indeed. Nevertheless, in ancient Roman times, when tours of the limes ceased and boundaries no longer secured the forces of in- and exclusion, the game became a draw. The metaphor and materiality of miasma may thrive upon in-betweeness, but, without its limits, landscape forfeits its elastic embrace, and ceases to be “a thing that we live within.”¹⁷⁵

Yvonne Scott

Size Matters: Landscape, Art, and Ireland in an Age of Globalization

The transcript of what was evidently a stimulating roundtable discussion prompted in this reader a range of responses to the many aspects raised—too many to address in this context. Consequently, the comments here are confined to two distinct, but related, elements that are particularly relevant in the Irish context: the definition of landscape representation, and the question posed by James Elkins (p. 119): “Can landscape painting . . . still be practiced by people seriously engaged with the history of art, or does it have to find expression in various local and regional contexts?”

Ireland makes a useful case study for this topic generally. In the first place, landscape has been a dominant theme in Irish art particularly since the early twentieth century, a legacy of its history of colonization and the subsequent independence in 1921 of twenty-six of the island’s thirty-two counties, its traditionally agricultural economy and rural society, relative dependence on tourism, shifting migration patterns, contested border, and island status—all of which have combined to heighten awareness of issues of territory, sovereignty, environment, and natural resources. Less fashionable, theoretically, is the fact that the island’s scenery, particularly along the western seaboard, prompts an aesthetically charged response—as the comments by the participants to the roundtable revealed as they ventured into the dramatic Burren landscape.

In the second place, Ireland as a nation occupies a “local,” rather

than central, position in the wider international scheme while, within Ireland, globalization has facilitated and exacerbated conditions of both isolation and inclusion, of distinction and homogeneity. Most significantly for this commentary, the technological networks associated with globalization have impacted both on the representational tactics of artists and on their visibility within the art infrastructures, locally and internationally. These will be returned to, but before considering the representation of landscape it is relevant to consider how it is defined, in particular in terms of scope and scale.

Despite the adoption of landscape terminology to describe a host of structures and virtual or conceptual environments (the political landscape and so on), the term as an art historical genre continues to be primarily understood as an exterior scene of some kind. As with any of the traditional genres, these were formalized for purposes that are now largely defunct and for social and professional environments that have radically changed. This does not mean that such genre categories are no longer useful—they are, particularly when examining transitions in representational strategies over time, as this roundtable event demonstrates. However, contemporary visual agendas create complexities and prompt refiguring of genres to encompass alternative perspectives, as we see for example in the terminology of “space and place.” The point of categorization is to group images according to common denominators. However, with the multiple dimensions and ambiguity of meaning, images typically transgress or extend such boundaries.

The roundtable participants noted that virtually all landscape imagery, even today, is anthropocentric: human occupants or viewers are implied if not depicted. Within that parameter, landscape is understood to serve one of two broad functions: as an environment for a subject or as *the* primary subject, essentially either a passive or a protagonist role. Where the role of landscape representation is to provide a context, then the classification could logically be reconfigured as “environment” and extended beyond “landscape” to include interior as well as exterior spaces. On the other hand, where the focus is the land and its components (trees, fields, mountains, and so on), particularly where nature is the predominant theme, then the definition of landscape as an *exterior* location is clearly appropriate.

However, urban exterior “landscape” scenes may be entirely devoid of nature in the organic sense, in which case the exteriors/interiors distinction loses relevance.

Further, certain components within themes and genres have iconologic and semiotic functions in common that cut across their boundaries. For example, a country lane, a city street, a corridor, and an artery can all be understood as sites of transition, or as connectors in a network, or as hybrid spaces.

Arguably, landscape as exterior environment makes sense as a *subset* of space/place rather than as an independent genre. Yet the scope of landscape, as the roundtable discussion revealed, is so enormous that if anything it requires subdivision. Themes for art history are less, now, about the objects or components presented than the conditions they signify, and the taxonomy is probably more effectively reconstituted as a matrix than as a series of vertical silos or horizontal hierarchical shelves. However, in this era where traditional art history and cultural theory have equally valid, if sometimes conflicting, claims as mechanisms for analysis, their conjunction under established banners, like “landscape,” as in events such as this, provides interesting opportunities for reexamination of definition and interpretation.

The issue of the parameters of landscape relates not just to scope, but also to scale. While traditionally understood as a panorama, embracing a selection of the various constituent elements as mentioned, some images commonly described as landscape comprise a limited range of elements, and are commonly now distilled to a single element. Gwen O'Dowd and Mary Lohan have each painted seascapes with no reference to land or sky, people or boats, just sea, O'Dowd exploring gender or environmental concerns, while Lohan's imagery of fluxive and structureless surroundings is employed to sidestep urbanization and the visible traces of human intervention. Similarly, Willie McKeown's frameless monochrome sky paintings resist the orientation of position or identity. In such environments whose fluid constituents (air or water) suggest suspension and boundlessness, Deleuze and Guattarian ideas of democratic networks are implied, as hierarchies are dissolved and constituent particles interconnected.¹⁷⁶ Notions of hierarchy, direction, and progress are

deliberately obviated without surface, horizon, or other coordinates to provide the benchmarks for scope, time, and scale.

How small can an element be and still lay claim to being a landscape? Clare Kerr's closely focused and "enlarged" images of a tiny clump of grass or clover growing in a field provide a substantial environment certainly for an insect, and her work is commonly described as "landscape." However, the circular format of such images infers the (human) view through a lens; thus anthropocentrism is retained. But what of Tom Molloy's series of leaf studies? Do single elements cease to be landscapes when they are too small to accommodate a human? What happens when they are removed from the environment from which they "naturally" belong? Molloy's images of ninety-four leaves, individually represented and framed, operate as a single collective installation entitled *Oak* (1999). All are fallen from a single tree, each meticulously recorded and, as a composite, refer to nature and to the breadth of space they occupied and defined, both on their original tree and then strewn around its base, connected by their common parentage. Could the single oak tree that they infer be classified as a landscape? If depicted without its environment or if the image focuses on a single leaf still attached to the tree, to which genre does it belong? As a fragment of a landscape, each arguably represents it synecdochically, while at the same time possessing its own "local" characteristics and set of circumstances—which brings us back to Elkins's major question: "Can landscape painting . . . still be practiced by people seriously engaged with the history of art, or does it have to find expression in various local and regional contexts?" The "still" and the "or" are provocative, inferring the questions of whether landscape may be considered anachronistic on one hand, and whether responding to the local/regional can be regarded as "serious" compared, presumably, with the opposite (central, urban, metropolitan, international, universal, global?).

In the early 1980s, David Brett contended that regionalism supposes inherent "natural" characteristics, a proposition, he argued, whose sustainability is questionable, along with the landscape art that represents it: "For example, landscape painting; this is a genre used for over a hundred years as a sign of local or regional affiliation. Is it sustainable as a serious activity if (when) it proposes the region as a

natural category?"¹⁷⁷ As though anticipating Elkins's question, he asserted: "Worthwhile landscape painting can no longer be the bearer of 'regionalism' (in the way in which it was for, say, Paul Henry) because the concept of the region has changed along with the interests that support it."¹⁷⁸

As Róisín Kennedy pointed out during the roundtable discussion, more recently artists addressing the West of Ireland have been concerned to subvert the nationalist (regionalist) agenda. This, as it happens, was the theme of an exhibition at the Royal Hibernian Academy in March 2005, entitled *The West as Metaphor*.¹⁷⁹ It was a response to the fact that virtually all critical analyses of the landscape of the western seaboard were confined to the nationalist agenda of the first half of the century, despite the fact that the region continues to be addressed by almost every Irish artist, including some of the most challenging and internationally celebrated, such as Patrick Ireland, Michael Craig Martin, James Coleman, Hughie O'Donoghue, Dorothy Cross, Kathy Prendergast, Clare Langan, and others.

While some of these artists at the turn of the millennium debunk the notion of regional identity as *inherent* in the local landscape or inhabitants, they nonetheless find circumstances of contemporaneous relevance characteristic of such environments. They variously explore issues of rural degeneration, of survival, and more recently of regeneration, of emigration and return, of immigration, and the isolation and marginalization that exist in parallel with conditions of inclusion and plurality in periods of rapid social and economic change—as has occurred in Ireland over the last ten to fifteen years.

"Local" in any case is understood not only as a particular and singular locality, but alternatively as a generic term for localities everywhere whose multiplicity and common factors give the "local" universality, and of course the universal in the particular is a widely recognized concept. Thus a circumstance can be typical of a region without being exclusive to it, be replicated in other locations and thereby carry extensive as well as intensive significance. Typicality does not necessarily infer inherence—it can be the product of changing conditions whose effects become generalized over time. Ireland was once typified by oak forests, subsequently cleared to

make way for agriculture and to facilitate building. Increasingly, pine forests—currently promoted through the national media as a viable crop—are modifying the nature of the Irish landscape, as seen in the work of Elizabeth Magill, Tom Molloy and Oliver Comerford, where settings consequently parody the Nordic environs more usually associated with German romanticism. The elegiac sense of loss some of their work evokes is conveyed less by the glow of the setting sun through a mist than the sulfurous lights of the city in the middle distance, glowing through smog. It hardly needs stating that climate change can alter landscape irreversibly. Where the regional was once raised to national significance, and given to signify unity, permanence, and conclusion, it is now understood as fragmentary and mutable—like landscape generally, its representation and its definition.

The local continues though to be understood in terms of community and familiarity, a consequence of a sense of separateness and relatively small scale. Luke Gibbons warns of:

its consolatory role as a comfort zone, a refuge from the seismic upheavals of the capitalist work system: empire, industrialization, mechanization, urbanization, secularization. As with related concepts of community, place and locality began to function as “out-takes” from modernity, as narrative or nostalgic asides from the march of progress in its dominant and often predatory—West forms.¹⁸⁰

Brett had expressed related concerns when he pointed out that: “landscape painting, as a regional sign, is now an obstruction to the understanding. It presents the idea of the land as unproblematical.”¹⁸¹ He went on however to suggest that “[T]he only possible authentic expression of regionalism is social realism.” He was not, as he explained, talking about style but an approach to subject matter: “In this case—to the immediate, local and concrete experience; and to analysis of that experience through critical thought.”

The ubiquitous picturesque view of indigenous Ireland in the first half of the century may have eclipsed the occasional unromanticized images of the west, such as Seán Keating’s barren prospects in *Economic Necessity* (1936) and Brian O’Doherty’s uncompromisingly

grim *Shannon* (1950),¹⁸² each of which suggests the bleak conditions that forced locals, including artists, to the centers at London and New York.

More recently, the networks of regulations governing EU membership, as well as providing the kinds of support that propelled Ireland to levels of prosperity more commonly associated with the privileged centers, have informed images such as Dermot Seymour's "portraits" of cattle. These radically depart from the bucolic images that Gibbons warns of, depicting instead prize specimens as consumer units whose identity is indexed by electronic tagging. Typically perched on a precipitous fragment of land to denote isolation and fragility, such images respond to a perspective of the central/periphery relationship described by Henri Lefebvre: "In strategic spaces, resources are always localized. Estimates are made in terms of units, whether units of production . . . or units of consumption. . . . Objectives and 'targets,' by contrast are always globalizing in tendency, and effective worldwide . . ." ¹⁸³ There is a tendency to think of local and regional in rural terms, but cities can be understood as a collection of distinct regions, each with their own local issues and characteristics, whose borders are defined by relative deprivation or privilege, visibly inscribed on the landscape, as Paul Seawright's recent controversial series on a Dublin suburb revealed.

The reach of globalized networks potentially facilitates homogeneity and dissolves difference. However, Niru Ratnam notes that it may also promote awareness of difference and the desire to retain it:

it would be an oversimplification to regard the populations of places subject to powerful cultural invasion as merely the passive recipients of a western agenda. The cultural interface is more often marked by negotiation or even rejection—and subsequent translation—of the values that come with the clothes and the soap operas.¹⁸⁴

The information networks are sufficiently crowded to make individual visibility difficult. However, technology facilitates targeted searches and the opportunity for a presence from whatever location, and brings those out on a limb within scrutiny, like Tom Molloy's oak leaves.

Hal Foster observed more than twenty years ago: "Certainly, marginality is not now given as critical, for in effect the center has invaded the periphery and vice versa."¹⁸⁵ However, the ripples do not spread evenly or consistently and regional issues remain to be explored.

A map of Ireland (1998) by Kathy Prendergast repeatedly drawn free-hand while looking at the map, but with her eyes averted from the page, gives multiple outlines, a metaphor for the shifting and permeable boundaries of Ireland and Irishness reverberating in an age of social and environmental change, an image relevant not only to the perimeters defining the landmass but also its landscape in all of its various meanings.

Martin Powers

Landscape Assessment

I appreciate the invitation to comment on the conversations that took place around the subject of landscape at the Burren College of Art, Ballyvaughan, Ireland. Judging from the transcript, it was an event to remember. My impression is that Jim has long held an interest in rethinking fundamental art historical issues in light of, or at least in awareness of, China's richly reflexive history of artistic practice. I have long felt the same way, and took genuine pleasure in reading the transcript with this in mind.

There are two arenas of discussion in the transcript that, I believe, could be fruitfully interrogated from the China case: (1) The problem of comparative histories. (2) What is special about landscape?

The problem of comparative histories

At various moments during the conversation, attempts were made to compare artistic or social practice in China, or elsewhere, with the European case. As far as I'm concerned any such exercise should be encouraged, but we must begin with the recognition that such comparisons are never innocent or neutral. Since the late eighteenth century, constructed "cultures" have been deployed as weapons in the

very serious game of international cultural politics. One could argue that, about the same time that nations began to emerge as separate from, say, the king's domain, it became necessary for intellectuals—artists, historians, writers, and, later, social “scientists”—to construct an image of that imaginary “nation” that was the locus and frame for the citizen's identity.¹⁸⁶ One might even claim that art history as a modern discipline was born in the fires of nationalistic fervor. Already with Winckelmann, style is conflated with something like national character.¹⁸⁷ By the nineteenth century, as we know, styles had become vehicles for constructed national identities. As Cao Yiqiang observes in his *Art and History*:

[From the perspective of nineteenth-century Europeans] art offered a key to the past, and this belief fostered a powerful sense of nationalism such that each European nation sought to place its own history at the glorious center of the history of art. As an example, Michelet declared that French art, and not Italian, represented the high point of Renaissance achievement.¹⁸⁸

Such studies often made use of, shall we say, “irregular” rhetorical devices such as a double standard, special pleading, selective memory, and so on, anything to get the job done.¹⁸⁹ And so in the opening pages of *The Poetry of Architecture*, John Ruskin compared the cottages of England with those of France, concluding that, in England: “Everything is perpetually altered by the activity of invention and improvement. The cottage, consequently, has no dilapidated look about it; it is never suffered to get old.” Unfortunately, in France, “little is renewed: there is little spirit of improvement; and the customs which prevailed centuries ago are still taught by the patriarchs of the families to their grandchildren. The French cottage, therefore, is just such as we should have expected from the disposition of its inhabitants.”¹⁹⁰ The irony of course is that it was French art that would shortly emerge as the birthplace of modernism with its fetishization of originality. But of course France's lead in the arts would have been sufficient reason for Ruskin to claim just the opposite. In cultural politics it is often the case that intellectuals appropriate the achievements of others for their own national group in a process of cultural displacement.

We may be tempted to smile at Ruskin's naïvety, but the twentieth century was hardly more enlightened. Serge Guilbaut has documented how fierce was the cultural politics of modernism as late as the 1950s, when America was asserting hegemony in the cultural sphere equal to its military might. By that time, even French intellectuals were put on the defensive. According to Guilbaut, Jean Cassou, Director of the National Museum of Modern Art in Paris, was convinced that "Paris was being constantly denigrated so as to demonstrate that 'abstract art, which, at the moment, experiences on both continents an uncontested success, has no roots whatsoever in France.'" These volleys against French dignity, of course, would have been fired by art critics and historians. Cassou's response, not surprisingly, was that the French still do it better:

If one has to accept the fact that abstract art is the style that right now triumphs the world over and responds to the aspirations of a world turned upside down by new philosophies, new scientific conceptions of the universe, astonishing technical progress, indeed, if one has to talk about abstract art, one has to recognize that this so-called abstract art is cultivated in France with that powerful sense of invention, that confident taste, and that flair for quality that are specifically tied to the French spirit. One has to recognize then that, if abstract art is produced in Denmark or in Argentina, it is still done better in France.¹⁹¹

East/West comparisons have been no less aggressive. Already in the nineteenth century—whether one thinks of Hegel or Schlegel—writers all too predictably concluded that "The West" is best, whether the topic be grammar, art, or women's breasts.¹⁹² Even today, or perhaps especially today—in light of China's rise to world prominence—one must read increasingly grand claims for Western exceptionalism in light of this long history of cultural one-upmanship. Just recently Jim Cahill began an essay on "the History and Post-History of Chinese Painting" by puzzling over the persistence of stereotypical views on Chinese art even after decades of detailed, English-language scholarship. Citing a remark by Arthur Danto, he says "Danto misreads a statement in an essay by Sherman Lee written for the catalogue of an exhibition of Ming-Qing paintings to mean that

later Chinese painting underwent no significant change in the later period." Danto imagined that, for the Chinese, after a certain period of development, further development was "‘unimaginable and superfluous,’" a claim with no justification in period discourse. Having recounted all this (and more) Jim could only sigh in a moment of unqualified despair: "For us in the field, by contrast, what has strangely failed to develop is not the art but foreign perceptions about it: has nothing happened between Roger Fry and Arthur Danto?"¹⁹³

While Jim puzzled over staggering unawareness of artistic practice in China despite five decades of scholarship, I am not surprised at all—it makes sense that the more prominent China becomes globally the more sweeping will be the claims for Western uniqueness. Nonetheless I believe that the discipline of art history must put aside these nineteenth-century games if it is to move forward on a higher theoretical plane. You see, the real cost of exclusivist narratives is not that they are biased or dishonest—though that may be—but that they seduce us into ignoring significant historical phenomena by chalking them up as the product of ethnic genius. Let's just take some high points of the Gardner's-variety triumph-of-the-West narrative:

1. In the fourteenth century (or by the sixteenth century at any rate) Giotto is recognized as an individual artist with a characteristic style, and thus begins the inevitable ascent of Western individualism.
2. In the seventeenth century Salvatore Rosa refuses to work on aristocratic commissions unless inspired to do so.
3. At the end of the eighteenth century George Morland rebuffs aristocratic patrons entirely.
4. In 1854 Courbet paints *The Encounter*, comparing his own worth as a genius to that of the nobility. He further rejects academic illusionism and finish in favor of rougher but more expressive styles.

If one presumes that this sequence is unique to the West, then the presumption that there's something special coursing through Western veins seems natural enough. Bourdieu, however, recognized

that the expansion of artistic agency in the nineteenth century was not the product of a freedom-loving Western *Volksgeist* but of fundamental changes in social institutions, including the decline of hereditary privilege and the consequent emergence of an open art market.¹⁹⁴ If this is the case, though, then we should expect that a discourse of artistic autonomy could arise whenever such conditions were present, and if that is the case then modern artistic practice is not an expression of the Western spirit but rather of historical dynamics. This possibility is rarely mentioned in art history surveys, where students are allowed to believe that, between ancient times and 1854, the rest of the world slumbered in medieval darkness until liberated by the light of colonial administration.

A less romantic and more global view of these developments would yield a different kind of story. Such a narrative might note that, in China, hundreds of artists were recognized as individuals with characteristic styles, names, and accomplishments before Giotto was born. On what grounds do we leave these men and women out of the history books so as to retain Giotto as marking a unique moment of promise? By late Tang times (ninth century) some artists refused to paint unless inspired. By the tenth century a number of artists had rebuffed the attentions of the nobility. Among non-literati artists, some accepted commissions, some sold their work through restaurants or painting galleries, while others—including monk painters—could sell out of their studios.¹⁹⁵ Within this open art market, art production was able to develop independently of aristocratic tutelage, so by the late eleventh century literati artists were in a position to reject courtly standards of illusionism and finish in favor of coarser but more expressive styles.

In China, too, these artistic practices emerged in tandem with significant changes in social institutions. Almost any review of important Song institutions would include the following: by the eleventh century nonaristocrats could acquire positions of authority through blind, egalitarian examinations (names were covered and replaced with numbers, exams were copied to hide handwriting, and were graded by multiple graders and the grades averaged) and performance in office. Officials had term limits and their authority was situated in the office rather than in the official's ascribed status

(which they didn't have in any case).¹⁹⁶ The remnant nobility had lost most fiscal and political privileges, while private and public schools overtook monastic schools as sites of education.¹⁹⁷ The state assumed responsibility for welfare (although temples and private institutions could practice charity), and most farmers were either freeholders or tenants.¹⁹⁸ The state was separate from the court in budget and administration, and major resources were invested into institutional checks on abuses of power.¹⁹⁹ Taxes were progressive, paid to the state rather than the court, and were calculated as cash payments.²⁰⁰ All this meant that a citizen's legal identity and legal rights were situated in the state apparatus rather than in lineage, and so were not contingent on the whims of the nobility as in other parts of the world. Because of this, all citizens/*min* had the right to bring lawsuits to court. We even find cases in which families of "slaves" brought suits against imperial relatives and won.²⁰¹ Private publishing flourished and the aristocracy frequently suffered lampoons from literary luminaries, including art critics. "Public opinion," *gonglun*, becomes an important term in political discourse.²⁰² Neither the economy nor the legal system nor art criticism any longer fell under "aristocratic and ecclesiastical tutelage" and so artists began to make strong assertions of artistic autonomy much as we find in Europe almost a thousand years later. Who can say which of the following translations is from Song China and which from nineteenth-century Germany?

1. To render an explanation of painting is the same as saying that it is the portrayal of the artist's mind.
2. The poetry of painting simply consists in the apt expression of the artist's own feeling.
3. I write only to express my mind, and paint only to suit my intentions.

As assertions of artistic autonomy, the differences among these statements are too subtle to be significant. Such assertions, along with the valorization of idiosyncratic brushwork, cannot be dismissed as peculiarities of Chinese culture (especially since one of these is from the pen of a mid-nineteenth-century German critic). Statements such as these could never have been made under a medieval

social formation, for they require that the artist or critic be able to stand as a separate legal entity, as an author, rather than as a dependent of some nobleman. Can it be insignificant that, when such conditions do develop, we find such claims for autonomy being made both in China and in Europe?

From this we can see that attempts to categorize Song or Ming landscape as medieval are problematic (most historians of China today treat the Song as an early modern social formation). At one point Minna Törmä averred that Chinese *shanshui*, unlike European landscapes, are not opposed to culture but are part of it and, at the same time, part of a larger cosmic system.²⁰³ Jacob Wamberg may have misunderstood her point but in any case picked up on it to add:

Interestingly, you might say that that is true for the pre-modern West too, that landscape depiction here is also about depicting waters and mountains. In a quite logical correspondence with work traces being absent from ancient and medieval landscapes, their wildernesses are all founded in rocky grounds cleft with occasional water reservoirs. Before 1420 you don't see the territory, civilization's hinterland, but rather *terra*, the virginal earth.

Here and in other parts of the conversations Chinese landscape tends to be classified together with medieval or ancient art in Europe. I am sympathetic with the attempt to link artistic practice with social formations, but I am unaware of any European medieval landscapists who took it for granted that the real subject of his work was his own character and mood, for example Shi Tao (1641–c.1717):

Standing amidst a sea of ink, stand firm and establish your own views. Determine your life beneath the tip of your brush and within a foot of silk transfigure [styles] and within the chaos liberate new light. Then, even if the ink fails to come to life, even if your brush is dead, even if the painting doesn't work, at least the "me" in it still remains.²⁰⁴

I'd be interested to read comparable passages from the hands of medieval landscapists, if such exist. Another problem with seeing Song painting as medieval is that this requires us to assume that the kinds of social and artistic practices we find in Song China were

typical of medieval Europe as well, when in fact most of these practices don't appear in Europe until the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, and then only after Europeans had acquired rather detailed knowledge of Chinese institutions (such as merit-based social status, an idea they rejected again, and again, and again).²⁰⁵ The biggest problem with such comparisons, of course, is that they are historically imprecise and so would yield faulty conclusions.

What if we were to include developments in Chinese artistic and social practice in our Gardner's survey? Unfortunately the most glorious moments in Western art would no longer appear so unique, so it isn't hard to discern why this hasn't happened just yet. I would argue, however, that the intellectual payoff would be worth the cost in wounded ethnic pride. To take a simple example, why is it that both European modernists (Whistler, Courbet, Manet) and Song literati rejected illusionism and finish in favor of rougher styles that retained the material traces (*ji* 迹) of the artist's brush? Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that, both in Europe and in China, earlier art had been dominated by the courts, which tend to prefer highly finished, naturalistic styles reflecting a high level of skill, a rhetoric of facticity, and proper decorum toward the patron? If both of these groups wished to assert their autonomy from courtly tutelage, then they clearly could not promote finished, illusionistic styles. Whether you were Chinese or French or English, there was only one way to go, and that was toward rougher, less illusionistic styles. While it would be possible to trivialize this observation, one could also push it further toward a study of the dialogical nature of stylistic development, investigating to what degree new styles are typically constructed in relation to some Other.

How would a historian of Europe date a passage like this: "What literature most detests is following in others' footsteps"?²⁰⁶ Such a remark (thirteenth-century China) reveals anxiety over dependence on classical literature. Many such remarks can be found in Song literary criticism, where copying is dismissed as suitable only for hacks, for example: "Those who want to be good at calligraphy should create their own individual style. We call slavish those who copy the work of others."²⁰⁷ Do such passages reflect an individualistic Chinese national character? I doubt it. If Bourdieu is correct and

the rise of autonomous groups forces competition for more and more idiosyncratic styles, then it isn't hard to imagine why, contrary to the stereotype, Chinese artists and poets reveal so much anxiety over dependence on the past, or why European artists do so later on.²⁰⁸ By abandoning those more comforting traditional narratives one could create a history of art appropriate for the global condition of the twenty-first century. However, it's only fair to note that there is another option, and that is to go into denial. Since this is the default, it is worth discussing.

Denial

Should we choose denial, we have available to us a wide array of rhetorical techniques bequeathed by nationalist Western historians and Cold War sinologists: "Well, when Chinese artists rebuff the aristocracy it isn't real rebellion because not all artists did that"²⁰⁹ or "they didn't completely overthrow all of Chinese tradition" or "artistic autonomy is a Western concept anyway and so can't be applied to Chinese artists" and so on. This latter argument, which has become something of a postcolonial mantra, failed to impress Jim Cahill in the essay mentioned above:

You may wonder why this point needs to be made—it may seem self-evident—after all, scholars of Italian painting do not limit their investigations to those issues that concerned Vasari. I make it to answer another familiar charge: that introducing and pursuing matters that do not figure, or figure only weakly, in traditional Chinese writings is tantamount to imposing foreign attitudes onto Chinese art. That argument seems to me completely specious.

It is specious because it conflates the distinction between analytical terms and period terms. There was no concept of "gender," in its modern, post-Foucauldian sense, during the Renaissance, yet we frequently use this category as a prism for organizing investigations into Renaissance practice. Unless one sees the post-Foucauldian term as the inevitable expression of a Western spirit that coursed equally through the veins of sixteenth-century Italians, there would be no reason why one should not utilize this device in studying the

art of other times and places, since it is every bit as foreign to the Renaissance as to, say, Heian Japan.

While we're at it, another specious argument is anachronistic comparison: "Yes, it's true that China held democratic elections in 1911, but even then women were forbidden to vote!"²¹⁰ Yet another method is to treat European practice as normative and unique when in fact it may represent only one case among many. A well-known example is Sir Kenneth Clark's attempt to claim that landscape itself was uniquely Western because only Western landscapes (or some at least) employ one point perspective. His argument was equivalent to stating that eating utensils are uniquely Western because nowhere in China's rich body of writing do we find mention of knives and forks being used for the purpose of eating! But, as W. J. T. Mitchell observed, "the geographical claim that landscape is a uniquely western European art falls to pieces in the face of the overwhelming richness, complexity, and antiquity of Chinese landscape painting."²¹¹ As a result he was able to use the Chinese case to develop a broad theory of landscape as a social practice and to propose a theory explaining why it occurs late in historical time.

Clearly one could apply Clark's sleight of hand to just about anything. One need only treat local practice as a universal norm to turn anything into a "Western concept." Some sinologists have even held that European-style illusionism is not just one instance of a visual rhetoric of facticity but a universal norm that the Chinese fail to match, though I am at a loss to imagine on what historical grounds one might decide which nation's illusionism is more normative than another's.²¹² Such reasoning obviates the heuristic value of comparing different rhetorical constructions of, say, "similitude" (among cultural groups having terms for that ideal), so as to develop a broader theory about the conditions under which such a value may become a criterion for artistic excellence, as it does—for different reasons—in ancient Greece, Song China, and Renaissance Italy. I made an attempt at such a theory years ago, but the topic requires sustained examination and from multiple disciplinary perspectives.²¹³

The argument that a concept of "space" emerges only in the late eighteenth century might be considered another candidate for critique, for it takes a particular, local notion of space and conflates it

with concepts of space generally. As I read it, Denis E. Cosgrove provided a deconstruction of this very fallacy during the conversation in Ballyvaughan:

The question of space is central here and complex too (and it cannot be disconnected from meanings of time). Most people I think today would agree that the Kantian view of absolute space as a container of things is too narrow and that space is relative: a product of relations between things. All such relations are historical and thus space (and time) are historically (and culturally) constituted.

When we confuse a local (Kantian) view of space with Space, or one point perspective with the representation of deep space, what we do is to naturalize local practice, much as people used to naturalize gender by conflating it with sexual difference. What we gain from deparochializing such terms is heuristic leverage. Just as we now see gender as socially constructed, why should we not view pictorial space, also, as generic to all pictorial representation but socially constructed in different ways among various historical groups?

All this is not to argue for some PC relativism in which all cultures are regarded as both equal and equivalent: quite the contrary. The point of working with rubrics such as “illusionism” or “space” would be (1) to identify transcultural artistic problems that are, in some sense, generic to picture making, at least under certain circumstances; (2) to identify differences in the way these problems were solved under specific historical conditions. The comparative approach would help us in this discipline to avoid confusing local accident for efficient cause (thinking that industrialism, for instance, is a necessary condition of a decline of aristocratic authority). It would further help us to develop sound generalizations from multiple case studies as well as to identify genuinely unique practices.

Wen Fong is preparing to publish a Yale volume attempting to do just that.²¹⁴ He revisits the notion of calligraphy as a core paradigm in Chinese art theory but rather than simply reiterate traditional pieties (early on criticized by Cahill) he examines art criticism, language, and social practice seriously and comparatively, making heavy use of primary sources. Of course in all such enterprises, primary

documents should be our guide. No doubt some will agree and others not, but this essay represents a serious attempt to discover differences within categories of inquiry common to European and Chinese art history as practiced today.

Another example of drawing careful distinctions is Jim Elkins's argument about art history being Western. I agree with him in the sense that the modern discipline of art history, which evolved as a function of nationalism, emerges as an institution in Europe from the mid-eighteenth century onward, driven largely by German (perhaps more than "Western") scholarship. However, more generally Europeans took control of the discourse of nationalist competition in ways that most Chinese intellectuals had difficulty understanding even in the twentieth century (many still don't). As nations outside of Europe (Japan, China) found it necessary to participate in cultural politics in the late nineteenth century, they adopted, rather than questioned, the rules of discourse based on constructed ethnic characters that Europeans had developed to promote their own interests.

But to leave it at that commits some injustice to the complexity of the situation. Clearly, systematic and historical accounts of the evolution of artistic practice appear in China, Japan, and Europe along with early period art collecting, and somewhat prior to the appearance of an open art market. There is nothing uniquely European about this. Of course Jim has in mind that particular kind of art history that we practice in modern times, a practice built around nation-based narratives. Fair enough, but the very idea of national styles could be seen as developing out of a condition of cultural competition between constructed nations, the latter being the result of the emergence of a centralized state apparatus separate from lineage. In this sense internationalism could be seen as the defining feature of what we call modern, in the cultural sense. To me this is not quite the same thing as the romantic (or postcolonial) notion that nationalist competition is somehow another expression of Western genius (not that that is Jim's argument, but it is a common assumption). If competition is a natural result of constructed nations and the latter become necessary when lineage breaks down as a determinant of social role and identity, then modern artistic practice

is as much a product of internationalism as European cultural practice. Still, it is legitimate to draw a line between art history as practiced by Zhang Yanyuan or Vasari and that promoted by Wölfflin or Warburg.

Another complicating factor, however, arises as a consequence of international or global exchange, and that is the simple fact that many practices we like to regard as modern and Western are in fact hybrid in origin, that is, they come into being only because of the sudden availability of resources originally *lacking* in Europe. The most basic of these is global travel itself, which required the invention of the compass, the movable rudder, and gunpowder, all Chinese technologies. When we turn to less tangible resources, the flattering account of transculturation has it that creative Western intellectuals appropriated resources from Africa, Asia, and so on, developing them in ways totally unrelated to whatever functions they had in their original context, powered by the European “imaginary.” This argument doesn’t stand scrutiny. Many of the key Enlightenment ideals that eighteenth-century authors associated with China were in fact Chinese social practices. These include: the idea of a separate state apparatus free of aristocratic authority; egalitarian, merit-based participation in the polity; a secular political theory; public political criticism; religious tolerance; and much more.

Principles of equal opportunity and competitive egalitarian examinations had been admired by writers such as Samuel Purchas, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Quesnay, William Temple, Samuel Johnson, Addison, and Goldsmith among others. All pointed to China as an example of what they appear to regard as unfamiliar practices.²¹⁵ Being unfamiliar with such ideas, they failed to understand the notion that all people are equal under the law (*bianhu qimin* 编户齐民).²¹⁶ Take Samuel Pufendorf (1632–94), who argued at length that worth should not be attached to birth, and advocated greater attention to what he called “merit.” On close inspection the entire discussion is couched in terms such as “Virtue,” “Dignity,” or “Honour,” rather than performance and rank, and he understands “civil dignity”—by which he means an official position—as being conferred solely by the sovereign.²¹⁷ His argument climaxes with a reference to Chinese practice: “Neither do the Chinese express any

Honour for Antiquity of Defcent, the poorest and meanest Person in the Empire is capable by his Learning only of preferring himself to the highest places of Honour [that is, bureaucratic rank]."²¹⁸ And so he concludes that "Nobility ought not to depend *only* upon the Blood, but should much rather be rais'd and establish'd upon Virtue" (italics added).²¹⁹ In these lines Pufendorf fails to distinguish the man from the office, a bureaucrat from nobility, or merit from "Honour," and though he understood that common citizens might attain high office in China he seems unable to imagine procedures expressly designed to suppress evidence of "nobility of blood." If Europeans had such difficulty imagining equality or merit-based social status, then the argument that the end product was the result of the European imagination becomes difficult to, well, imagine.

Likewise in the history of art, many of those practices we associate with the modern arguably involved transculturation (Japonisme is an obvious example) and so it strikes me as dangerous to conflate the cultural construct "Western" with Europe and North America (again, like conflating gender with sex). Our constructed "West" is shot through with Asian, Middle Eastern, and African resources and practices. Of course, this goes both ways. In the conversations, Jim Elkins noted that:

There have been many hybrid traditions in Chinese painting, starting with Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining 郎世宁) or, even before, with the possible Western influences on Dong Qichang. In terms of twenty-first-century practice, I doubt that many of us see landscapes independently of the history of Western art.

Putting aside the term "influence," which I don't use, I agree, but the same can be said for European art. The fact is that, after the sixteenth century or so, neither Chinese nor European art can be understood properly without taking account of processes of transculturation, processes that may involve competition, envy, and displacement as much as direct imitation. That this doesn't sound intuitive is due to the fact that our histories of art are written from a nationalist perspective so that authors carefully cleanse their narratives of non-Western impurities (as sinologists have done in the other direction).

Indeed, one could argue that the rhetorical function of the word “Western” is precisely to put a Euro-American flag on developments that originally involved significant resources from outside of Europe and America, but that is a subject for another essay.

What is special about landscape?

Is it possible to treat “landscape” not as a product of Western genius but as a social practice that can emerge, perhaps must emerge, under certain social conditions? W. J. T. Mitchell of course published a study of the latter sort, and one with which I would tend to agree. In the conversations there are several moments also when more general inferences are made about landscape as a historical phenomenon. Jim Elkins, for example, observed that “Landscape, in this way of thinking, is an exemplary encounter with subjectivity. It is understood as a kind of unity—‘framed’ or otherwise ‘composed,’ and always ‘seen’—which reflects, or articulates the sense of self.” That landscape bears a relationship to subjectivity is defensible, but that relationship surely changes over time and from region to region. Certainly we can’t presume that subjectivity in Claude’s landscapes is the same as in Cezanne’s. In the conversations it appears that most references to European landscape are to the naturalistic variety. Since such paintings typically make a claim to objective reportage, subjectivity enters in mainly in the guise of a particular view, but this view would not have been read as a reflection of the artist’s personal view in all periods of European art (it might have been regarded as the king’s view, for instance). True, as reportage, there is at least the implication that we are seeing the scene as one would see it standing at the spot where the artist, theoretically, stood. Nonetheless, when the artist’s subjectivity becomes the *primary* subject of the landscape, naturalism tends to take a back seat. There is, one could argue, a tension between naturalism and subjectivity, or at least I have argued as much on another occasion.²²⁰

This tension was articulated early on in the Chinese tradition. In order to understand this tension as it evolved, we need to recognize that similitude *was* an issue in Chinese art criticism, as Jim Cahill and Wen Fong have made clear in their publications. An important

feature of similitude as constructed in Northern Song China was spatial depth. Other marks of reportage included careful attention to the details of plant growth, the flow of water under different conditions, and the marks of weathering and time on the surfaces of natural objects. Song critics noticed these qualities in contemporaneous painting and understood such representations as records of a “real” scene. Liu Daochun (late eleventh century) says:

[As for Li Cheng’s paintings], the cognoscenti take them to be records of reality. In painting Li Cheng fully mastered all creation, completely articulating his thoughts through his brush, painting a scene of a thousand miles within the space of a foot, describing all the thousands of variations [of texture, form, and so on] with his brush. His layered mountain ranges and peaks, interspersed with temples in mist, these were especially fine! As for representing the varying densities of forests, or the varying depths of flowing water, he made these appear as if you were in the real scene. His thought was pure and his style straightforward; there was no one to compare with him in all of antiquity.²²¹

Notice that, in this critic’s view, landscape can serve as a vehicle for the artist’s private thoughts. The rhetorical force of those private thoughts, however, derived from the assumption that, in the end, the painting reports the actual condition of objects in nature. The artist manipulates placement, light, and the shapes of trees and rocks so as to achieve a certain poetic effect, but in the end we are to feel as if we have arrived at the “real” scene.

By the late eleventh century the rhetoric of facticity so deeply informed Song visuality that Emperor Shenzong (reigned 1068–85), upon being presented with a painting of destitute farmers, rescinded a host of “New Policies” on the assumption that the paintings recorded reliably the effects of those policies upon farmers at the village level.²²² Like modern viewers of “eyewitness news,” it didn’t occur to him that such images might have been manipulated, precisely because they had been so nicely packaged in a medium that looked “real.”

Chinese critics of this period were very much concerned with expression and wrote about it extensively, but what was being

conveyed was the expressive qualities of objects in nature, qualities inherent in those natural objects. While the artist may have chosen which expressive qualities to portray, the subject of the painting was not the artist's personal emotions but those emotions elicited by trees, rocks, mist, or natural views. It appears that it was this kind of expression that, according to Michael Bright, occupied post-Renaissance poets and artists until the nineteenth century. Toward the middle of that century Bright finds evidence that the subject of poetry and painting increasingly came to be the artist's own, subjective state.²²³ In China this shift from expressive objects to personal expression occurs as well, but in the eleventh century, presumably because ascribed status had already been replaced with achieved status, thus enabling artists to operate as agents on behalf of themselves rather than some aristocratic patron.

As in Europe, those Chinese artists who rejected finish and similitude had little choice but to adopt rougher styles that, happily, enabled them to include more subjective information about themselves at the expense of the putative qualities of the objects portrayed in fictive space. Literati critics were aware of this and developed critical language that focused on the material aspects of the painting as a record of an individual artist's state of mind expressed through bodily movements.²²⁴

So how come all this occurred within the genre of landscape painting? Why didn't earlier artists pursue subjective expression in figure painting? Why landscape?

I've argued elsewhere that landscape occupies a special place in cultural histories because the social coding of landscape is open to negotiation in a way that is difficult to achieve in figure painting.²²⁵ The social coding of figures tends to be transparent for competent viewers. Anyone can tell the difference between the high-status individual and his humble servant in Courbet's *The Encounter*. The social coding of landscape, on the other hand, is hardly obvious and therefore can be manipulated by groups pushing separate agendas. For the same reason the literary referent within landscape is malleable in a way that, say, a crown of thorns, or a cup with a snake, is not. True, Chinese landscapists often make use of China's rich poetic tradition to encode social ideals, but these can be interpreted

differently by different competent viewers. A willow could allude to a recluse or to a young woman; a tall pine could refer to a principled dissenter or to a high official. The ambiguity inherent in rocks and trees, and the fact that one can alter their shapes over a wide range of forms, made them ideal vehicles for paintings that took as their primary subject the artist himself.

Over time Chinese landscapes made little pretense to providing information about objects in nature but were read largely as records of personal artistic choices that set the artist apart from both contemporaries and canonical masters. In other words, these art historical landscapes enabled artists to position themselves in relation to both the canon and contemporary rivals in a process that Bourdieu has theorized at length. And so Dong Qichang, in an inscription attached to an album leaf in Kansas City, has this to say:

General Wan Bangfu, who is stationed at Piantou pass, has in his household collection a Li Cheng “level distance” silk hanging scroll. The brushwork [*bifa*] is the same as in the hanging scroll in the Duke of Cheng’s house. Mi Fu said that (in his time) he had seen only two genuine Li Chengs. This scroll probably comes close. When I returned home I improvised [*fang*] on the piece as an intimate scene. Uniquely I brushed in my washes flat [so as to obviate the sense of space and distance achieved in Li Cheng-style landscapes], something that Guo Xi or Xu Daoning could never achieve. [September 11, 1624]²²⁶

Here Dong situates himself in relation to a venerable tradition and defines himself as an artist who can turn that tradition on its head. “*Fang*” has often been translated as “imitation,” but such a translation projects European concepts onto a Chinese context. In this colophon it is clear that “*fang*” implies willful rejection of key features of Li Cheng’s style, in particular his trademark mastery of deep space. In Chinese literary theory, turning a classical technique on its head is a common technique.²²⁷ Dong boasts of doing something similar here and so it should be obvious that, by late Ming times, *fang* does not imply imitation (it probably lost this connotation after the Song). This is consistent with countless Ming paintings in which “*fang*” is written upon works that have very little resemblance to the

model other than the use of some texture strokes or compositional forms.

But why depart so radically from the “model”? Why do Chinese critics treat imitation as akin to slavery? Once naturalism had been abandoned as a criterion of excellence, the artist was liberated to manipulate the shapes of rocks and trees in such ways as to construct a unique public persona for himself. These art historical landscapes were ideal sites for such negotiations precisely because natural forms can assume an infinite range of shapes. This made it possible for artists to ignore pictorial content and to focus on brushwork, paper, ink, and other material qualities reflective of the artist’s physical presence and idiosyncrasies. One could make similar observations of a Cezanne landscape of course. Should we chalk that up to the French spirit, mentality, *Volksgeist*, or to transculturation and historical process? I guess that depends on what it is you’re looking for.

Jerome Silbergeld

Landscape Theory from a Chinese Space-Time Continuum

The overriding impression left by my reading the transcript of this seminar is of its “open range,” and I find myself uncomfortably wishing for at least a little bit of barbed wire to help in herding all of these ideas together. But I realize it is a Chinese perspective that encourages me to respond in this way. While if really pressed I cannot quite define “China,” and prefer not to, there at least is a coherence (of long standing, an essence) that the “Chinese” bring to their encounters with the topic of “landscape” (for them, that’s not the right word either). It’s an ontological matter. For the Chinese, in place of an anthropomorphic Creator who fashioned the universe and left it for mankind to reign over in our own arrogant ways, the earth (“mountains and water,” *shanshui*, the Chinese term usually translated as “landscape”) and the heavens are primary links in a dynamic chain of ongoing creation, not forms primarily but dynamic essences (manifestations of the formless Dao, infused with its energy), understood animistically, worshipped (“propitiated” is a better word) pantheistically. The chain binds everyone together from elite to ordinary, links every medium from architecture to painting,

and allows for little meaningful distinction between sacred and secular.

As far as written theory goes, much more is made in the West of literati painting theory than of any other genre, increasingly with a consideration of class-based motives in mind,²²⁸ but it is in the largely oral traditions of architectural and alchemical theory and practice that the extent and depth of landscape's Chinese impact can be most deeply felt. *Fengshui*, scarcely heard of in the West a decade ago but now available in endless perverted incarnations at every Barnes & Noble sales counter (in dozens of embarrassing titles from *The Fengshui of Sex* to *Fengshui for Dummies*), in its unbastardized native forms dictated that nothing could be built without proper siting, proper timing, and proper numerics, lest the residents of structural misalignment be cursed down through the ages. The conjunction of earth and the heavens regulates a space-time continuum—the earth is stable in space, the heavens rotate through time; the heavens bring time, cyclical time, restoring and renewable, to earth—and only the knowledgeable use of the *fengshui* almanac (dictating when to install the threshold, the main roof beam, the hearth, and so forth) can assure the architectural resident a measure of enduring harmony. In all matters of scale, only the use of correct digits and avoidance of incorrect ones can spare the dwellers from generations of misery. The *fengshui* master and carpenter had powers that transcended politics, were men (like sorcerers or shamans) to be feared within the community, and had an inherently antagonistic relationship with their clients.²²⁹ Whether we regard all this as superstitious in a self-circumscribing way or as proto-scientific and precociously holistic, what is most remarkable about it is its thorough, systematic self-infusion into all matters “landscapic.”²³⁰ Looking at a landscape painting, whether highly representational or thoroughly abstract, the orientation of the buildings reveals to the viewer the cardinal directions of the landscape. Landscape paintings and maps have their differences but also their common ground and shared conventions;²³¹ and the best of middle period Chinese maps astound the modern viewer with their topographical knowledge and cartographic skills.²³²

Fengshui has its own regional variations and developmental history, dating in practice at least from the twelfth century B.C.E.,

with written formulations since the late eighth century,²³³ and it is better understood in conjunction with Chinese alchemy, which unites the Chinese preoccupation with longevity and elixirs of immortality to the secrets and sources of landscape energy, sacred mountains, and medicinal plants. There is nothing in the early writings that suggests an easy relationship with nature: "Of all the Daoists revere in highest secrecy," wrote the fourth- to fifth-century alchemist-botanist Ge Hong,

nothing is more important than the prescriptions for obtaining long life. . . . This divine process [of preparing elixirs] is normally carried out in mountains and forests which tend to abound in harmful tigers and wolves [one may read this both literally and figuratively] that one must know how to scatter [via various esoteric charms and spells]. . . . One must go up a famous mountain, undergo rites of purification for a hundred days . . . [and] only then may one undertake to prepare the great medicine.

He then names the sacred mountains where such results may be obtained and concludes, "Their gods will most certainly assist."²³⁴

From earth and sky (and mountains reaching to the sky) to water: in an agrarian society that was plagued with drought in the north and floods in the south, the number of important officials who specialized not in Confucian abstractions but in a highly knowledgeable practice of hydrology was significant, and the number of hydrologists among the ranks of Chinese landscape painters was no less significant; their jobs took them traveling, and their travels informed their paintings and contributed to the rich tradition of travel literature that dates back at least to the Song dynasty.²³⁵ From dust to dust: Who in China doesn't know where their ancestors came from, and where their ancestral burial grounds lie? Such is the reference in famous paintings like Zhao Mengfu's *Autumn Colors on the Qiao and Hua Mountains* of 1296, or Shitao's *Ancestral Tombs of the Fei Family*, 1702, called forth by specific occasions and circumstances.²³⁶

In and out of the Chinese arts, in theory and in practice, there is a vast body of landscape-related material. From the first essay on landscape painting theory, in the fifth century (concerned not just

with drawing the image of landscape but with “drawing” the energy of the earth into the artist and holding it in reserve in his painting for hygienic and life-extending purposes²³⁷), down to art works of our own time,²³⁸ the uses of landscape are so many that the genre has repeatedly been referred to as “neutral subject matter,” onto which may be inscribed any number of thematic possibilities, from the visible manifestation in the structures of landscape of Heaven’s creative mechanics²³⁹ to landscape’s generic relatedness to the human body²⁴⁰—all of which we might think of as “naturalistic,” for lack of a better term, related as suggested above to *fengshui* and alchemy; from analogical self-portraits, via landscape and its motifs,²⁴¹ to intimate engagements via landscape with history and fate²⁴²—which might be thought of collectively as “humanistic,” a product of literati thought (avoiding the word “theory”) in later times. This is an art by, for, and about China’s intellectual aristocracy: no hard-laboring peasants here, where the painting is less about the landscape than it is about the painter and the history of landscape painting.²⁴³ “Neutral” is a convenient term for the purpose but the Chinese landscape is anything but neutral, freighted with hundreds, thousands, of years of intense consideration—consideration that is often “theoretical” in nature whether conveyed by text, by image, by oral transmission, or only by practice (“miniaturization,” “replication,” “conjuring” are our terms; the practice is theirs), and contributed to by virtually anyone who ever wrote a poem or walked the land. Its contents are not lacking in disputation and historical change, but, strikingly, the passage of time has brought greater agreement on fundamental matters—for example, that landscape, like the underlying “nature” of which it is a visible manifestation, is moral in essence, a source of moral guidance for mankind²⁴⁴—than it has brought diversity and proliferation of thought about such matters, at least down until modern times.

That the landscape was conceived of as moral and revered should not lead us to conclude that it was particularly well managed; indeed, one can witness in the progress of landscape representation the slow progression of deforestation, first north and then south, to the point in time, in 1889, when the great Temple of Heaven in Beijing had to be rebuilt using Douglas fir from Oregon state.²⁴⁵ Just what will

become of the landscape not only in today's, or tomorrow's, polluted and denuded China, not only on the ground but in theory and in image, is anybody's guess: to the best of my knowledge, the subject has yet to be broached in terms of visual art and theory but a round-table like this should provide the stimulus to do so.²⁴⁶ And, hopefully, reflection on Chinese landscape arts and theory can expand the possibilities for consideration of Western landscape.

This leads back to the question implied, if not actually posed, at the outset: two questions, really, of *why* (if what is written above is essentially correct) Western landscape theory should range so freely and *why* Chinese thoughts on landscape are comparatively so cohesive. But any reasonable answer—which can neither ignore the real diversity in Chinese thought nor impute any value judgment—must have many parts to it, including the cohesion and conformity of Chinese culture itself, and something of the reverse for the diverse cultures of Europe; but most important would be the fact that China's interest in landscape/*shanshui* lies not so much in land-shape as in essence, in the energy that animates the land, the same energy that runs through us all.

Michel Baridon

When you have just come out of a book, one way of making sure that it was worth writing is to explain why you chose it as a subject and whether it has confirmed or modified your original views.

When I started to write *Naissance et renaissance du paysage* I meant it as a contribution to the debates that have been going in "le forum du paysage." Since the early 1990s hardly a year has elapsed without adding one or two important books to the many we already had on the subject. Some of the theses put forward by those books seemed to me very stimulating intellectually but disputable historically, and I felt that my contribution to the forum would be to ascertain the facts and then leave all participants to decide on the theses.

Let me take two or three examples: can we follow Augustin Berque when he maintains that, since the word *landscape* appeared in most of the languages of Europe in the sixteenth century, people had

no eye for it in the Middle Ages? Or when he concludes from this that since the term *shanshui* has always existed in Chinese (together with painted representations) China's civilization is "paysagère" while ours is not? Can we follow Alain Roger when he maintains that landscape perception is inseparable from *artialisaton*, in other words that the descriptive approach of geographers precludes their participation in the forum?

To show that such questions were not purely academic I dedicated my first chapter to *paysage* as a sign of the times (the landscaping of railway stations and airports, the wish expressed by a growing number of persons to have their ashes dispersed anonymously in a landscape of their choice, the role played by landscapes in the development of tourism, and so on). Then, I plunged into Antiquity.

By bringing together literary texts and paintings (still in existence or described by writers) it became obvious to me that:

1. The civilization of Greece and Rome was indeed *paysagère* because philosophy established connections between the sciences, the arts, and literature. In the ancient world there was no hiatus between the world picture elaborated by geographers and the landscapes described by poets and by historians. All relied on geometry and optics.
2. The same sciences were at work in the representation of space by linear and aerial perspective, a fact that explains the importance of theater scenes in philosophic discussions and in the creative imagination of the playwrights. This was particularly true in Greece and in the Greek-speaking part of the Roman world: while Ptolemy's optics was reaching its final stage of development, the poets and the novelists of Alexandria were describing landscapes that no reader of *Daphnis and Chloe* is likely to forget.

With the great invasions and the rise of Christianity, things took another turn. The Church fathers did nothing to preserve the heritage of Greek science. It was not for men, they said, to discover the secrets of nature (Lactancius) and the Bible had no place for such "lies" as the rotundity of the earth (Augustine). Nature was to be

contemplated, not observed, let alone studied. It could be represented in the symbolic mode, however, and this was enough for artists to express themselves. On the Ravenna mosaics all trees are alike, all sheep similar, but they are made eternal by the cosmic character of the apsidal vaults. Time being suspended, mountains, clouds, plants, and animals lose the vitality and the symphonic intellectual power they had in the days of Ovid and Tacitus or when the Esquiline frescos were painted. The landscape thus entered into partial eclipse during the early Middle Ages, the two notable exceptions being the desert as described by the monks who turned it into an image of their spiritual quest (Jerome's *Life of Anthony*, Cassien's *Conferences*) and the oceans as sung by the Barbarians of the Baltic and the North seas even after they had been Christianized.

After the early efforts of the Carolingians to retrieve the cultural heritage of antiquity, the study of Greek science was slowly resumed with the help of translations done by the Arabs. Euclid, Aristotle, and Ptolemy became accessible again. Their study was often discouraged by the Church, but the mendicant orders (Franciscans and Dominicans), who were aware of the intellectual needs of the students because they often lived in cities, made a decisive contribution to the reinstatement of Greek science in the quadrivium of medieval universities. "Franciscan optics" (P. Hills's phrase) developed an intellectual interest in the operations of nature and promoted its study.

The movement was amplified for economic reasons in the city states of Italy, Florence and Siena in particular (both close to Assisi where Giotto worked for the Franciscans). Long-distance trade, banking, and the early developments of industry called for a rationalization of the world picture. In Siena, the face of the *campagna* was changed by the decline of the aristocracy and the private appropriation of domains by merchants. The city authorities commissioned artists to draw survey maps; such maps clarified problems of ownership but they also comforted painters in their attempts to represent space on a large scale. In the Palazzo pubblico they commissioned Ambrogio Lorenzetti to paint a spherical map of the world together with a townscape of Siena and a landscape of the neighboring *campagna*. The whole was completed in 1340, four

years after Petrarch's famous ascent of Mont Ventoux. From this date, one may consider that the landscape in its modern form is in existence.

From this survey it is possible to draw some conclusions, the first two of which can be presented (hopefully) as theories:

1. Whether they have a specific term to designate it or not, all civilizations are landscape conscious (see the earliest myths of creation). Some cease to represent landscapes for religious reasons, temporarily or not, but they never become landscape blind.
2. The observation and, to a larger extent, the study of nature promote the representation of landscapes. The more accurate the study, the more searching the representation. One notable exception is Islamic culture, not in all countries.
3. In the Western world the landscape was reborn as an independent art form before Brunelleschi's theory of linear perspective became known in artistic circles.

David E. Nye

Response to the Roundtable

This fascinating conversation covered a great deal of ground and it points in many possible directions for a commentator. Indeed, one could easily write a response as long as the original document. But it is impractical to try to insert oneself into the roundtable in this way. Instead, I would like to stress the usefulness of the work of four seminal scholars in landscape studies, all of whom were marginalized in the discussion. One of them was mentioned but once, J. B. Jackson. Two, D. W. Meinig and Leo Marx, were not mentioned at all, while William Cronon turned up only in a single note. The first two are cultural geographers, while the third is a literary critic, and the last is an environmental historian. Since James Elkins begins the discussion by saying that the goal was "a cross-section, a reasonable sample, of the degree of coherence of talk about landscape" I feel compelled to emphasize the centrality of Jackson, Meinig, Marx, and Cronon, to my sense of what landscape is.

Jackson once offered a succinct definition: "A composition of man-made or man-modified spaces to serve as infrastructure or background for our collective existence."²⁴⁷ The art historian and literary critic will find this inadequate, but one might append a second, subsidiary definition, "The representation and narration of such spaces." These two elements of a definition of landscape respect the making of the work of art, which Gaudio rightly insisted is important, but it also keeps firmly in mind that the physical landscape is also made, before the work of art emerges. There are thus two quite different kinds of "making"—and I hasten to add that, while this might look as though I were trying to resurrect the Marxist idea of base and superstructure, nothing could be further from my point. For the physical making of landscape is culturally contingent, not deterministic, and the same spaces can be transformed in many different ways. I recall a walk through a part of Stockholm where similar small plots of land had been made into gardens, each one quite different, yet all starting with the same kind of earth, the same rainfall and sunlight, and based upon a roughly similar investment of money and time. These small, personal landscapes exemplify the process by which a site is transformed into a humanly made place that can serve as infrastructure (vegetable gardens, small houses) or background (ornamental gardens) for collective existence. On a larger scale, one can say that on the same location, Kansas, at the same time (the 1850s) slave holders and family farmers constructed quite different landscapes. But enough about the potential usefulness of Jackson's definition. His work as a whole is marvelous because he always kept specific sites in focus.

I see some of the same virtues in D. W. Meinig's monumental four-volume work *The Shaping of America* that appeared with Yale University Press.²⁴⁸ I realize that the purpose of the roundtable was not bibliographic, but Meinig has produced a history of the United States quite unlike any done before, because he places at the center of that history the shaping of the many individual landscapes that came to make up the nation. I wish I could say that similar work is being done about every region of the globe, but so far as I am aware this is not yet the case. Note 31 of the roundtable notes: "Surprisingly, little was said in the roundtable about the historically

constitutive relationship between landscape and technology.” I share with Meinig a sense of the importance of the technologies human beings use to shape their environments. Indeed, I go so far as to believe that no landscape is innocent of technology, that all landscapes—agriculture is an obvious example—embody the technology of the time of their making (and remaking).²⁴⁹

Leo Marx’s seminal work *The Machine in the Garden* provides a model of how to link the study of landscape to the study of texts—not only novels and poetry but political speeches and technical reports. His work retains its usefulness, especially now, as the ecological crisis deepens.²⁵⁰ Of course, Marx’s book could not take account of the scholarship of the last forty years, but it still speaks to us, and has remained continuously in print since 1965. Moreover, Marx is still an active scholar, and the many essays he has published after *The Machine in the Garden* are also valuable.²⁵¹

Finally, I was surprised at how little the roundtable focused on the ecological sense of landscape. Environmental history and ecology were apparently not much on anyone’s mind on June 17, 2006, more’s the pity. Indeed the very word “environment” was only mentioned four times, and early on (not including the notes added later). I suggest that readers of the present volume supplement it with the works of William Cronon and other environmental historians.²⁵² Art historians cannot merely give lip service to the historicity of landscape, any more than historians can ignore the complexity of representation.

Robert B. Riley
Theory Comments

The two major strengths of this roundtable are summed up on the first page of the text: emphasis on “conversation,” and aim for a “cross-section” instead of consensus.

A conversation it is indeed—courteous, stimulating, and only loosely directive. It’s also noticeable for absence of jargon and for clean, straightforward language. Proposals, responses, and demurrals are offered with hardly a trace of designer trigger words signifying

intellectual sophistication—*praxis*, *topos*, *chronos*, and so on. For me as a reader, the content-to-page ratio was so much higher than that of most conference proceedings as to make me wonder how, and why, our usual mandatory meeting format of speeches and the rote reading of journal formatted writings ever came about.

“Cross-section” is also an apt descriptor, and if the sections at times seem to be taken in different planes, or to more resemble random biopsy, it is a small price to pay for an interesting, almost open-ended discussion from provocative thinkers.

At this point I will coopt “conversation” and “cross-section” as a rationale for my own informal and none too highly structured response.

It is good to note that, for the most part, the participants’ references are confined to fields and authorities that bear a close and obvious relationship to landscape design, landscape, and nature, with a welcome absence of reference to nondisciplinary hero authorities of the moment. I stress this point because, in my few decades of travel into and out of architectural academia, I was presented with a succession of hero figures from other disciplines, intellectual hooks on which to hang design decisions—D’arcy Thompson on growth and form, Churchman on systems, Simon on administrative behavior, von Bertalanffy on general systems theory, Ashby on homeostasis, Piaget on childhood development, Lévi-Strauss on bricolage and dualities, Calvino, Eco, and so on, an architectural propensity first noted seventy years ago by John Summerson in “The Mischievous Analogy.” Landscape architecture has not been innocent of such fads and frivolities but they have usually been on a less pretentious intellectual level, more derived from reading *Newsweek* than the *New York Review of Books*—left brain/right brain, future shock, fractals, and on and on.

All of the phenomena and the authors above have had valuable insights toward a better understanding of design and the environment. But, because they have been used as rhetorical justifications and badges of intellectual sophistication, not applied in the real process of design and understanding, when they have been discarded for later fashions, no intellectual tools or underpinnings have remained for our use. If we were to look at any of these authors or

these concepts today we'd have to start all over. That's not the route of intellectual progress.

The first major issue in theory, an issue barely addressed in this roundtable, must be the simple one of definition. What is theory? Is it as hard to come to grips with as "nature"? Let me offer two bipolar definitions of theory. One, commonly used today, forcefully advanced by John Dixon Hunt, is that theory means exactly what the Greek word meant, "speculation," and indeed "speculation" is an early entry under *theory* for Raymond Williams. At the other extreme Amos Rapoport distinguishes among framework, model, and theory. A framework organizes. A model predicts. A theory explains. It is easy, of course, to dismiss this as a rationalist positivist hangover but it remains the basis of most hard science and social science inquiry. Speculation, indeed, is most worthwhile but I have my doubts on ennobling it with the term "theory." For those who disagree, would you like to propose, at your university, a graduate-level course in "advanced landscape architectural speculation"? Unfortunately, designers want the freedom, make that the permissiveness, of the first definition but want the cachet, prestige, and sophistication of the second.

I would propose a different set of descriptors, attributes, or mandates for theory. If we accept theory as explanation, then comes the question "Explain what?" Then in turn comes the question "What are the questions?" What questions, what area of inquiry, do we expect it to respond to? A theory should not only match answers to particular questions but also raise more to be pursued and offer a framework in which to fit answers, observations, and insights. A theory, then, offers not only explanations but also a metaframework. Consider the questions we could ask of phenomena as diverse and broad as nature, landscape, or landscape architecture, questions ranging from the botanical to the behavioral. Would not the theories have to be multiple? Of course they would. The most gratifying aspect of this roundtable is that the issue of multiple theories is raised and intelligently discussed. If this issue is so obvious that it should have served as the basis for discussion, and for working inquiry, years before this, never mind. The corollary of this view of theory is that theory, like concepts of nature, landscape, and landscape architecture,

can only be defined and developed situationally. Theory responding to one question can be anywhere from useless to misleading for pursuing another question. Theories are the organizers for insights, observations, and speculations about the landscape and the landscape experience that hopefully build into what Clifford Geertz terms “thick description.” The more theories, and the more the observations and insights they organize, the richer (although certainly not simpler) will be our understanding of landscape and landscape design. The role of theory as an organizer of observations and a guide to questions would hopefully remove it from its use as a superficial justification for design forms whose derivation has little to do with it. (The question “Yeah, but do the users get it?” leveled at the theoretical rhetoric of designers is relevant but not the only question to be raised. In fact, that “theory,” whether communicated to users or not, might have served as a very useful framework for the designer, a gestalt making decisions easier and more consistent. This is a role of theory often overlooked, probably because it is not grandiose enough.)

From these observations I would offer these three commandments for the pursuit of theory and inquiry today:

1. Work within a framework of theoretical multiplicity. To seek one overarching theory in a postmodern context is a mark of the intellectual immaturity of the discipline. *We speak with the tongue of Derrida, but we think with the mind of Newton.*
2. With any area of theory or inquiry, be clear about expectations. Particularly consider the utility of theoretical frameworks and investigations within the whole universe of landscape, landscape change, and landscape experience. Utility can be judged in more than one way: the extent of applicability of the theory, the centrality or criticality of the area under inquiry, say, or the pure intellectual return expected.
3. Always consider generalizability. Also remember that the latter, while a goal to be desired, is not the only measure of utility. I would suggest that those interested in advancing the state of theory, and inquiry in general, within our discipline eschew the phrase (and the concept) “Landscape is . . .” and

defer to "Landscape can be . . .," "landscape for some people," "landscape in a capitalist society," or some such.

One final musing on theory. Landscape theory can be roughly but usefully classified as internal theory, or contextual theory, or experiential theory. Confusion abounds from the failure to distinguish among them. Internal theory, traditionally and frustratingly wedded to history, has dealt with the development of design and landscape as a self-contained phenomenon. Contextual theory, now ruling the intellectual landscape inquiry, deals with the relationship of a landscape to the culture and society in which it is embedded. Experiential theory deals with the response of human beings to landscapes—a field that since the environmental behavior boom of a couple or three decades ago has been left mostly to novelists, memoirists, and essayists but one that holds enormous value for our understanding of the landscape. The three are not hermetic categories. Obviously they relate to one another. The point is that they raise different questions and require different modes of inquiry—and theories.

Notes

1. James Elkins, p. 150.
2. Yi-Fu Tuan, "Sign and Metaphor," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 68 no. 3 (1978): 363–72, pp. 366, 370. See also Philip Wheelwright, *Metaphor and Reality* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1962), 72.
3. Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London: W. Strahan (1968 [1755]), entry for *landscape*. Both of these senses of landscape appear in some form in most, but not all, dictionaries. Johnson's dictionary is notable because it differentiates between them so clearly and this may be because he was not just a pioneering lexicographer but a scholar who was deeply concerned with landscape. See Robert J. Mayhew, *Landscape, Literature and English Religious Culture, 1660–1800: Samuel Johnson and Languages of Natural Description* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
4. Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 48 (emphasis in original).
5. Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983), quoted on p. xxiii.
6. Merriam-Webster, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the*

- English Language, Unabridged*, electronic edition (Springfield MA: Merriam-Webster, 2000)): *prospect*.
7. One's perception of the place might be influenced, however, by being thus viewed from a distance. Raymond Williams, *Border Country: A Novel* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960), 75. Stephen Daniels, "Marxism, Culture and the Duplicity of Landscape," *New Models in Geography*, vol. II, edited by Richard Peet and Nigel Thrift (London: Unwin & Hyman, 1989), 196–220.
 8. Kenneth R. Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86 no. 4 (1996): 630–53; Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic: From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), chapter 1.
 9. *OED, Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971): *landscape*.
 10. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language: landscape, -ship, -scape*; Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape"; Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic*.
 11. *OED: -ship*.
 12. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language: culture*.
 13. Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape"; Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic*.
 14. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language: ideology*.
 15. Olwig, *Nature's Ideological Landscape: A Literary and Geographic Perspective on its Development and Preservation on Denmark's Jutland Heath* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984).
 16. Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana, 1976), entry for *ideology*; Olwig, "Representation and Alienation in the Political Land-scape," *Cultural Geographies* 12 no. 1 (2005): 19–40.
 17. Simon Schama, "Dutch Landscapes: Culture as Foreground," in *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*, edited by Peter C. Sutton (London: Herbert Press, 1987), 64–83; Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic*, chapter 1.
 18. Michael Rosenthal, *British Landscape Painting* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1982), 12.
 19. Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000).
 20. Denis Cosgrove, *The Palladian Landscape: Geographical Change and Its Cultural Representations in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 9.
 21. Stephen Daniels and Denis Cosgrove, "Introduction: Iconography and Landscape," in *The Iconography of Landscape*, edited by Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1–10, p. 1.
 22. Daniels, "Marxism, Culture and the Duplicity of Landscape."

23. Olwig, " 'This Is Not a Landscape': Circulating Reference and Land Shaping," in *European Rural Landscapes: Persistence and Change in a Globalising Environment*, edited by Helen Sooväli, Hannes Palang, Marc Antrop and Gunhild Setten (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004): 41–66.
24. Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956 [1435–36]), 56.
25. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language: absolute space*.
26. W. J. T. Mitchell, "Preface to the Second Edition of *Landscape and Power: Space, Place, and Landscape*," in *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002): vii–xii, pp. vii–viii.
27. Emile Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society* (London: Faber & Faber, 1973), 311–12.
28. Cosgrove, "Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* N.S. 1 (1985): 45–62; Cosgrove, "The Geometry of Landscape: Practical and Speculative Arts in Sixteenth-Century Venetian Land Territories," *The Iconography of Landscape*, edited by Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 254–76.
29. Cosgrove, "Platonism and Practicality: Hydrology, Engineering and Landscape in Sixteenth Century Venice," in *Water, Engineering and Landscape: Water Control and Landscape Transformation in the Modern Period*, edited by Denis Cosgrove and Geoff Petts (London: Belhaven, 1990): 35–53.
30. Olwig, "Landscape, Place and the State of Progress," *Progress: Geographical Essays*, edited by Robert D. Sack (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 22–60.
31. Williams, *Keywords: nature*.
32. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature," *Nature/Walking*, edited by John Elder (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 1991 [1836]), 1–67, p. 7 (emphasis mine).
33. Emerson, "Nature," 44.
34. Emerson, "Nature," 13.
35. Emerson, "Nature," 13.
36. E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969 [1959]), 19–20.
37. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*.
38. J. W. T. Mitchell, "Gombrich and the Rise of the Landscape," in *The Consumption of Culture 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text*, edited by Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 104. See also Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994): 5–34.
39. Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic*, chapter 8.
40. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape"; Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Politics, Planning and the Protection of Nature: Political Abuse

- of Early Ecological Ideas in Germany, 1933–45,” *Planning Perspectives* 2 (1987): 127–48.
41. Olwig, “Natives and Aliens in the National Landscape,” *Landscape Research* 28 no. 1 (2003): 61–74. This is partly because the mosque is seen to be the expression of a culture at a lower stage of development, as evidenced, for example, by the fact that their religion forbids the pictorial representation of their God. The publication on September 30, 2005, of cartoons of Muhammad by the rightwing Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* (the Jutland Post), which caused an international crisis, was thus prompted by the editor’s desire to violate, in the name of the Freedom of the Press, the Muslim strictures against the making of images of the prophet. This “heroic” defense of the freedom of the press against the religious feelings of a suppressed ethnic minority was widely portrayed as a defense of the values of Western Civilization against an attack by a less developed culture. As one Danish political leader from a powerful rightwing party put it (in paraphrase): “There cannot be a clash of civilizations when there is only one civilization.”
 42. See Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Cosgrove, “Geography Is Everywhere: Culture and Symbolism in Human Landscapes,” in *Horizons in Human Geography*, edited by D. Gregory and R. Walford (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1989); Maunu Häyrynen, “The Kaleidoscopic View: The Finnish Nationalistic Landscape Imagery,” *National Identities* 2 no. 1 (2000): 5–20; Martin Jay, “Scopic Regimes of Modernity,” in *Modernity and Identity*, edited by S. Lash and J. Friedman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Sverker Sörlin, “Monument and Memory: Landscape Imagery and the Articulation of Territory,” *Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* 2 (1998): 269–79; Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society 1780–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958).
 43. Homi K. Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817,” in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 102–22.
 44. Alexander Pope, Epistle IV, to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, 1731.
 45. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco CA: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987).
 46. Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Expanding the Geographical Imagination* (London: Blackwell, 1996); and Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.
 47. See Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, translated by Harriet de Onís (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1995 [1947]). For the conference “Trans: A Visual Culture Conference” hosted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 19–22, 2006, see www.visualculture.wisc.edu/Conference/trans.html. On the “Transvideo” exhibition at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, October 10, 2006–January 7, 2007, see <http://www.mmoca.org/exhibitions/exhibitdetails/transvideo/index.html>. I thank the students in AH800: Visual Transculture for challenging my thinking.

48. Jill H. Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
49. Casid, "Inhuming Empire: Islands as Colonial Nurseries and Graves," in *The Global Eighteenth Century*, edited by Felicity Nussbaum (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 279–95.
50. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, "Narrativizing Visual Culture: Towards a Polycentric Aesthetics," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff (New York: Routledge, 1998), 37–59.
51. Edward W. Said, "Traveling Theory," *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 126.
52. Said, "Traveling Theory Reconsidered," *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 436–52.
53. James Clifford, "Notes on Travel and Theory," *Inscriptions* 5 (1989): 177–86.
54. See for example, Dianne Harris, *The Nature of Authority: Villa Culture, Landscape, and Representation in Eighteenth-Century Lombardy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).
55. *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*, edited by Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles (Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).
56. Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993).
57. In particular, see Denis Cosgrove, *The Palladian Landscape: Geographical Change and its Cultural Representations in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993).
58. For a state-of-the-field summary, see Dianne Harris, "The Postmodernization of Landscape," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58 no. 3, *Architectural History* 1999/2000 (September 1999): 434–43. Though already outdated, the essay gives a sense of where things remain in the field. Numerous important works of scholarship have emerged in the intervening years since the essay's publication, but the field remains very small with many questions yet unasked.
59. W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 5–30.
60. This is true, in part, because landscape history is most frequently taught in landscape architecture professional degree programs where history courses have long been taught by designers who frame their study of landscape to serve the needs of design students intent on becoming professional landscape architects. Believing that such students primarily require expertise in formal analysis, the majority of landscape history courses taught in the United States have been locked into the most rudimentary forms of aesthetic analysis.
61. Remarks made by Cary Nelson, "Corporate Humanities" panel, Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, February 8, 2005.
62. On p. 92, Anne Whiston Spirn states: "There is a notion, embedded in the original word, of a mutual shaping of people and place: people shape the land, and the land shapes people." The idea appears again on p. 110 when Rachael Ziady DeLue comments that landscape "shapes us."

63. See statement by Elkins, p. 103.
64. Kath Woodward, *Understanding Identity* (London: Arnold Publishers, 2002), vii.
65. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Dell Upton, "Speaking Self and Hearing Race in the Antebellum City," *Landscape Journal* 26 no. 1 (Spring 2007).
66. Woodward, *Understanding Identity*, x.
67. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1959); Woodward, *Understanding Identity*, 10.
68. See for example, Lynda Nead, "Mapping the Self: Gender, Space and Modernity in mid-Victorian London," in *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, edited by Roy Porter (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 167–85. Among the most important, though controversial, works that explore the instability of gender identity is Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999). For an example of scholarship that deals with the dynamics of racial definition, see *Racial Formation in the United States*, edited by Michael Omi and Howard Winant (New York and London: Routledge, 1994). There are many important texts on these topics; these represent a mere starting point.
69. For more on this see A. Appadurai and J. Holston, "Cities and Citizenship," *Public Culture* 8 (Winter 1996): 187–204.
70. My thanks to Helaine Silverman for pointing this out to me.
71. This is an extensive body of literature, but to note a few key texts see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Stephen Daniels, "The Political Iconography of Woodland in Later Georgian England," in *Iconography of Landscape*, edited by Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993); Kenneth Robert Olwig, *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic: From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).
72. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994). For two recently published texts that confront the spatial dimension of postcolonial identity see Jill H. Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta: Modernity, Nationalism, and the Colonial Uncanny* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006).
73. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 4–5.
74. *Landscape and Race in the United States*, edited by Richard Schein (New York and London: Routledge, 2006); James Duncan and Nancy Duncan, *Landscapes of Privilege: The Politics of the Aesthetic in an American Suburb* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004); David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995); Dianne Harris,

- guest editor, special double-issue of *Landscape Journal* on "Race and Space," 26 no. 1 (Spring 2007). For an online bibliography on this topic, see http://cdms.ds.uiuc.edu/Research_CDMS/CriticalWhiteness/Race_and_Space.htm.
75. Dianne Harris, "Screening Identity: Race, Class, and Privacy in the Ordinary Postwar House," in *Landscape and Race in the United States*, edited by Richard Schein (New York: Routledge, 2007), 127–56; Dianne Harris, "Clean and Bright and Everyone White: Seeing the Postwar Domestic Landscape in the United States," in *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*, edited by Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles; Dianne Harris, "Seeing the Invisible: Reexamining Race and Vernacular Architecture," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 2 (2006/2007): 96–105; and Dianne Harris, *Little White Houses: Race, Class, and the Ordinary Postwar House, 1945–60*, in progress).
 76. Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 90.
 77. Christopher Tilley, "Interpreting Material Culture," *The Meanings of Things: Material Culture and Symbolic Expression*, edited by Ian Hodder (London: Routledge, 1991), 191. See also *The Material Culture Reader*, edited by Victor Buchli (Oxford: Berg, 2002); *Learning from Things: Method and Theory of Material Culture Studies*, edited by W. David Kingery (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996); *American Material Culture: The Shape of the Field*, edited by Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison (Winterthur DE: Winterthur Museum; distributed by the University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1997); *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces*, edited by Patricia Spyer (London: Routledge, 1998); *Reading Material Culture: Structuralism, Hermeneutics and Post-structuralism*, edited by Christopher Tilley (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).
 78. Bernard Herman, "Embedded Landscape of the Charlestown Single House," in *Exploring Everyday Landscapes: Perspectives of Vernacular Architecture*, vol. VI, edited by Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurry (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 43.
 79. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "In Praise of Philosophy," translated by John Wild and James Edie, *In Praise of Philosophy and Other Essays* (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 54 (emphasis in original).
 80. Bill Brown, "Introduction," *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002); John Dewey, *Psychology* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887), 280.
 81. Herman, "Embedded Landscape of the Charlestown Single House," 51.
 82. Fred Myers, "Introduction," in *The Empire of Things: Regimes of Value and Material Culture*, edited by Fred Myers (Santa Fe NM: School of American Research Press, 2001), 3.
 83. As quoted in Myers, "Introduction," 16.
 84. David Tatham, "The Lithographic Workshop, 1825–1850," in *The Cultivation of Artists in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Georgia

- Brady Barnhill, Diana Korzenik and Caroline F. Sloat (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1997), 45–54.
85. Alan Wallach, "Wadsworth's Tower: An Episode in the History of American Landscape Vision," *American Art* 10 no. 3 (Fall 1996): 8–27.
 86. Wendy Bellion, " 'Extend the Sphere': Charles Willson Peale's Panorama of Annapolis," *Art Bulletin* 86 no. 3 (September 2004): 529–49.
 87. Robin E. Kelsey, "Viewing the Archive: Timothy O'Sullivan's Photographs for the Wheeler Survey, 1871–74," *Art Bulletin* 85 no. 4 (December 2003): 702–23.
 88. Dorothy Moss, "Recasting the Copy: Original Paintings and Reproductions at the Dawn of American Mass Culture, ca. 1900," dissertation, University of Delaware, forthcoming.
 89. John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigree Books, 1980), 77.
 90. I would like to thank Jennifer Roberts and Sara St. Antoine for their constructive comments and astute bibliographic suggestions and Denis E. Cosgrove for generously sharing his thoughts on landscape and ecology.
 91. On the etymological relation between *scape* and *sheaf*, see John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 7.
 92. See for example John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Ann Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: The English Rustic Tradition, 1740–1860* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Albert Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze: Manifest Destiny and American Landscape Painting, c. 1830–1865* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1991); *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920*, edited by William Truettner (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1991); Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825–1875* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); *Thomas Cole: Landscape into History*, edited by William H. Truettner and Alan Wallach (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1994).
 93. From the start, my use of Professor Cosgrove's phrase does not align with the positions he has taken. See for example Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), xxix ("But I am not sure I would even today give great prominence to environmentalism").
 94. The ecological crisis is quickly fostering an epistemological quandary. In a moment of musical chairs, progressives associated with ideological critiques of science find themselves endorsing the reasonableness and reliability of the results of empirical inquiry into climate change, while conservatives argue that the science of this inquiry is politically motivated and therefore suspect. See Bruno Latour, "Why Critique Has Run Out of Steam," *Critical Inquiry* 30 (2004): 225–48; David Demeritt, "Science Studies, Climate Change and the Prospects for Constructivist Critique," *Economy and Society* 35 (2006): 453–79. For an intelligent discussion of related issues, see Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

95. My defense is purposefully vague about the exact set of landscape uses and practices to which it applies. For the moment, I am interested only in the potentials of the definition, not its shortcomings.
96. Professor Cosgrove has distinguished these uses of the term. See Cosgrove, *Social Formation*, 9.
97. See Henri Zerner, "On Landscape," in *The Rudolf L. Baumfield Collection of Landscape Drawings and Prints* (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, 1989), 28.
98. Kenneth Robert Olwig, *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic: From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002). See also Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86 (1996): 630–53. Garrett A. Sullivan Jr. has also drawn attention to early modern understandings of landscape and emphasized their multiplicity. In his discussion of the estate, he has distinguished landscapes of absolute property from those of stewardship and custom. Although the landscape of absolute property is associated with a single point perspective, he argues, landscapes of custom include multiple perspectives. Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., *The Drama of Landscape: Land, Property, and Social Relations on the Early Modern Stage* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). The institutionalization of landscape, he claims, "marks the triumph of landscapes of absolute property." Sullivan, *The Drama of Landscape*, 15.
99. Olwig, *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic*, 213, 220; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 133. See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).
100. Tuan, "Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective," *Progress in Geography* 6 (1974): 211–52. I am once again borrowing from Olwig's use of Tuan's work. See Olwig, *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic*, 215.
101. Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology*, 139–40. Sullivan has argued that "the emergence of a landscape of absolute property was spurred on by the flight of landlords to London." Sullivan, *The Drama of Landscape*, 18, 46–56.
102. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature," in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures* (New York: Library of America, 1983), 9–11. Emerson's relationship with property is complex, but I tend to agree with Cary Wolfe's assessment that it remains locked in a rather conservative structure. Wolfe has noted with respect to this passage: "The problem with the deed and title of Miller and Locke, after all, is not that they are forms of property ownership, but rather that they are not, like the poet's more perfect possession, ownership *enough*." Cary Wolfe, "Alone in America: Cavell, Emerson, and the Politics of Individualism," *New Literary History* 25 no. 1 (Winter 1994): 149. Wolfe has contrasted his position to that of Stanley Cavell, who has argued that self-possession for Emerson is the "reverse of" possessive, that it is an "exercise not of power, but of reception." Wolfe, "Alone in America"; Stanley Cavell, *The Senses of Walden*, expanded edition (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press,

- 1992), 134–35. But the passages I cite from “Nature” demonstrate that the two positions are compatible. Self-possession becomes unpossessive because only an evacuation of the self can facilitate a greater possession of the world. Still, it should be borne in mind that a dose of comic hyperbole may inform the “transparent eye-ball” passage. See Lawrence Buell, *Emerson* (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 92–94.
103. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 153.
 104. Agamben defines *Homo sapiens* as “a machine or device for producing the recognition of the human.” Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, translated by Kevin Attell (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 26.
 105. Jacques Derrida, “The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow),” translated by David Wills, *Critical Inquiry* 28 no. 2 (Winter 2002): 400; Jacques Derrida, “L’animal que donc je suis,” in *L’animal autobiographique: autour de Jacques Derrida*, sous la direction de Marie-Louise Mallet (Paris: Galilée, 1999), 283.
 106. Verlyn Klinkenborg, *Timothy; or, Notes of an Abject Reptile* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 127.
 107. In passing, I will suggest that the headlong embrace of social constructivism in much of the academy in recent years can also be construed as a fantasy of not belonging.
 108. Needless to say, the Book of Genesis offers an ur-fantasy of *you belong to us; we do not belong to you*, to wit: “‘Let us make man in our image . . . and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth’ . . . And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it . . .’” Gen. 1: 26–28. Peter Singer has succinctly taken the Christian tradition to task for its anthropocentrism and its dismissal of ecological reciprocity. See Peter Singer, *Writings on an Ethical Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000), 87–90.
 109. Yi-Fu Tuan has remarked that in the Middle Ages “The earth occupies the lowest place in the heavenly hierarchy: movement to it is downward movement.” Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia*, 132.
 110. I am no expert in early modern religious beliefs in Northern Europe, but Martin Schwarz Lausten has noted that private prayer books from the last fifty years of Roman Catholicism in Denmark (c.1470–1519) evince “searing confidence” in “the intercessory prayer and assistance to be provided by the saints in all of life’s activities.” Martin Schwarz Lausten, *A Church History of Denmark* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2002), 80. I am equally inexpert on the ecology of early modern Northern Europe, but Thorkild Kjærgaard has concluded that “Increasing pressure on the ecosystem—as evidenced by the peasants’ interest in the dune lyme grass in the time of Christian III [King of Denmark and Norway 1513–23]—was a forewarning of the ecological crisis that would cause the young Christian IV’s once so prosperous kingdom to totter . . .” Thorkild

- Kjærgaard, *The Danish Revolution, 1500–1800: An Ecobistorical Interpretation*, translated by David Hohnen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 12. My expedient sampling of the literature on these topics is merely meant to caution us against any nostalgic imposition of ecological belonging on historical communities that understood landscape in terms of political self-determination or local custom.
111. A popular example of such debunking is Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999). For other examples of historical ecological blundering, see Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Viking, 2005).
 112. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, edited by Claude Lefort, translated by Alphonso Lingis (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 137.
 113. Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, translated by David B. Allison (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 152. I can't help but hear calls to return to phenomenology as echoing the nostalgia for a return to origins. Merleau-Ponty's insistence that phenomenology is a "transcendental philosophy" for which "the world is always 'already there' before reflection begins" seems painfully prelapsarian in the wake of Derrida. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), vii. I am certainly open to a rejoinder, but one that would take account of criticisms such as Judith Butler's forceful argument that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology operates as a scopic regime of exclusion. See Judith Butler, "Sexual Ideology and Phenomenological Description: A Feminist Critique of Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception," in *The Thinking Muse: Feminism and Modern French Philosophy*, edited by Jeffner Allen and Iris Marion Young (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 85–100.
 114. Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 30–33. I should add that my emphasis on the ideology of doing should not be taken as an underestimation of the difficulties of profound ecological knowing.
 115. This is another reason why the emphasis in the roundtable discussion on phenomenology troubles me. A return to phenomenology might incline us to normalize experience, to empty it of its ideological content, and to ignore the social structures and operations that determine the conditions under which it can exist as such.
 116. Bruno Latour, *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, translated by Catherine Porter (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
 117. For a brief statement of the questions and difficulties that subtend the project, see Bruno Latour, "Crisis," in *We Have Never Been Modern*, translated by Catherine Porter (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1–12.
 118. Latour, *Politics of Nature*, 198–99.
 119. Latour, *Politics of Nature*, 199.

120. Peter Singer, the practical ethicist who has become a lightning rod of controversy for pointing out gaps between our knowing and doing, has meditated thoughtfully on what our fellow creatures (he does not use the hybridity of Latour's *matters of concern*) might demand of us. See Singer, *Writings*, especially pp. 21–102. For a succinct discussion of critiques of Singer's position, see Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003): 33–39.
121. In discussing “the conservation of nature,” Latour remarks that “It is understandable that people find it hard to give up the conveniences procured by such an arbitrage between the indisputable and the disputable.” The word “conveniences” renders this remark, in my view, a gross understatement. Latour, *Politics of Nature*, 93. In light of my comment about the Masai, I should also note that the gap between knowing and doing obviously extends to matters of social justice among humans. How far an ostensible political commitment to redistributing social power within human society extends into action is, in other words, open to question.
122. Prescriptions of detachment for the landscape scholar, which once de facto celebrated the gap between knowing and doing, have become dated fast. Consider, for example, Jackson's admonition from 1984 following an aerial examination of agricultural water use in the American West: “Still, as air travelers, as amateur viewers of the landscape, our role is simply to look at the visible results of these projects and problems and to postpone judgment until all the evidence is in. Americans are capable of seeing the dangers ahead and trying to circumvent them.” Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, 143.
123. Heidegger's notion of animal captivation is subtle, and I do it little justice in this passing reference. See Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, translated by William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 238–49. See also Agamben's delicate unpacking of the concept in Agamben, *The Open*, 39–62.
124. Agamben, *The Open*, 77.
125. The fantasy of not belonging, I should add, has infiltrated ecology as well as landscape. The emergence and popularity of the phrases “landscape ecology” and “human ecology” evince this. For a history of *ecology* and its cognates, see Paul Ward English and Robert C. Mayfield, *Man, Space, and Environment: Concepts in Contemporary Human Geography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 115–20. Some scholars in the fields of art history and cultural studies even refer to an “ecology of images,” a phrase that completes the cooptation of the word by fantasies of not belonging.
126. Frederic Jameson has stressed the “repressive dimension of the contemporary ecological ethic” and the “renewed conception of human nature as something sinful and aggressive that demands to be held in check for its own good.” Frederic Jameson, *Seeds of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 48–49. I am tempted to say that both this objection and its object are in the thrall of the fantasy of not

- belonging. Some eco-zealots seem to hold human beings especially accountable as if there was something morally superior about being incapable of having fantasies. For his part, Jameson seems to bring his anti-authoritarianism close to the market's forestalling of checks on consumers' desire.
127. Michael Newman, p. 111.
 128. Mike Collins, *Apollo 11* astronaut.
 129. Anne Whiston Spirn, p. 150.
 130. James Elkins, p. 126.
 131. Ernst Gombrich, "The Renaissance Theory of Art and the Rise of Landscape," in *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, vol. 1: *Norm and Form* (London: Phaidon, 1953), 108.
 132. Kenneth Clark, *Landscape into Art* (Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1956 [1949]), 141.
 133. Gombrich, "The Renaissance Theory of Art and the Rise of Landscape," 117.
 134. Edward Casey, *Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 6–7.
 135. Jean-Luc Nancy, "Uncanny Landscape," in *The Ground of the Image*, translated by Jeff Fort (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 49.
 136. Nancy, "Uncanny Landscape," 57.
 137. Nancy, "Uncanny Landscape," 61.
 138. Gombrich, "The Renaissance Theory of Art and the Rise of Landscape," 116. He suggests that the idea of the picturesque is already evident in 1548 in the writing of Paolo Pino.
 139. Gombrich, "The Renaissance Theory of Art and the Rise of Landscape," 117.
 140. Anne Raine, "Embodied Geographies: Subjectivity and Materiality in the Work of Ana Mendieta," in *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts*, edited by Griselda Pollock (London: Routledge, 1996), 231.
 141. William Gilpin, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; On Sketching Landscape: To which is added a Poem, on Landscape Painting* (London: Farnborough, 1972 [1794]), 48.
 142. Arnaud Maillet, *The Claude Glass: Use and Meaning of the Black Mirror in Western Art*, translated by Jeff Fort (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 167–68.
 143. Klaus P. Mortensen, "The Peasant and the View: When Nature Became Landscape—and Painting," in *A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting 1840–1910* (Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 2006), 235–36.
 144. John Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), 7. "A traditional subject, the landscape was nevertheless treated in a most untraditional way. Rather than representing it in paint on canvas or in rhythms of steel, a handful of artists chose to enter the landscape itself, to use its materials and work with its salient features."
 145. See also Edward Casey, *Earth-Mapping: Artists Reshaping Landscape* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

146. The Swedish word *landskap* also means “province”; in Finnish there exists the literal translation *maakunta*, referring to a region as a cultural area with its own character and with people with their own character; the other Finnish word for province, *lääni*, refers to a county as an administrative area.
147. See picture: www.fng.fi/fng/html4/fi/ateneum/guide/cont/chap6/sect10/page82.htm.
148. For instance: Lauri Anttila, “Polkuja. Pfade,” in *Kaipuu maisemaan. Saksalaista romantiikkaa 1800–1840. Alles drängt zur Landschaft. Deutsche Romantik 1800–1840*, 3.7.–30.9.1991 (Tampere: Tampereen taidemuseon julkaisuja 41. Publikation von Kunstmuseum Tampere 41, 1991), 248–69.
149. Maunu Häyrynen, *Kuvitettu maa. Suomen kansallisen maisemakuvaston rakentuminen* [The illustrated country. The construction of Finnish national landscape imagery] (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia 834. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2005).
150. *Suomalainen maisema. Maisematutkimuksen näkökulmia. Det Finländska Landskapet. Olika synvinklar inom landskapsforskningen* [The Finnish landscape. Perspectives on landscape research], edited by Inkeri Pitkäranta and Esko Rahikainen, National Library Gallery Publications No. 1 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Library, National Library of Finland, 2002).
151. Ville Lukkarinen and Annika Waenerberg, *Suomi-kuvasta mielenmaisemaan. Kansallismaisemat 1800- ja 1900-luvun vaihteen maalaustaiteessa* [From Finnish national landscapes to mindscapes: national landscapes in late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century Finnish painting] (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2004), 329–37.
152. Elina Brotherus, *The New Painting*, Next Level, UK, 2005.
153. Horst Dieter Rauh, *Heilige Wildnis. Naturästhetik von Hölderlin bis Beuys* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1998).
154. Concerning the analysis and history of concepts, the now released landscape thoughts use the experience of my senior research fellow project “Starting Points and Presuppositions in Art History,” Academy of Finland, 2003–04.
155. W. J. T. Mitchell, “Imperial Landscape,” in *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: Chicago University Press, 1994), 5–34.
156. Recently *Art of the Garden* (London: Tate, 2004); and “A Prospect for the Nation,” in *Papermaking and the Art of Watercolour*, edited by T. H. Harris and S. Wilcox (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 23–60.
157. William Cronon, “A Place for Stories: Nature, History and Narrative,” *Journal of American History* (March 1992): 1347–76. See also a forthcoming essay, “And the Moral of the Story Is . . . Fables of Climate Change,” in *Journal of Historical Geography*, originally given at the plenary “Narratives of Climate Change” at the Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geography annual conference, August 2006.
158. Matthew Johnson, *Ideas of Landscape* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 2.
159. Jem Southam, *Landscape Stories* (Princeton NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).
160. See Michael Taussig, “Miasma,” in *Culture and Waste: The Creation and*

- Destruction of Value*, edited by Gay Hawkins and Stephen Muecke (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield), 9–23.
161. Thanks to Daniel Bridgman, Jon Caris, Michael Davis, Rick Fantasia, Alex Keller and Barbara Lattanzi, whose reading suggestions and incredulous questions were more helpful than they ever imagined. Whatever ill-formed ideas still surface, these are (alas) mine.
 162. The primary registry of the dispute is known as the *Manuscript of 1546–1547*, today held in the municipal archive of Cuauhtinchan, Mexico. A transcript of the Spanish text has been made by Luis García Reyes, and published in *Documentos sobre tierras y señorios en Cuauhtinchan* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988). Other renditions of this, and older local territorial conflicts in the region, surface in the *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca*, transcribed and edited by Paul Kirchhoff, Lina Odena Güemes and Luis Reyes García (Mexico City: CIS/INAH 1976).
 163. The academic literature on this is extensive. For a range of different, but largely recent, perspectives, see Philip Arnold, *Eating Landscape: Aztec and European Occupation of Tlalocan* (Niwt: University Press of Colorado, 1999); *Territorialidad y paisaje en el altepetl del siglo XVI*, edited by Federico Fernández Christleib and Angel Julián García Zambrano (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006); Serge Gruzinski, *The Conquest of Mexico: The Incorporation of Indian Societies into the Western World, 16th–18th Centuries*, translated by Eileen Corrigan (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993); James Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Alessandra Russo, *El realismo circular: tierras, espacios y paisajes de la cartografía indígena novohispana, siglos XVI y XVII* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2005); and Andrew Sluyter, *Colonialism and Landscape: Post-colonial Theory and Applications* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).
 164. The sixteenth-century documents produced in Cuauhtinchan that survive today represent an unusually large corpus. Among them are the *Historia Tolteca Chichimeca*, the *Manuscripts of 1546–1547 and 1553*, *Mapas de Cuauhtinchan 1, 2, 3, and 4*, and the painting known today as the *Mapa Pintado*. While the prose documents are housed in Cuauhtinchan, the pictorial histories are held by the Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mexico City, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and private collectors. A number of other sixteenth-century sources from central Mexico—some crafted by indigenous hands, others by Spanish friars and administrative officials—also describe the broader central Mexican landscape. Among the most useful recent writings on sixteenth-century perspectives in and around Cuauhtinchan are: Elizabeth Hill Boone, *Stories in Red and Black: Pictorial Histories of the Aztecs and Mixtecs* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000); *Cave, City and Eagle's Nest: An Interpretive Journey through the Mapa de Cuauhtinchan #2*, edited by David Carrasco and Scott C. Sessions (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007); Kirchhoff et al., *Historia Tolteca Chichimeca*; Dana Leibsohn, *Of Time Immemorial: Pre-Hispanic History and the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca* (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2007); Reyes García, *Documentos*; and the numerous

- publications by Keiko Yoneda, but especially "La migración Chichimeca y su cosmovisión (siglo XVII). Un estudio acerca de Ehecatl, el dios del viento," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28 (2001): 68–79.
165. Dana Leibsohn, "Seeing In-Situ: Mapa 2 Cuauhtinchan," in *Cave, City and Eagle's Nest*.
 166. *Second Life* is an Internet-based 3-D virtual world developed by Linden Labs that opened to the public in 2003, and now claims over 6 million residents (<http://secondlife.com/whatis/>). I have chosen to focus upon it here in part because its percolation into daily life is both extensive and well documented, in part because *SL* residents rather than a parent company build the daily environments (see note 170). Obviously the project represents just one of many interactive digital spaces heavily dependent upon representations of the earth and its landscapes. In a wholly other vein, *Google Earth* currently commands more than a small share of attention, and interests in virtual globes extend in a number of directions (see, for instance, <http://geography2.blogspot.com/>).
 167. This is not to say that "sufficiency" is what lends photographs their vitality. For instance, as was pointed out in the seminar in Ireland, Adams's views of Yosemite align in distinctly interesting ways with American as opposed to European ideas of the luminous landscape, and they play a complex role in the nexus among art making, tourism, and culturally diffuse understandings of nature. The relationship between landscape and photography is, however, best left for others better equipped than myself.
 168. Tim Cresswell, "Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice," in *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, edited by Kay Anderson, Mona Domosh, Nigel Thrift, and Steve Pile (London: Sage, 2003), 269–81.
 169. In March 2007, virtual Amsterdam, one of the most heavily trafficked settings in *SL*, with a waiting list for virtual retail space, was sold. The Reuters bureau desk anchored in *SL* reported on the \$50,000 eBay sale (<http://secondlife.reuters.com/stories/2007/03/27/amsterdam-sold-for-us50000/>); the day after the sale, access to the Amsterdam sims was no longer open. It is not yet clear what plans the new owners have for the sims.
 170. For Lucier's notes on this project, see *Mary Lucier*, edited by Melinda Barlow (Baltimore MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 162–67; Eleanor Heartney's essay "*Noah's Raven* and the Contradictions of Landscape" (from 1993) has been usefully reprinted in this same volume, pp. 168–80.
 171. I offer here just a sketch of this continually changing range. In addition to individual investments in shops, property, and transitory pleasures—some of which produce profits substantial enough to report as taxable income—numerous public companies, including Pepsi and Dell Computers, do business in *SL*. Art galleries such as White Cube maintain sims and host regular openings, and Reuters now staffs an *SL* news desk. Harvard Law School and University of North Carolina School of Information and Library Science are among the academic institutions that now hold classes and sponsor conferences in *SL*. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) currently maintains its own island, and in January 2007 Sweden announced plans to open an *SL* embassy. The

- National Basketball Association (NBA) has an *SL* headquarters, and numerous campaign events, political rallies, and open town meetings regularly transpire in *SL*, led by both US residents and international groups. For an evocative discussion of the economies that bind *SL* to daily life see also Julian Dibbell, *Play Money: Or, How I Quit My Day Job and Made Millions Trading Virtual Loot* (New York: Basic Books, 2006).
172. In broad strokes, utopian camps tend to find the crossing between worlds fascinating, with the potential to produce social and political good; dystopians, on the other hand, often express disappointment in the ideologies and impoverished mimicry of digital landscapes or, more vehemently, condemn these spaces as dangerous escapist environments. Traces of this debate echo the early anxieties about the transformative power of photography and, later, cinema. While the tensions between representation and lived reality have been rehearsed across a good swathe of Western philosophy and cultural criticism (say, from Plato to Benjamin), debates over digital and virtual interventions still thrive. A now-predictable but lively contribution on this theme surfaces in Arthur Kroker, *Data Trash: The Theory of the Virtual Class* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994). I have found sharper and more innovative thinking, however, posted on the listservs hosted by the Institute for Distributed Creativity and Fibreculture: <http://distributedcreativity.org/> and <http://www.fibreculture.org/>.
 173. Marilyn Strathern, "The Patent and the Malanggan," *Theory, Culture and Society* 18 no. 4 (2001): 1–26.
 174. Doreen Massey, "Landscape as Provocation," *Journal of Material Culture* 11 nos. 1/2 (2006): 33–48. The particular lithic forms Massey focuses upon are in the Lake District of England, although the metaphor rings true for innumerable sites.
 175. Rachael Ziady DeLue, p. 104.
 176. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "Introduction: Rhizome," in *A Thousand Plateaus*, translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
 177. David Brett, "From the Local to the Global, the Place of Place in Art," *Circa* 29 (July/August 1986): 17–21.
 178. Brett, "From the Local to the Global, the Place of Place in Art," 21.
 179. Yvonne Scott, *The West as Metaphor*, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin (2005). This exhibition drew on my research supported by a Government of Ireland IRCHSS Post-doctoral Fellowship, and was co-curated with Patrick Murphy, Director of the RHA.
 180. Luke Gibbons, "Space, Place and Public Art: Sligo and its Surroundings," in *Placing Art*, edited by Liam Kelly, colloquium proceedings (Sligo: Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council, 2002), 15–28, at p. 20.
 181. Brett, "From the Local to the Global, the Place of Place in Art," 21.
 182. Brian O'Doherty recently commented about the circumstances that prompted this painting: "The picturesque Ireland everywhere represented . . . was so unreal. We were bogged down in post-War gloom in the '40s but the clichés kept coming." Communication to the author, March 10, 2006.

183. Henry Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford and Cambridge MA: Blackwell, 1991 [1964]), 88.
184. Niru Ratnam, "Art and Globalisation," in *Themes in Contemporary Art*, edited by Gill Perry and Paul Wood (New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 276–313, at p. 288.
185. Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (Port Townsend WA: Bay Press, 1985).
186. Lynn Hunt notes that, after the collapse of the *Ancien Régime*, the nation began to replace the king as the source of personal value. See Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 87–119.
187. Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 34–36, 54–60.
188. Cao Yiqiang, *Yishu yu lishi* [Art and history] (Hangzhou: China Academy of Art Press, 2001), 63.
189. "In looking at Europe, and specifically England, our natural egocentricity has often led us to assume a priority at deep, socio-cultural levels whereas the evidence for this is either thin or non-existent." Jack Goody, "The West's Problem with the East," in Goody, *The East in the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8.
190. John Ruskin, *The Poetry of Architecture: Cottage, Villa, Etc.* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1877), 2, 12–13.
191. Serge Guilbaut, "1955: The Year the Gaulois Fought the Cowboy," *Yale French Studies* 98: *The French Fifties* (2000): 167–81, at p. 168.
192. Hegel's views should be familiar to everyone. Schlegel held that inflected European languages are decidedly better than uninflected languages in every respect, including their more beautiful sounds. See Frederick von Schlegel, *The Aesthetic and Miscellaneous Works of Frederick von Schlegel* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1860), 446–53. Re breasts, see Stephen Jay Gould, "Bound by the Great Chain," in Gould, *The Flamingo's Smile: Reflections in Natural History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 289.
193. James Cahill, "Some Thoughts on the History and Post-History of Chinese Painting," *Archives of Asian Art* 55 (2005): 17–33, at p. 20.
194. Pierre Bourdieu, "The Market of Symbolic Goods," in *The Field of Cultural Production*, edited by Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 112–41.
195. Guo Ruoxu, *Tuhua jianwen zhi* [A record of famous paintings], edited and annotated by Yu Jianhua (Hong Kong, 1973 [late eleventh century]), juan 2, offers many examples of maverick artists and their rhetorical posturing. See also Martin Powers, "When Is a Landscape like a Body?" in *Landscape, Culture, and Power*, edited by Yeh Wen-hsin (Berkeley CA: Center for Chinese Studies, 1998), 1–21.
196. E. A. Kracke, *Civil Service in Early Sung China* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).
197. Brian E. McKnight, "Fiscal Privileges and the Social Order in Sung China," in *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China*, edited by John Winthrop Haeger (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), 79–99.

198. Hugh Scogin, "Poor Relief in Northern Song China," *Oriens Extremus* 25 (1978), 32ff.
199. Yu Yunguo provides a detailed analysis of the system of checks and balances developed in Song times with extensive primary source documentation. See Yu Yunguo, *Songdai tiajian zhidu yanjiu* [The censorate in Song times] (Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2001), 1–42. The term "censorate" may seem incongruous here and it is, but the problem is with the English translation, not with the Chinese term.
200. Kracke, *Civil Service in Early Sung China*, 8–27, 54–76.
201. Qu Chaoli, *Songdai difangzhengfu minshi shenpan zhineng yanjiu* [The function of civil courts in local government in Song times] (Chengdu: Bashu shudian, 2003), 39–40. Qu's study covers most of the institutional developments outlined here and he dredges up the relevant primary documents for inspection.
202. This is a rich topic, which has been strangely ignored by students of Chinese history. A quick search of the *Song History* however will yield scores of memorials and private statements in which the term is understood as a significant factor in government. For example, "I've heard that, while the dynastic line relies upon the monarch for support, the monarch relies upon public opinion for support." *Songsshi* [History of the Song dynasty] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 12243; "Since ancient times, of all the worries a monarch might have, the greatest has always been holding court without the support of public opinion." *Songsshi*, 12245.
203. This is not quite true. Many literati adopted a rhetorical posture of rejecting society, and even Confucius, in order to embrace nature. For example, Rückert's "Ich bin gestorben dem Welt Getümmel, und ruh in einem stillen Gebiet" resonates nicely with the end of Bai Juyi's (772–846) "Suiting Myself" poems in which he abandons society to seek freedom (he uses the term *ziyou*) in nature. The poem ends: "Henceforth my person and this world will forever abandon one another. 悠悠身與世, 從此兩相棄." In the literature on the pleasures of nature, you will find few references to the "cosmic order." That notion, however, is rather a commonplace in early period sinology.
204. Committee for the Compilation of Historical and Literary Texts, *Selected Texts in the History of Aesthetics in China* (Taipei: Buxin shuju, 1984), 674.
205. Le Comte and Abbé Raynal both noted with approval the egalitarian nature of China's political process, and both had their books proscribed and burned. Raynal adopted the critique of hereditary privilege that was a core feature of Chinese political thought and got himself exiled as well. For a sample of his views see Abbé Raynal, *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of Europeans in the East and West Indies*, translated by J. O. Justamond, 8 vols. (London, 1776), 97. For a useful discussion of the period see Günther Lottes, "China in European Political Thought, 1750–1850," in *China and Europe: Images and Influences in Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, edited by Thomas H. C. Lee (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1991), 65–98.

206. Wei Qingzhi, *Shiren yuxie* [Jade splinters from the poets] (Taipei, 1992 [thirteenth century]), 117.
207. *Ouyang xiu quanji* [The collected works of Ouyang Xiu], 2 vols. (Taipei, 1991), *Bi shuo*, 1044.
208. Bourdieu, "The Market of Symbolic Goods," 114ff. See also Katherine Burnett's richly documented study "A Discourse of Originality in Late Ming Chinese Painting Criticism," *Art History* 23 no. 4 (November 2000), 522–58.
209. Yes, I actually heard this argument after delivering a lecture that touched upon the maverick ideal in the Northern Song.
210. I actually heard this one also, more or less, from the lips of a distinguished colleague some years ago in Michigan. S/he apparently was unaware that women were not allowed to vote in the West either at that time.
211. W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 9.
212. I wouldn't deny that European painters at certain moments in history took illusionism more seriously and, in ways, more successfully than in other traditions. This, however, is no reason to take it as normative. Were a sinologist to dismiss the use of a gestural brush stroke in abex as unreal because in the West brushwork wasn't developed to the same degree of sophistication as in China, I suspect his argument would be summarily dismissed.
213. Powers, "Discourses of Representation in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century China," *The Art of Interpreting: Papers in Art History from Pennsylvania State University* IX, edited by S. C. Scott (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 89–125.
214. Wen Fong, *On Writing Chinese Art History: Calligraphy and Painting as One* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, forthcoming).
215. Ssu-yü Teng, "Chinese Influence on the Western Examination System," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7 no. 4 (September 1943), 267–313, especially pp. 280–301.
216. Qu Chaoli, *Songdai difangzhengfu minshi shenpan zhineng yanjiu*, 33–42.
217. Samuel Pufendorf, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, translated by Basil Kennet (London, 1729), VIII, iv, 32, p. 822.
218. Pufendorf, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, VIII, iv, 31, p. 821.
219. Pufendorf, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, VIII, iv, 31, p. 821. Walter Demel, "China in the Political Thought of Western and Central Europe," in *China and Europe: Images and Influences in Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, edited by Thomas H. C. Lee (Hong Kong, 1991), 57, translates differently from the Latin as follows: "this is inculcated by sage men [in China] that noble people should not rely on their noble lineage only, but much more on their virtue." Either translation supports my point.
220. Powers, "Discourses of Representation."
221. *Songren hualun*, edited by Pan Yun'gao [Song dynasty art criticism] (Xiaopei: Hunan xinhua shudian, 1999), 55.
222. *Songsbi*, 10435–36.
223. "In all the passages cited above, those dealing with painting and those with architecture, the writers are taking a mimetic point of view even though

- they use the word 'expression.' Expressionism as an aesthetic goal does not develop until the artist's goal comes to be the portrayal of his own thoughts and feelings rather than the more or less objective depiction of things external to the artist." Michael Bright, "The Poetry of Art," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 46 no. 2 (April-June 1985), 269.
224. Michael Baxandall, "The Language of Art Criticism," in *The Language of Art History*, edited by Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 67-75, especially p. 74.
 225. Powers, "When Is a Landscape like a Body?"
 226. *The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang*, edited by Wai-kam Ho (Kansas City: Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, 1992).
 227. See Wei Qingzhi, *Shiren yuxie*, 188-90.
 228. Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting, from Su Shih to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).
 229. See Klaas Ruitenbeek's brilliant study, *Carpentry and Building in Late Imperial China: A Study of the Fifteen-Century Carpenter's Manual Lu Ban jing* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993).
 230. On the role of *fengshui* concepts in writings on Chinese landscape painting, see Susan Bush, "Lung-mo, K'ai-ho, and Ch'i-fu: Some Implications of Wang Yüan-ch'i's Compositional Terms," *Oriental Art* N.S. 8 (Autumn 1962), 120-27.
 231. Maxwell Hearn, "Pictorial Maps, Panoramic Landscapes and Topographical Paintings: Three Modes of Depicting Space during the Early Qing Dynasty," in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Wen C. Fong*, edited by Jerome Silbergeld and Dora Ching (Princeton NJ: Tang Center for East Asian Art and Princeton University Press, 2007, forthcoming).
 232. See the so-called Traces of Yu map, 1165, which laid out the entirety of present-day China on a grid with remarkable accuracy; see *Science and Civilization in China*, edited by Joseph Needham, III: Mathematics and the Sciences of the Heavens and the Earth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 547ff.
 233. For a broad consideration of *fengshui*, see *Science and Civilization in China*, IV.1: Physics; Stephen Bennett, "Patterns of the Sky and Earth: A Chinese Science of Applied Cosmology," *Chinese Science* 3 (1978): 1-26; Stephen Skinner, *The Living Earth Manual of Feng-Shui: Chinese Geomancy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).
 234. Ge Hong, *Alchemy, Medicine, and Religion in the China of A.D. 320: The Nei-P'ien of Ko Hung*, translated by James Ware (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1966), 240, 226, 298, 94. See also Jerome Silbergeld, "Chinese Concepts of Old Age and Their Role in Chinese Painting, Painting Theory and Criticism," *Art Journal*, 44 no. 2 (Summer 1987); Michael Sullivan, *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962); Kiyohiko Munakata, *Sacred Mountains in Chinese Art* (Champaign: Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, 1991).
 235. See for example *Inscribed Landscapes: Travel Writing from Imperial China*, edited and translated by Richard Strassberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

236. Cf. Chu-tsing Li, *The Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains: A Landscape by Chao Meng-fu* (Ascona: Artibus Asiae, 1965); Jonathan Hay, *Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
237. Silbergeld, "Chinese Concepts of Old Age," 103–14; Jerome Silbergeld, "Re-reading Zong Bing's Fifth-Century Essay on Landscape Painting: A Few Critical Notes," in Michael Sullivan *festschrift*, edited by Li Gongming (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian and Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art, forthcoming).
238. In a recent article, I began with Frederick Church's *Niagara* of 1857, a Bierstadt view of Yosemite, and a 1984 painting of Yosemite by Wang Jiqian or C. C. Wang, raising questions of naturalistic representation, artistic conventions, and audience assumptions. "Mountains and Water, *Shan Shui*: What Do We Mean by 'Landscape' in Chinese Landscape Painting?" *Journal of the International Snuff Bottle Society* 37 no. 1 (Spring 2005): 4–20.
239. John Hay, "Values and History in Chinese Painting, I: Hsieh Ho Revisited," *Res* 6 (Autumn 1983): 73–111; and "Values and History in Chinese Painting, II: The Hierarchic Evolution of Structure," *Res* 7/8 (Spring/Autumn 1984): 102–36.
240. John Hay, *Kernels of Energy, Bones of Earth: The Rock in Chinese Art* (New York: China Institute in America, 1985).
241. For example, Jerome Silbergeld, "Kung Hsien's Self-Portrait in Willows, with Notes on the Willow in Chinese Painting and Literature," *Artibus Asiae*, 42 no. 1 (1980): 5–38; Anne De Coursey Clapp, *The Painting of Tang Yin* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), chapters 2 and 3 on "commemorative painting."
242. Jerome Silbergeld, "Back to the Red Cliff: Reflections on the Narrative Mode in Early Literati Landscape Painting," *Ars Orientalis* 25 (1995): 19–38.
243. Painter-calligrapher-collector-statesman Dong Qichang summed up this attitude well in the early seventeenth century when he wrote, "If one considers the uniqueness of natural scenery, then a painting is not the equal of real landscape. But if one considers the wonderful excellence of brush and ink, then landscape can never equal painting." In Wen Fong, *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum, Taipei* (New York and Taipei: Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Palace Museum, and Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 243.
244. Wen Fong, *Possessing the Past*, 30, with reference to passages from Confucius and his follower Mengzi (Mencius).
245. I believe that the entire engineering system of Chinese architecture has evolved over time in response to this deforestation; see Jerome Silbergeld, "Beyond Suzhou: Region and Memory in the Gardens of Sichuan," *Art Bulletin* (June 2004), 207–27, especially pp. 221–22.
246. For environmental politics and its appearance in recent scholarship and fiction, cf. Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ah Cheng, "King of the Trees," in Ah Cheng, *Three Trees*:

- Stories from Today's China*, translated by Bonnie McDougall (London: Collins-Harvill, 1980).
247. John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 8.
 248. D. W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, 4 vols. (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1986–2004).
 249. See *Technologies of Landscape*, edited by David E. Nye (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999).
 250. Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).
 251. See, for example, "Lewis Mumford: Prophet of Organicism," in *Lewis Mumford, Public Intellectual*, edited by Thomas and Agatha Hughes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); "The American Ideology of Space," in *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Stuart Wrede and William Howard Adams (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1990), 62–78; "Does Pastoralism Have a Future?" in *The Pastoral Landscape*, edited by John Dixon Hunt, Studies in the History of Art 36, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, Symposium Papers XX, (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1991), 209–26; "Environmental Degradation and the Ambiguous Social Role of Science and Technology," *Journal of the History of Biology* 25 (Fall 1992): 449–68.
 252. *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, edited by William Cronon (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995). Start with the journal *Environmental History*, which no one referred to during the roundtable. The October 2006 issue contains three articles of obvious pertinence to the discussion of landscape: William Rollins, "Reflections on a Spare Tire: SUVs and Postmodern Environmental Consciousness"; Theodore Binnema and Melanie Niemi, "'Let the Line Be Drawn Now': Wilderness, Conservation, and the Exclusion of Aboriginal People from the Banff National Park"; Nicolaas Mink, "A Narrative for Nature's Nation: Constance Lindsay Skinner and the Making of *Rivers of America*."

5

AFTERWORDS

BETWEEN SUBJECT AND OBJECT

Alan Wallace

Anyone who drives America's highways sooner or later encounters a sign announcing a scenic overlook. Pulling into a parking lot, we find ourselves looking down at an extended vista, often with the aid of pay-per-view telescopes or binoculars. We may feel awed by the vastness of the scene, perhaps even a touch of vertigo as we stare at the Pacific Ocean from a bluff north of Big Sur or at the Hudson River from a pull-off high in the Catskill Mountains. Yet if the experience of a panoramic view is often dizzying and overwhelming, its attraction is undeniable. On a first visit to New York City, a trip to the top of the Empire State Building or a helicopter tour is virtually *de rigueur*. When it comes to the American Grand Tour, no journey is complete without visits to the Grand Canyon and Niagara Falls—both characteristically viewed from a cliff or promontory that gives onto a vast open space.

I begin by describing this commonplace landscape experience because as a cultural practice it seems to naturalize itself. It recapitulates a particular relation between viewer and viewed, spectator and spectacle, whose pervasiveness within American and European culture pretty much guarantees its invisibility. I want to write about this relation because it is the one relation to landscape that many Art Seminar participants and Assessment authors hoped to avoid or get

away from. Current theories of landscape lean toward what James Elkins calls "a kind of de facto phenomenological understanding." Phenomenology, as Rachael Ziady DeLue observes, allows us "to break down the subject-object relation, to break down the idea of landscape as a view." Landscape becomes "lived experience, rather than 'me-it,' or self and other. That is one of the things the phenomenological has to offer: landscape as a thing that we live within."

How then to account for the ubiquity of landscape as a category of alienated life? Why is it that the vast majority of people in Western society do not live within the landscape but instead experience it in a distanced or reified fashion? Why does landscape almost always stand for the reign of the "me-it"? From this vantage point, experiencing landscape in all its sensuous materiality, being with the landscape rather than against it, looks like a privilege or luxury, the realization of a dream of unalienated existence.

As the roundtable somewhat reluctantly acknowledged, despite the singularity of the term, landscape can be many things; one of the less pleasant things it can be is an aspect of domination. The seminar cited W. J. T. Mitchell's famous observation "Landscape might be seen more profitably as something like the 'dreamwork' of imperialism" and then, in effect, brushed it aside. Taken by itself, Mitchell's statement reduces to a clever aphorism. However, the aphorism glosses a complicated argument for a Marxist approach to the study of landscape that the seminar abbreviated as "landscape as ideology."¹ That approach still has an important role to play in the study of landscape. Yet with the exceptions of Robin Kelsey's essay on landscape as "not belonging" and Kenneth Olwig's remarks on "actual landscapes," no developed argument for this approach surfaces in the course of several hundred pages of discussion. At the risk of reiterating what may be well known to the roundtable participants if not necessarily to the readers of this volume, I will in this Afterword recapitulate, schematically, one version of "landscape as ideology."² As will become evident from the eight short theses below, my concern is not only with landscape as a vehicle for ideology, but also with ideological landscape as a form of domination.

1. The Western landscape tradition centers on a subject-object relation that can be described in terms of antithetical or opposed pairs: “me-it,” self and other, viewer and viewed, spectator and spectacle. In this tradition, the subject dominates imaginatively an expanse of actual or represented landscape, seascape, or cityscape. The relation I am describing is a form of alienation, of “not belonging,” but it is not Kelsey’s humanity “not belonging to the totality of [terrestrial] life.” Instead, it is the more familiar representation of humanity divided into classes, a representation of social hierarchy and division. Landscape of the type I am describing prompts the viewer to objectify the viewed, to see it as disconnected, as other. Thus, contrary to what Olwig asserts in the course of an argument I otherwise find compelling, I very much doubt that in the sixteenth century the audience for landscape painting, whether noble or bourgeois, saw itself as part of the landscape or *Landschaft* as painted by a Patinir or a Brueghel. Instead, it very likely imagined itself presiding or ruling over the pictured landscape and its inhabitants.
2. The type of landscape I am describing prompted the viewer-subject to identify, symbolically, with the dominant forms of political power. Identification resulted from a viewing process that depended upon certain conventions. In England in the early modern period, the prospect was the leading landscape type. Initially a literary convention, it became in the eighteenth century an established landscape painting genre. A prospect was, in James Turner’s words, “the expert presentation of distant views (not necessarily of countryside) to create the illusion of realism and totality.”³ Totality was key. As Carole Fabricant has written, in the eighteenth century peaks and other promontories became central features of aristocratic landscapes—and later important features of the landscape toured and described by those who aspired to replace the nobility in the newly emerging social order. From such heights the eighteenth-century spectator, like a lord overseeing his creation, was

able to “command” (Gilpin) a view of the country stretching out beneath him and thereby exert control over it in much the same way that the aristocratic class (at least through the seventeenth century) ruled over those on the lower rungs of the social hierarchy.⁴

3. As Foucault and others have emphasized, the simultaneous invention in the early 1790s of the panopticon, a type of prison, and the panorama, a form of mass entertainment, marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of visual domination.⁵ In Bentham’s panopticon, a solitary guard or overseer hidden in a central tower, himself a representative of the modernizing bourgeois state, controls, visually, the inmate population while the means of violence needed to secure his authority remain as it were hidden in the wings. The panorama aestheticizes an almost identical relation between subject and object. It offers the thrill of visual mastery—what I have elsewhere called “the panoptic sublime”—but its object is not the inhabitants of a prison but a circular painting representing a landscape.⁶
4. Foucault employs the terms “sovereign gaze” and “eye of power” to describe this new mode of bourgeois vision.⁷ Inhabiting the eye of power, the panopticon guard or panorama visitor’s relation to “reality” was mediated by his or her identification with the power of the state. The panoramic mode in effect supported the state’s claim to stand over and above society as well as its claim to centrality in a world in which the distant and foreign fell under its purview. In this respect, the panoramic mode became a key feature of bourgeois culture, and nowhere more so than in the United States, where landscape tourism, landscape literature, and landscape painting and photography augmented and reinforced a view of the world in which the state’s imperial agenda—seizing by force of arms nearly half of Mexico, conquering the American West by displacing and annihilating Native American populations, “opening”

Japan—took on the appearance of naturalness and inevitability.

5. With the invention of the panorama, signifiers of the panoramic proliferated. Landscape tourism defined itself almost exclusively as a series of panoramic views (the view from Mount Holyoke, the view from Mount Washington, the view from the Catskill Mountain House). Viewing towers—for example, the Terrapin Tower at Niagara Falls—prompted the tourist to see the landscape as a real-life panorama. Landscape painters abandoned canvases proportioned according to the golden section (an aspect ratio of 1.6:1) and instead resorted to elongated rectangular formats (2:1, 2.5:1, 3:1) that were themselves signifiers for the panoramic. Telescopes and viewing tubes allowed viewers to experience a heightened sense of control via a visual dialectic between panoramic breadth and telescopic detail—a dialectic already implicit in the panopticon and early panorama.
6. A succession of technological innovations associated with the panoramic—panoramic photography, Panavision, Cinemascope, IMAX, HDTV—have become commonplace features of popular culture. Satellite photography represents the most recent addition to the list. Today anyone with access to the Internet can view detailed satellite images of almost any place on earth—Brooklyn backyards, Golden Gate Park, downtown Baghdad, the house where you live.
7. The original pairing of panorama and panopticon suggests a close relationship between the aesthetics of panoramic landscape and what might be called the aesthetics of surveillance. If today we view with pleasure a satellite photograph, it is impossible to forget that satellite photography has its origins in the militarization of space. Similarly, if the panorama and panopticon once produced the fantasy or illusion of an

omniscient and omnipresent state, new surveillance technologies, in particular closed circuit television (CCTV), constitute a further realization of the state's monstrous aspiration to omniscience and omnipresence.⁸

8. As we observed earlier, the panorama afforded viewers an opportunity to identify with "the eye of power." Because the panoramic now pervades our culture, that identification has become habitual, reflexive, unconscious, seemingly innocent. Yet increasingly we find ourselves caught between the position of viewer and viewed, of subject and object. If the panoramic inspires identification with the regime of surveillance, being the object of surveillance inspires a different response. The former implies a politics of complacency, the latter a politics of resistance.

Notes

1. See W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, second edition, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 10.
2. For the purposes of this Afterword, I understand "ideology" in the sense in which T. J. Clark defines it in *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (New York: Knopf, 1984), 8. As Clark notes, "ideologies naturalize representation, one might say: they present constructed and disputable meanings as if they were hardly meanings at all, but, rather, forms inherent in the world-out-there which the observer is privileged to intuit directly." While for the purposes of my argument I want to restrict the meaning of "ideology" to a relatively simple definition, I am aware that the term is fraught with complexities. See Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991); and Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 126–30.
3. See James Turner, "Landscape and the 'Art Prospective' in England, 1584–1660," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 42 (1979), 290–93.
4. Carole Fabricant, "The Aesthetics and Politics of Landscape in the Eighteenth Century," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century British Art and Aesthetics*, edited by Ralph Cohen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 56.
5. See M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 195–228, 317 n. 4; and "The Eye of Power," *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited

by Colin Gordon, translated by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mephram and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 146–65. See also Stephen Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, translated by Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 5–48.

6. See Alan Wallach, “Making a Picture of the View from Mount Holyoke,” in *American Iconology: New Approaches to Nineteenth Century Art and Literature*, edited by David Miller (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 80–91, 310–12.
7. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; and “The Eye of Power.”
8. See *CTRL + SPACE: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, edited by Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Karlsruhe: ZKM, Center for Art and Media; and Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2002).

BLINDNESS AND INSIGHTS

Elizabeth Helsinger

Landscape “like things . . . seems to hold something else in reserve.”¹ What is this mysterious excess? Irreducible to its material forms (shaped environments or their representations), landscape is also at once an epistemology—a mode of explanation—and a practice—a mode of participation, a site of agency.² Landscapes only become such when they are both made and noticed, acted or lived or thought with some degree of consciousness. They require our participation to *be* landscapes. Without this, the tree falls unheeded in the forest. The forest exists and can be imagined to live its own life, but it is not yet landscape.

Art historians, landscape architects, and cultural geographers share a great deal of common ground in the discussions of landscape that constitute the present volume. It’s what makes cordial conversation possible, but also perhaps leads to certain dead-ends. In what follows I want to look first at several attempts, both in the original roundtable and by assessors, to transcend the disciplinary impasses that this volume makes apparent. I’ll then turn to anthropology and poetry for some additional ideas we might find useful in that effort. I write as a literary historian, a perspective not, as it happens, really represented in the discussions, and hence as eavesdropper and poacher on a most interesting if frustrating conversation.

The landscape theory Art Seminar is meant to address a lack of theoretical reflection by the various disciplines that take an interest in landscapes. Troubling questions drive both roundtable and responses: Where can we go now? Does landscape as a conceptual category have *any* meaning in the present or purchase on the future? Metaphors of space, place, and “scaping” may well be embedded even in our theorizing (as Jill H. Casid points out), and the term itself, like all that it may be imagined to embrace, may have a much longer and more various history, but the very taken-for-grantedness of the language of landscape in contemporary usage (popular as well as scholarly) might simply mask the obsolescence of the concept as deployed by scholars—unless, that is, it can be redefined so as to shed its too-close relation with one particular, much studied historical manifestation of it: landscapes of power in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and, residually, nineteenth centuries. Landscape in this familiar sense, practiced and represented as a central cultural mode in Britain but referring for its cultural authority to European landscape art and design from at least the fifteenth century, spread with trade and empire to more distant outposts of British and European cultural influence. It is this version of landscape that has been the major focus of criticism in the twentieth century, the springboard for similar criticism of landscapes and landscape art in places as disparate as contemporary Israel/Palestine and postcolonial India and South Africa.

In Ireland the talk circled in fascination about what participants began to refer to, in shorthand, as the polarities of landscape as ideology and landscape as phenomenology (the sensed, felt, lived experience of landscape, whether as an aesthetics, as a process, or as a practice of making places, shaping and being shaped by land). The cluster of inviting perspectives subsumed under “phenomenology” is to me, as to the participants, seductive but rather dangerously so, coming, as we all do, after the fall from innocence occasioned by late-twentieth-century readings of landscapes as sites of power. It hardly seems possible, even if it were desirable, to simply turn our backs on all the ways we have come to understand landscape as a socially constructed way of seeing that is vulnerable to—if not actively shaped for—instrumental use by discourses of power and authority (though it can occasionally be used against them as well). As Maunu

Häyrynen observes, “replacing the politics of landscape by its poetics would . . . unnecessarily limit the scope of analysis and obscure the historicity of landscape.” Yet the appeal of landscape as “phenomenology” also suggests that exposing the instrumentalism of landscapes, reading them for their (buried) ideological content, doesn’t exhaust all the possibilities of landscape as form or practice.

Several of the assessors tackled the task of expanding the horizon of study even within the discipline of art history in order to unsettle the term. I note especially the historical extension backwards to the early years of Western civilizations undertaken by Michel Baridon, who ties the origins of landscape art to the rise of optics and geometry in ancient Greece and their development by Arab scholars and mathematicians, enabling preconditions for a revival of interest in landscape (and the development of perspectival representational theory) in Europe toward the close of the period of medieval Church hegemony. Baridon sees landscape art as tied to these technologies for perceiving and representing land. Jerome Silbergeld, expanding comments in the conversation by Asian art historians, disturbs this stubbornly Western framework of art historical discourse on landscape by sketching for us the radically different cosmological beliefs and contemplative and aesthetic practices that constitute classical landscape in China. Jill H. Casid, in her vigorous response, reminds us that “place,” even for Western and modern peoples, is not necessarily made up of geographically contiguous or politically continuous locations: travelers, nomads, immigrants, diasporic and hybridized subjects understand landscape as both complexly layered and spatially dispersed. (Just what the visual representation of such dispersed landscapes might be is still being explored.) Kenneth Olwig emphasizes the difference, to be found in the divergent etymologies of *landscape*, between landscape as region—a particular place with geographic and political features and its inhabitants, whose relations are mediated by and shape land—and landscape as space, a more abstract but visually (and mathematically) representable subject, whose particular location, features, and inhabitants are less important than its shape and extent. (This, Olwig suggests, is really the landscape that interests artists.) Like Anne Whiston Spirn, who also recalls the double etymology, Olwig would have us restore

the sense of landscape as place (land-*ship* [OE]; association or partnership, in Spirn's translation) as an antidote to the diluting and instrumentalizing reduction of landscape to space (shaped space, land-*skab* or -*shaft*) dominant in Western art and landscape design since the Renaissance.

Two things continue to trouble me even in these (and others') efforts to open up what we consider as landscape. First, the conversation displayed a tendency to elide what might have been taken as a fundamental difference worth exploring, that between "real" landscape and its representations. Had discussers spent more time taking that distinction seriously (even if in the end to dismantle it), it might be possible to better see the assumption at work for most participants, that is, that landscape-as-representation aspires to be realistic or naturalistic. The reason the "landscape itself" and its representation can be thought of for theoretical purposes as the same is because we're assuming that the one matches the other according to whatever conventions of (realistic) representation are applied (both those that are inherited and those that are emergent in the work of a new artist). But this is to rule out some fairly large categories of landscape as representation. It is to assume that literary landscape, for example, is primarily ekphrastic, whether of visual representations or of "the landscape itself." Much, certainly, of what counts in poetry as landscape is not simply (or even much at all) descriptive. The detail of poetic landscapes is often minimal, radically selective, and rhetorical. It may be highly effective in evoking a sensed particular place and the space-time of its individual and cultural perception but it does so by representing (often consciously) the processes of active shaping, both material and mental, social and individual, that turn an unnoticed forest into a landscape.

Second, as Stephen Daniels notes, we don't always take sufficient account of the complex ways in which space is inseparable from time in any conception of landscape. In many respects it would make better sense to think of landscape as necessarily a spatio-temporal concept. Even landscapes as material forms, one might argue, presume temporal extension.³ As cultural forms or as lived experience they not only carry past histories (Denis E. Cosgrove wonders whether we can *ever* perceive landscapes apart from historically

shaped frameworks of perception and comprehension, though this probably overstates the case). They also have designs on the future. They take place not only in time but over time. That's part of their power—both their ability to influence present and future perception (and hence, perhaps, social and political actions) and their strong psychological appeal (landscapes participate in our efforts to construct a continuous sense of self as well as nations' efforts to construct their pasts and futures).

Most of the discussants, although they are attracted to landscape as a verb, nonetheless focus their attention on landscape as a noun—the physical *product* (place, space, or representation) of perceiving and making or (as Anne Whiston Spirn reminds us) of the interaction of human and nonhuman forces. The problem with focusing critical attention on objects, of course, is that it makes us look for the elusive, defining attributes of landscape in the objects themselves (landscapes as place and space, or representations of them that aspire to erase our consciousness of the difference between signifier and signified). Yet it was the turn, in the middle of the eighteenth century, to perception as the subject of philosophical inquiry that inaugurated the most inventive period of landscape aesthetics in the West (and, arguably, one of the most productive periods of landscape art and landscape design). Other disciplines attend less to landscapes-as-objects (or as place and space) and define landscape instead by what it *does*—by which they mean not only what impact landscape (as a cultural and social form) has on social and individual lives but also the reverse: what interventions, what human activities, produce landscapes. Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon, for example, in the introduction to their recent collection *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space* summarize anthropological landscape as (1) “a framing convention which informs the way the anthropologist brings his or her study into ‘view’ (i.e. from an ‘objective’ standpoint—the landscape of a particular people)” and “the meaning imputed by local people to their cultural and physical surroundings (i.e. how a particular landscape ‘looks’ to its inhabitants).”⁴ As the scare quotes suggest, the visual is largely metaphoric here (though early British anthropologists were apt to use visual or verbal scene setting in a more literal way, and visual perceptions of the land might be one

component of local "landscape").⁵ What is of primary interest to late-twentieth-century anthropologists is precisely the ways of looking as conceiving and thinking that turn the places and spaces of others and of the anthropologists themselves into landscapes, and the uses to which such landscapes are put.

As I've already suggested, the anthropologists are not alone in turning attention from mysterious but attractive material objects (spaces, places, and their representations) to the modes of explanation and agency that turn place and space into landscape. I want to consider the reflections of four poets, each of whom, I will argue, has something to contribute to making landscape a concept of continuing usefulness. For each poet, it is less the place or space itself than the process through which it becomes meaningful, becomes, I would argue, landscape, that is the true subject of his poems.

Let me begin with Wordsworth's "spots of time." This is the phrase by which he designates, in Book XII of "The Prelude," remembered moments of powerful feeling (fear or desire) that are recalled as vivid if economically sketched sensory images of a place embedded in the narrative of an event for which it comes to stand, an event in which the setting seems to be itself an actor. He has already recounted several of these transformative place-times, beginning with the boat-stealing episode of Book I. There youthful pride and pleasure in a nocturnal row in a stolen boat is stalled, the strokes of the rower overcome

When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree

(I.377-87)

The repeated beats of the poetic line, like the strokes of the rower they imitate, reproduce the “measured motion” of the mountain, whose emerging peak appears in this moment of imaginative fear—relived in the present of the poem—“like a living thing” striding in pursuit of the guilty boy. The poem is a re-enactment, across a distance of time, of that “spectacle” whose obscure meanings and strong feelings could not be resolved at the time.

After I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

(l.391–400)

The immediate effects of this experience of place are to make representation impossible; the possibility of landscape is usurped by unwilling ghostly images of dreams still pursuing him: “huge and mighty forms.” “Huge” is here repeated a third time in the passage (earlier it obtrudes as “a huge peak, black and huge”) as if to underline the poverty of language, as of the “colours of green fields” and “pleasant images of trees,/Of sea or sky,” to capture the intensity of the experience. It is only with the passage of time and in the relative tranquility of recollection (poetry, as Wordsworth famously defined it, is “the spontaneous overflow of emotion . . . *recollected in tranquillity*” [my italics]⁶) that the traumatizing spot of time can become poetic landscape. It is in the process of recollecting and re-experiencing the emotional impact of a spot of time (as a long passage in Book VI makes clear) that imagination intervenes to make meaningful and representable what could not earlier be comprehended.⁷ It is in fact the recall of several such spots of time toward the end of Book I that allows the poet at last, after many false starts,

to begin his epic by returning to the formative elements of his own past as the subject matter for his poetry, in particular the shaping influences of the hills and lakes and moorland wastes of his native Cumbria.

A "spot of time" related in Book XII can stand as paradigmatic of the poet's later efforts to understand and represent the temporal process of scenic inscription, recollection, and eventual poetic making of landscape. Riding among the hills when still a small child, he becomes separated from his guide and dismounts to stumble on the grave of a murderer hanged from an iron gibbet in the forgotten past, place and event now marked only by the murderer's name carved in large letters kept legible by "superstition of the neighbourhood."

A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,
 Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road:
 Then, reascending the bare common, saw
 A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
 The beacon on the summit, and, more near,
 A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head,
 And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
 Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,
 An ordinary sight; but I should need
 Colours and words that are unknown to man,
 To paint the visionary dreariness
 Which, while I looked all round for my lost guide,
 Invested moorland waste, and naked pool,
 The beacon crowning the lone eminence,
 The female and her garments vexed and tossed
 By the strong wind.

(XII.246–61)

This event, like that of the boat-stealing episode, arouses strong emotions—the terror of the child stumbling on guilt, death, and decay in a lonely spot—which in turn adhere to the starkly presented elements of the place to which he flees: the barren height, the naked pool, the beacon, the bleak and empty waste across which the girl with wind-vexed garments struggles. (She is a figure for the murderer's body exposed to the elements but also for the child himself, awaking

an obscure sense of guilt at the moment of confronting death.) Like the monumental letters of the murderer's name carved in the turf, height, pool, beacon, and girl are the characters, the mnemonic traces, of a place and an occasion that challenges representation even across the distance of time and recollection ("I should need/ Colours and words that are unknown to man,/To paint the visionary dreariness"). Repetition of the bare elements of the scene (invoked a third time a few lines later) enacts the mysterious process through which place is indelibly inscribed by and sutured to affect through recollection and return. The poet, writing in the present, now understands these revisitable "spots of time" as "the hiding places of man's power": spots which, in the revisiting, awaken imagination. Thus they

retain
 A renovating virtue, whence, depressed
 By false opinion and contentious thought,
 Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
 In trivial occupations, and the round
 Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
 Are nourished and invisibly repaired
 (XII.210–15)

Spots of or in time act across time, then, in a theory that one might want to extend from the private experiences related here to public places that commemorate—inscribe the characters or traces of—historical events, remembered through the mnemonics of visitable places and retaining power to affectively nourish those who may not themselves even have participated in the original events. Such are the conclusions of many recent reflections on the work of public monuments (Holocaust memorials, for example, designed places of memory or spots of time for collective consumption). Land art too explores the processes by which places where something has happened, or simply where the artist has passed through, become landscapes through traces left on the landscape (Richard Long) or the page (Hamish Fulton) that can be repeatedly revisited. Land art (and its relatives such as earth art, public art, walking-as-art, environmental art), one might say, tests the limits of the greatest and

the least invasive marks that will make places into spots of time, visitable landscapes, meaningful places of the mind given aesthetically effective shape and color (Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* or, more transiently, Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *The Gates* in Central Park, versus Long's and Fulton's refusals of such grand transformative gestures).⁸

For poet-painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti it is not memory, or the acts of imaginative transformation that recollection enables, that is crucial to landscape but what he calls the artist's ability to imaginatively occupy an "inner standing point." This ability to project oneself into a scene may even require the temporary suppression of sight—certainly the comprehensive sight of the perspectival view—to access hearing, smell, taste, or touch. Indeed, these last two senses, depending as they do on proximity, can only take one deep within the imagined scene. Like the speakers of Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" ("Darkling I listen"; "I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,/Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,/But in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet . . ." [51, 41–3]) or of Marvell's "The Garden" ("Stumbling on melons, as I pass,/Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass" [39–40]), Andrea Mantegna, Rossetti discovers when he studies his painting *Parnassus* on a visit to the Louvre, must have *felt* as much as seen the dance of women in the foreground of his picture. The painter, he suggests, was so drawn into the space of what he intensely beheld that, like the poets, he was entangled in the web of sensations experienced by the participants, until

Scarcely, I think; yet it indeed *may* be
 The meaning reached him, when this music rang,
 Clear through his frame, a sweet possessive pang,
 And he beheld these rocks and that ridged sea.
 But I believe that, leaning tow'rds them, he
 Just felt their hair carried across his face
 As each girl passed him . . .

("For *An Allegorical Dance of Women*
 by Andrea Mantegna," 1–7)

When the "sweet possessive pang" of imagined music reaches the painter he "leans" into his painting until he can "feel" not only the

hair of the dancers as they brush past him but “meaning” in the rocks and ridged sea behind them. Place and space have become a landscape. In another of his Sonnets for Pictures, also composed on a visit to the Louvre with his fellow Pre-Raphaelite Holman Hunt in 1849, when the young painters were searching for their methods of recovering the freshness of early landscape painting, Rossetti reconstructs exactly this process at work for the painter of what might count as one of the earliest Renaissance pastoral landscapes, Giorgione’s (or Titian’s) *Fête Champêtre*:

Water, for anguish of the solstice:—nay,
 But dip the vessel slowly,—nay, but lean
 And hark how at its verge the wave sighs in
 Reluctant. Hush! Beyond all depth away
 The heat lies silent at the brink of day:
 Now the hand trails upon the viol-string
 That sobs, and the brown faces cease to sing,
 Sad with the whole of pleasure. Whither stray
 Her eyes now, from whose mouth the slim pipes creep
 And leave it pouting, while the shadowed grass
 Is cool against her naked side? Let be:—
 Say nothing now unto her lest she weep,
 Nor name this ever. Be it as it was,—
 Life touching lips with Immortality.
 (“For *A Venetian Pastoral* by Giorgione”)

Painter and poet overcome the distance of the scenic and the division of the framed view by painting or writing from inside as well as outside a place and the event that occupies it. While the poet speaks—as the painter paints—as an onlooker (the imperatives that open and close the sonnet are addressed to the figures in the painting, not spoken by them), the lines go on to evoke imaginatively the sensations of one of those pictured figures as she would feel them from inside the pastoral she inhabits. Rossetti’s Sonnets on Pictures often explore such inner standing points embedded in paintings themselves. The figure of Apollo (an appropriate figure for the artist), standing to one side of the dancing girls in Mantegna’s painting, is indeed shown just brushed by the hair and garments of the circling

women. While the woman on the left of Giorgione's painting leans to dip water from a well, and the central, clothed figures of the courtier and the shepherd seated beside her exchange a glance in a pause in their conversation (one has been playing his viol), that of the woman on the right, turned away from the viewer, has let the pipes slip from her mouth while she looks out at the pastoral scene behind her. She is the unseen center of the painter's—and the poet's—consciousness, projected into the painting. It is the imagined details of her sensations and her feelings that provide, Rossetti perceives, the painter's entry into his painting: the grass cool against her naked side, as she strains to hear the lapping sound of water and feels the weight of the silent heat gathering for midday in the sudden cessation of music and conversation that has overcome all four figures, brought together (as the rhythmic movement of their gestures and figures across the foreground of the painted scene suggests) in a shared moment of feeling ("sad with the whole of pleasure"). For Rossetti, then, what makes a landscape is a sort of double consciousness, the ability to give oneself up to the sensory immediacy of a place and a moment, to feel, as both sensation and emotion, what it is like to be present within a scene that, at the same time, one can envision from the outside—and then, of course, to find the form that will express this doubled consciousness of inner and outer standing points and convey it to another beholder. Some hundred and fifty years before anthropologists began to question their uses of landscape, Rossetti understands its challenge to lie in the tension between the differing perceptions of observer and participant.

It is the relationship between sensed form and the visual or verbal form offered by a maker of landscapes (poet, painter, landscape architect) that preoccupies the poets who provide my last two examples of ideas we might want to consider in rethinking the theory of landscape. Hopkins's paired terms, "inscape" and "instress," already register the -scaping of the external world as an internal process, one that depends on the response of a human beholder. The poet, whose forms and rhythms resemble few others, draws heavily on Anglo-Saxon (and possibly Welsh) to create his distinctively alliterative, accentual verse-forms and to coin the words to express his sense of the uniqueness of the visible design of each species of flower,

condition of cloud-strewn sky, pattern of waves, folds, or braids in wind or water or plowed land that he studies. The marked beats and repeated sounds translate the rhythm of visual patterns into language. Textures—seen but also felt—catch his attention; these are what he calls, in his journal notes, the “inscape” that defines the species-look of bluebells, or a valley in Wales, or the clouded sky on a particular morning over a particular spot. But “inscape” is only one half of a double term: “inscapes” are “instressed” when they touch and move a beholder: shape and pattern him through sensation and feeling. “Hurrahing in Harvest,” like others of Hopkins’s ecstatic sonnets (“Pied Beauty,” “The Windhover”), expresses this rapturous, even violent, meeting and greeting between landscape and beholder.

Summer ends now; now, barbarous in beauty, the stooks rise
 Around; up above, what wind-walks! What lovely behaviour
 Of silk-sack clouds! Has wilder, wilful-wavier
 Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?

I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes,
 Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour;
 And eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a
 Rapturous love’s greeting of realer, of rounder replies?

And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder
 Majestic—as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!—
 These things, these things were here and but the beholder
 Wanting; which two when they once meet,
 The heart rears wings bold and bolder
 And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his feet.

This is the moment of inscape instressed, and the poem is its consequence: a new inscape, a distinctive poetic form, a -scaping of words. For Hopkins, writing as a Jesuit, the anthropomorphic figures by which he writes of the landscape (“the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder” and, more generally, the figure of “love’s greeting” offered the beholder and the beholder’s “hurled” heart-reply) are not simply metaphorical but follow from a belief in a father-Creator (“All things counter, original, spare, strange/ . . . /He

fathers-forth whose beauty is past change," ["Pied Beauty," 7, 10]) and the Saviour-son whose presence is "gleaned" in the inscapes or distinctive patterns of "silk-sack clouds" moving in "wilful-wavier meal-drift . . . moulded and melted across skies," or the rising rows of "barbarous" stooks that here form the "landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough" praised in "Pied Beauty" (5). The poet's response is less an imitation than a different inscaping, marking the separate distinctiveness of beholder and beheld by creating a third form from their meeting. Hopkins's dialectical account of landscape (inscape, instress, new inscape) sets limits to the determining powers of inherited or imposed form. Recognizing the difference between the "real" scene and the poem, painting, or garden, his account seeks, like Wordsworth's and Rossetti's, to locate what I would call landscape at the intersection of beholder and beheld, but temporally, imaginatively, and formally subsequent to that experiential moment. "These things, these things were here,/ And but the beholder wanting"—but what is also wanting is the translation of what is beheld by that culturally and individually patterned mind into a new medium with its own formal possibilities.

Wallace Stevens is less tentative than Wordsworth, Rossetti, or Hopkins in asserting the primacy of that act of translation. "I placed a jar in Tennessee" begins the apparently unassuming "Anecdote of a Jar" (I quote the poem in its entirety):

I placed a jar in Tennessee
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild.
The jar was round upon the ground
And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.
The jar was gray and bare.
It did not give of bird or bush,
Like nothing else in Tennessee.

The poem offers no explicit judgments on the ethics of the imperial jar or the "I" whose act of placement asserts such uncompromising dominion. The poem performs what it describes: a jar is placed or posited, and everything else named in the lines that follow made to "surround" and depend upon that introductory act. The "slovenly wilderness" conforms to the shape of the jar, falling into rhymed metrical units that echo and repeat it (round/surround/around/round/upon the ground). The order imposed by poetic fiat, the (de)positing of a jar (itself severely "gray and bare") in the midst of wilderness, admits no fellowship with bird or beast or Tennessee—the specificities of a place and its inhabitants. (This is landscape as pure space, a conceptual order achieved through optics and geometry, one might say). There are no awful, huge forms, no "inner standing point," no rapturous meeting of inscape instressed from wilderness to jar and thence to poem. Stevens offers his ascetic, imperial jar without comment (and we are free, of course, to reject the offer of the landscape so produced). The question he is pursuing is perhaps philosophical rather than perceptual or political (despite the language of "Anecdote of a Jar," so easy to align with contemporary American dreams of empire). How much does the order of landscape owe to the "wilderness" and its inhabitants, how much to the gestures that only the artist, architect, poet, anthropologist, politician—or the historically and culturally located observer—makes?

"The Idea of Order at Key West" is a far more lyrical landscape poem, yet here too Stevens is clear. Listening to a singer singing at the sea's edge, the speaker of the poem (and the companions, including readers, for whom he speaks in the collective plural) have first to recognize the nonidentity of the song and the sound of the ocean. "She sang beyond the genius of the sea" (1), he says,

and yet its mimic motion
 Made constant cry, caused constantly a cry,
 That was not ours although we understood,
 Inhuman, of the veritable ocean.

(4–7)

"But it was she and not the sea we heard" (14), he insists,

For she was the maker of the song she sang.
 The ever-hooded, tragic-gestured sea
 Was merely a place by which she walked to sing.
 Whose spirit is this? We said, because we knew
 It was the spirit that we sought and knew
 That we should ask this often as she sang.

(15–20)

Like the placing of the jar, it is the making that gives shape, though it cannot give voice, to “the place by which she walked to sing.” The otherness of the sea (“the ever-hooded, tragic-gestured sea”) remains, slightly melodramatic, perhaps, but ultimately inhuman, unvoiceable, an absent presence behind the singer and the occasion of her -scaping song.

It was her voice that made
 The sky acutest at its vanishing.
 She measured to the hour its solitude.
 She was the single artificer of the world
 In which she sang. And when she sang, the sea,
 Whatever self it had, became the self
 That was her song, for she was the maker. Then we,
 As we beheld her striding there along,
 Knew that there never was a world for her
 Except the one she sang and, singing, made.

(34–43)

Is the solipsism of human making a good thing? The poet records both the cry of the sea and the blindness of the singer. The landscapes of human song, or poems, or paintings, or the architectural landscape formed by the jar placed on a hill in Tennessee, are created, Stevens finally seems to suggest, from the fragility and tentativeness of our sense of our own place in the universe, products of what he calls a “blessed rage for order” (52),

The maker’s rage to order words of the sea,
 Words of the fragrant portals, dimly-starred,
 And of ourselves and of our origins,
 In ghostlier demarcations, keener sounds.

(53–56)

Both “ghostlier” and “keener,” the singing gives us at least the illusion that the signs of human presence (“the lights in the fishing boats at anchor there” [47]) have “mastered the night and portioned out the sea,/Fixing emblazoned zones and fiery poles,/Arranging, deepening, enchanting night” [49–51]). Landscapes as human, made versions of the “slovenly wilderness” and the “dark voice of the sea” (21), the “meaningless plungings of water and the wind,/Theatrical distances, bronze shadows heaped/On high horizons” (30–32), do impose an order—of the mind, not the wind or wilderness or sea (or those who live there)—an order that speaks of its limitations even as it dreams of mastery, and for its listeners, or beholders, is also moving because it is so manifestly a dream.

What poems can help us to see is the way the form of the representation at once participates in a more general cultural language with a history and an intent to shape the future, *and* in the thisness, the moment of perception by the individual poet or artist—but without being reducible to either. The form of a particular poem or picture, while related to a more general type (and importantly shaped by it) is itself always a potential new type or model, and becomes so through the interaction—sometimes clash—of inherited types and present experience (both individual and social), registered with lesser or greater openness depending on the artist. Landscape is indeed a shared language or medium with a history, but every landscape is also an imaginative act. There is risk in overweighting either the social or the individual contribution, just as it is always difficult to balance the conflicting activities of mind (the rage for order) and material (the inhuman cry of the ocean, or the all-too-human cries of displaced inhabitants). But landscape as we have known or are likely to study it is never the unheard cry, the garden before Adam and Eve (and of course the speaking serpent) came to cultivate and name it. The entranced apologist for gardens in Marvell’s poem “The Garden” may stumble on melons to be ensnared by flowers, and imagine that “The nectarine and curious peach/Into my hands themselves do reach,” but he is soon engaged in -scaping like the poet he is:

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;

The mind, that ocean where each kind
 Does straight its own resemblance find;
 Yet it creates, transcending these,
 Far other worlds and other seas,
 Annihilating all that's made
 To a green thought in a green shade.
 ("The Garden," 41–48)

Marvell's "green thought in a green shade," like Stevens's "rage for order," may overstate the role of the imagination in landscape, but that may be truth needed for our time. It's the continuing reassertion of imagination they witness—where landscape becomes epistemology and a site for agency—that assures that landscapes as cultural creations are still exciting, and still being produced. I think that we want to keep the term "landscape," if for no other reason than to access the long history of what landscape has been in other times and places, as we catch it in this moment, perhaps, of renewal and transformation, and prepare to study its designs in the future.

Notes

Bibliographical note: quotations from the texts of Andrew Marvell's "The Garden" are taken from *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, revised edition, edited by Alexander W. Allison, Herbert Barrows, Caesar R. Blake, Arthur J. Carr, Arthur M. Eastman, and Hubert M. English Jr. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970, 1975); William Wordsworth's "The Prelude" (1850 version) from *Selected Poems and Prefaces by William Wordsworth*, edited by Jack Stillinger (Boston MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1965); Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Sonnets for Pictures (1870 versions) from *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Collected Poetry and Prose*, edited by Jerome McGann (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2003); Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Hurrahing in Harvest" and "Pied Beauty" from *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by W. R. Gardner (London: Penguin Books, 1953, reprinted in Penguin Classics, 1985); and Wallace Stevens's "Anecdote of a Jar" and "The Idea of Order at Key West" from *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).

1. See the Assessment by Jennifer Jane Marshall. Marshall suggests that this something in reserve resides in the sheer materiality of landscape, and proposes material culture (or "thing") studies as the most promising recent approach for the insights it can offer on landscape. As will become clear, I pursue a different tack.

2. For this gnomic formulation, I'm indebted to the very interesting work of Aishwarya Lakshmi (on British and Indian landscapes before and since the Mutiny) and Josh Comaroff (on the ghostly geography of religion in contemporary Singapore). I'm grateful for the grace and insights of the phrases in both Lakshmi's dissertation (Chicago, 2007) and Comaroff's dissertation proposal (UCLA, 2007).
3. On the temporal extensions of landscapes, see Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Exploration of Landscape and History* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Carter defines his subject as "spatial history": "how space is imagined, the horizons it looks forward to from the perspective of historical actors" (p. 3).
4. *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*, edited by Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1.
5. If "landscape" is mostly metaphoric, from the anthropological perspective, that would make better sense of the odd anthropological use of the terms "foreground" and "background" to designate, respectively, "the concrete actuality of everyday social life" and "the perceived potentiality thrown into relief by our foregrounded existence—the way we might be" (*The Anthropology of Landscape*, 3).
6. "Preface to Lyrical Ballads" (1802); *Selected Poems and Prefaces*, 460.
7. Recounting his disappointment on discovering that he had crossed the Alps without realizing it, missing anticipated views and their accompanying emotions, Wordsworth interrupts his narrative with an account of the passage from feeling "lost" to the recognition of latent meaning with the help of imagination, an intervention during recollection that enables, in the present, the writing of the poem:

Imagination—here the Power so called
Through sad incompetence of human speech,
That awful Power rose from the mind's abyss
Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,
At once, some lonely traveller. I was lost;
Halted without an effort to break through;
But to my conscious soul I now can say—
"I recognize thy glory:" in such strength
Of usurpation, when the light of sense
Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
The invisible world, doth greatness make abode,
There harbours whether we be young or old.
(VI.592–604)

8. Christo and Jeanne-Claude prefer the term "environmental artists," on the grounds that they use only sites already prepared and used by people, while many of the original land artists gravitate toward less-used or more distant sites, whether to construct giant earthworks (Smithson) or to leave minimalist or no sculpted traces (the walking artists, Long and Fulton). All of these contemporary artists, however, create versions of what I would call landscape art: art in which land (or land and water) is the material, the site

of interactivity and/or the subject of representation; that makes us conscious of both time and space; that is public (if not necessarily monumental); that either traces or records art out of human activity shaping places in and across time; and, of course, that reflects on land -scaping as art.

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