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AFTERWORD: THE PICTURESQUE AND THE WORK OF REGULATION

William Galperin

IT WILL no doubt strike readers of this journal as odd that despite having written extensively on Wordsworth's poetry and on issues of visibility in romantic literature and culture, it was the novels of Jane Austen that first got me thinking about the picturesque. As any reader of Austen knows, the sense of the picturesque that emerges in her writing is far from clear or settled. For every jab at the picturesque in Austen—and I am thinking chiefly of the satires in both *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility*—there is something that qualifies as an endorsement. The most ringing of these endorsements is undoubtedly the view of Pemberley House in *Pride and Prejudice*, where landscaping practices that accord with picturesque principles are not just pleasing to the eye, specifically to the heroine Elizabeth Bennet, but have the equally important effect of naturalizing, thereby legitimating, the novel's social hierarchy at whose pinnacle Pemberley's current occupant stands. The other important endorsement of picturesque aesthetics, with attention, again, to landscaping practices, occurs in *Mansfield Park*. Here, the seemingly excessive improvements advocated by Henry and Mary Crawford, which the novel's heroine deplors, are explicitly aligned with innovations in gardening undertaken by Humphry Repton (and before him Lancelot "Capability" Brown), whose works, practically and theoretically, proved the provocation in turn for opposing tracts by Richard Payne Knight and Uvedale Price that, along with writings of William Gilpin, form the core of picturesque theory.

I will in a moment articulate what I take to be the central issues in picturesque discourse, particularly as it bears on the ideological valences of Romantic-period writing and is reflected, accordingly, in the essays that comprise this special issue. In the meantime, it is noteworthy that even when apparently endorsing the picturesque—in for example the Pemberley episode—Austen discloses something both sinister and delimiting that it is the purpose of the picturesque, as it has been the purpose of domestic fictions like *Pride and Prejudice*, to naturalize and obscure. In fact, one does not have to go much further than the novel's famous first sentence to discover the picturesque—or a procedure analogous to it—at work. It may be "universally acknowledged," and by that sanction a truism, that "a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (1). However this does not obscure the fact that an altogether normative scenario, such as the sentence offers, is simply that. It represents an imposition, where the coercive weight of

public opinion (“*must* be in want of a wife”) is virtually synonymous with the wish-fulfilling fantasies of women, whose affirmation of “truth” is a by-product of their vulnerability and subordination. For the probabilistic scenario to thrive, in other words, there must not only be wealthy men and unmarried women available for emplotment in a narrative of eventual and necessary union. There must also exist something akin to “universal” inequality. Only in a climate of inequality is there sufficient pressure on both single men and women to produce a phenomenon so widespread that it wears the mantle of truth.

The mere fact, however, that this truth must also be universally acknowledged, that it cannot stand alone without the continuous prop of opinion, custom, and fantasy, raises another possibility, which all the weight of coercion and probability cannot suppress. This of course would be a condition wherein women no longer need or want to be married and where men, accordingly, are no longer obligated, or entitled, to rescue them. Such a view presupposes that conventional marriage, especially in its mystified form as the desired telos of narrative or romance, is also an impediment to women and on a continuum with the subordination that drives them to desire marriage as a respite in the first place. However, taken in context—namely, in conjunction with an observation that identifies both men and women as the objects and the agents of cultural imperatives—the prospect of things being otherwise, however far this may be from the “truth,” is surprisingly close at hand.

That such changes are almost entirely a matter of abstraction in *Pride and Prejudice*, that the famous first sentence quickly modulates from an unstable observation, with intimations of possibility, to the more stable irony characteristic of an authoritative narrator to whom the marital prospects of unattached women and the anxiety of their parents are components of the human comedy, does not diminish either the prospect itself or its power in retrospect to contest what is asserted to be universal and true. Nor does it diminish the fact that here, as throughout the novel, a world of possibility shadows the probable and representable world in Austen, which in the manner of the novel—and in the manner of what picturesque theory invariably calls “nature”—is paradoxically open to the very dilation on which it also forecloses.

This tension between the representable and the unrepresentable (or between the probable and the merely possible) is palpable during Elizabeth’s visit to Pemberley in the final volume. “Ascend[ing]” to a “considerable eminence, where the wood ceased,” Elizabeth’s “eye” is “instantly caught by Pemberley House,” the home of the wealthy and single Fitzwilliam Darcy, whose declaration of love she has recently spurned:

It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills; – and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt, that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something! (215)

Elizabeth’s fantasy of ownership, it is worth noting, is provoked not by nature but by naturalization: by the way that picturesque gardening allows Pemberley House to complement the landscape at the same time that the house remains an organizing center. And this improvement in the landscape recalls the inaugural sentence of the novel. Like truths universally acknowledged, “nature” at Pemberley is a prescribed or partial phenom-

enon by which Elizabeth confuses artifice—the strictures, again, to which nature conforms in the present instance—with something that is presumably endless and uncontained.

Thus even as she imagines herself “mistress” of the place (indulging at once the prerogatives of individual desire and the fantasy of a single man in search of a wife), Elizabeth is visibly in thrall and mastered by the scene. Her eye is “caught” by the sight of Pemberley House, whose allure involves both its naturalization and its metonymic relationship to its “handsome” master. Moreover, like the edifice itself, whose very infringement on the environment makes it vulnerable in like manner to fantasies of control, Elizabeth is herself annexed in the act, and as a condition, of her imaginary imposition.

This paradox, in which ownership or control betokens one’s cooptation in turn, becomes more of an issue as Elizabeth tours Pemberley from the inside. Here she is given further opportunity to possess nature, this time from the prospect of Pemberley’s windows:

The hill, crowned with wood, from which they had descended, received increased abruptness from the distance, was a beautiful object. Every disposition of the ground was good; and she looked on the whole scene, the river, the trees scattered on its banks, and the winding of the valley, as far as she could trace it, with delight. As they passed into other rooms, these objects were taking different positions; but from every window there were beauties to be seen. The rooms were lofty and handsome, and their furniture suitable to the fortune of their proprietor; but Elizabeth saw with admiration of his taste, that it was neither gaudy nor uselessly fine. . . . ‘And of this place,’ thought she, ‘I might have been mistress! With these rooms I might now have been familiarly acquainted! Instead of viewing them as a stranger, I might have rejoiced in them as my own, and welcomed to them as visitors my uncle and aunt. (216)

Although Elizabeth’s fantasies of ownership are indulged with more specificity and conviction once she is inside, there is a slight difference in their motivation. Previously this indulgence was a function of the way the house, in effectively blending with the environment, provoked Elizabeth to imagine herself as one of its privileged inhabitants. Now her role-playing, chiefly her stewardship of “place,” involves following Pemberley’s lead. No longer merely natural, or sufficiently naturalized to submit to ownership, Pemberley actually deconstructs the work of naturalization in becoming a space of what Foucault has called “constructed visibility” (Rajchman): a site from which things are seeable but in specific and restricted ways.

In other words for all her imagined authority Elizabeth is even more contained than before. Not only is she enclosed by the house and by domestic space (and ideology); her gaze, though seemingly unrestricted, remains restricted by the vantage of Pemberley’s windows, which vouchsafe some sights and not others. The more that Elizabeth asserts her authority, or acts on the presupposition of being free here, the more she resigns that freedom in discovering a nature beyond both her ken and the reach of her fantasies. The particular control of the landscape earlier masked by the naturalizing techniques of picturesque gardening—so much as to invite fantasies of possession—is exposed from the vantage of Pemberley’s interior in all of its limitation.

II

That the picturesque was predicated on a partial or otherwise restricted version of nature is hardly a revelation. But where Gilpin is quite frank on this point, noting that the aim of picturesque travel is to arrive at a station from which “natural scenery” conforms to “the

principles of artificial landscape" (*Observations* 2), which for Gilpin remains a landscape neither strictly sublime nor merely beautiful, his successors, Price and Knight, are not nearly so modest in pursuit of this partializing initiative. Where Gilpin's seminal essays on the picturesque are in a many ways a relatively innocent effort to extend the category of beauty beyond Burke's restrictive taxonomy to include the roughness and variety of nature in its more adulterated, comparatively quotidian, manifestations, Gilpin's successors are considerably more dogmatic in their advocacy of picturesque principles. The privileged term for both Knight and Price, therefore, is not beauty, which Price suggests be dispensed with altogether; the privileged term in the "second wave" of picturesque theory turns out to be "nature" itself, which subsequently slides into other totalizing terms such as "truth" or "reality." Unlike beauty, which is necessarily restrictive despite Gilpin's particular efforts to enlarge it, the concept of nature transforms in picturesque theory from a previously unappreciated aspect of the object world, into a totality—with picturesque nature becoming more or less a synecdoche—in which a larger wholeness or more comprehensive "real" is suddenly visible.

Nowhere is the regulatory aspect of the picturesque more in evidence than in the analogies that picturesque theorists, beginning with Gilpin himself, make between landscape organization, as they variously admire and prescribe it, and narrative fiction, which they argue must be equally naturalized and made to conform to an ultimately partial—if paradoxically comprehensive—conception of reality. Accordingly, theorists of the picturesque not only recommend representations of human and social life in narrative fiction that are natural and at the same time partial; they typically urge representations where the synonymy of truth and subject matter serves specific social and ideological interests. In commenting, for example, on the correct procedures for sketching a landscape in the best of taste, Gilpin remarks, by way of analogy, that "correct taste cannot bear those unnatural situations in which heroes and heroines are often placed... whereas a story, naturally, and of course affectingly told... though known to be a fiction, is considered a transcript of nature" (*Three Essays* 53). In appealing to a consensus regarding what is natural in a given story or representation, Gilpin neatly transfers the burden of creating taste to a community already possessed of the taste to which Gilpin means somehow to enlighten them. Gilpin no doubt wants to strengthen his case by appealing to an already-established cultural authority, or to the community, again, that necessarily knows the difference between truth and falsehood. But he does this finally to normalize and to obscure the limits already placed on the real by a now-mystified interpretive community—all of which he registers in the near (and characteristic) tautology that a story "naturally told" is "considered" by the community "a transcript of nature."

As the first of the picturesque advocates to establish links between the representation of nature according to certain principles and the representation of life in narrative, Gilpin is typically insistent that the naturalness of a given narrative depends on its also being cleansed of anything akin to the "marvellous" (*Three Essays* 53). However it is his successors, Price and especially Knight, who make clearer what is at stake in their various injunctions for what Knight calls "poetic probability" (270). Although poetic probability appears, in Knight's rendering, to be nothing more than a quasi-formal or even practical injunction for consistency in language, sentiment and action, it quickly opens—pursuant to arguments for "improved nature" in landscaping—onto an argument for naturalization. In Knight's various appeals for naturalized productions, whether in improved nature or in

the imitative arts, the proximity of a given embellishment to what he tendentiously calls “real nature” (329) accomplishes a double-task. It succeeds in masking its motives and goals, most prominently the enclosure of property, whose boundaries demarcating ownership are effectively drawn by nature itself in a properly improved landscape (Birmingham 9–85); and it obscures things, or at least how one looks at them, in the service specific class and hegemonic interests.

When Knight criticizes Samuel Richardson for having failed in *Clarissa* “to fill up properly and consistently bold outlines of character” and singles out the character of Lovelace as “a vulgar tavern buck who apes the more elegant and refined loquacity of the polished rake of fashion” (286), he is doing more than lamenting Richardson’s bad ear and eye. Knight is also noting the author’s insufficient familiarity with a certain class of persons whom Richardson can, as a result, only undermine or misrepresent.¹ To represent Lovelace accurately would introduce a level of admiration that is necessarily absent in *Clarissa* because its author simply does not know “the principles of good breeding and politeness” that are “the same in all ages and in all countries” (287). Thus what amounts in Richardson to an exposure and criticism of aristocratic libertinism is not an artistically or politically-conscious decision on the novelist’s part. It is chalked up to a deficiency of both knowledge and imitation that is subversive solely in the failure to recognize the transhistorical principles that only bad or unrealistic representations are likely to oppose.

The linkage, then, of a representational practice with a hierarchy, where gradations of difference are suddenly coextensive with reality, or with nature properly rendered, is further exposed in the similarities that Knight observes between fashions of landscape gardening, chiefly those followed by Brown and Repton, and certain French and English novels. In the same way that the new English garden does not always do a good enough job in uniting a great man to his property, usually by failing to obscure, or to naturalize as effectively as possible, his imposition on and control of the landscape, so it is equally the case that certain modern fictions attenuate their naturalizations.² Such fictions, that is, abandon their regulatory task of giving “useful knowledge and sound morality” (447) in the way they “relat[e], in intelligible language, events of familiar life”—albeit ones that, as Knight cautions, are “not quite incredible, nor quite common” (445–46).

With respect to the landscape that bears too clearly the marks of enclosure and improvement, Knight recommends that novelty be replaced by intricacy and variety as picturesque theory warrants, adding that the function of proper gardening is to conceal the extent of a man’s property by joining it to nature in the largest sense possible. In a landscape approved according to picturesque principles, “the spectator never knows when he has seen all; but still imagines that there are other beauties unrevealed” (442). Such a gesture does more than conceal the extent of a person’s holdings; it also extends those holdings in making a specific and contained property interchangeable with general nature. So, too, in fictions that embellish reality short of becoming unrealistic, the naturalizing imperative, which is adhered to in some measure (as it is in the comparatively “natural” gardens of Brown and Repton), does not provide sufficient protection against the tendency to fabulation that Knight deplors, and encourages rather a “sickly” or escapist “sensibility of mind . . . which cannot stoop to the tameness of reality, or . . . common life” (446–47).

There would appear of course to be a real difference between “common life,” as Knight urges its representation in narrative fiction, and the nature whose quotidian formation in landscape gardening is marked ideally by variety and contrast so as to lend what Knight

calls a charm of novelty (441). Yet these differences, however substantial, simply mark two routes to the same end. This, in turn, is a society where universal deference is achieved either by masking the arbitrary gradations of authority and privilege, which other fashions of landscaping ostentatiously (even waggishly) expose, or by reconciling the mass of readers, many of them women, to a world of diminished expectations. Knight no doubt believes in the integrity of his social vision and its consistency with some natural or divine plan. But the increasingly problematic proximity of certain romantic or escapist fictions to “life” as he construes it, or of certain artificial improvements in the landscape to nature as such, expose a slippage in his position in which nature, in all its possibility, is pitted against a naturalized “real” limited to specific interests and needs.

III

It must be observed, particularly as this is also something that the Pemberley episode explores, that the slippages in Knight’s various conceptions of the natural do not materialize under pressure of a skeptical or resistant reading of his commentary. They materialize because of the hegemonic disposition of picturesque theory itself, where naturalization is part of a larger initiative for regulating and containing change. It is this issue of change, then, versus containment—or the notion of possibility as against that of probability—that the essays in this special issue converge upon. Not every critic here subscribes to a notion of the picturesque as regulatory. Nor do the essays collectively hold that the picturesque is necessarily distinct from some horizon of change or melioration. But each of them, in its own way, is plainly wrestling with this problem.

Elizabeth Bohls comes the closest, I think, to an understanding of the picturesque as primarily regulatory in showing the tactical deployment of picturesque discourse in Matthew Lewiss’ renderings of life in the West Indies. Focusing chiefly on the moments in Lewiss’ journal when a “self-conscious artificiality” effectively intervenes so as to “distrac[t] attention from the problematic aspects of plantation life,” Bohls argues that such aestheticized evasions work ultimately to remind readers of the “stubborn realities” that have been airbrushed from Lewiss’ account. Whether such appropriations can be extended to imply a wholesale inculcation of picturesque discourse on Lewiss’ part, particularly as a naturalizing and regulatory initiative, is another matter. But there is little doubt, in my view, that when Lewiss draws a comparison between a slave Mary Wiggins and “an old Cotton-tree” as “the most picturesque objects” that he has seen for “twenty years,” he is echoing with more circumspection (and considerably more chagrin) similar observations by Price, who, in recommending the inclusion of gypsies and other vagrants in picturesque compositions, justifies this directive by observing that such figures retain the “same qualities as old hovels and mills” (76).

A similar wariness over the picturesque is at work in Anne Wallace’s account of Charlotte Smith’s *Beachy Head*, where the appearance of fossils, for example, and the competing accounts of origins they evoke, open onto an horizon of incomprehensibility (or possibility) to which the sublime, rather than the picturesque, is more conceptually suited. Just as importantly, Wallace shows that Smith’s well-known preoccupation with detail and particularity, which for a critic like Naomi Schor might well be allied with a feminine outlook on the world (and thereby opposed to the sublime), actually accords with the sublime

in the pressure that particularity, seen vividly and closely, exerts on what Martin Price has called the “picturesque moment.” To the extent, in other words, that Smith’s view of things is informed by gender politics (as anyone familiar with her life might easily conclude), they are no less a response to Gilpin himself, whose conception of the picturesque as a mediating category between the sublime (read male) and the beautiful (read female), typically ensures that beauty will be found in the male visage rather than in females, where a more conventional, and less interesting, beauty resides. As a result, the wonder and incomprehensibility that Smith regularly extracts from small things, or from particulars, not only stands opposed to the blurring or melding of particulars that the picturesque seeks variously to accomplish. Such detailism, as a species of what is in effect a feminine or “minute sublime,” derives democratic and disruptive possibilities from the very things that the palpably false democracy of the picturesque, whether at Pemberley or in Gilpin’s synthetic masculinism, necessarily contains.

This is a somewhat different “politics of the picturesque” than the one to which most readers are accustomed, where the concept of aesthetic distance bears most immediately on questions of individualism, pro and con.³ But the issue of false democracy is worth pursuing now in light of the homology between aesthetic unity, on the one hand, to which variety and difference are invariably coordinated in picturesque discourse, and social hegemony, on the other, which works also by process of assimilation in absorbing, thereby neutralizing, emergent or potentially subversive practices (Williams). In other words, just as Gilpin’s idea of beauty appropriates an ideal of femininity to masculinist purposes and prestige, so his aesthetic theory, in seeking to coordinate a variety of discordant elements from tree trunks to vagrants, ultimately marshals heterogeneity in the service of uniformity and control. I raise this point now because the essays here by Benjamin Colbert, Beth Dolan Kautz and Jane Stabler variously oppose this view in regarding the picturesque as either ecumenical or even subversive (Stabler) rather than repressive or, as the case may be, conservative.

Kautz, for her part, is perfectly correct in stressing the intermediate status of the picturesque, in this case as a template for a medical allegory that seeks, in the example of Wollstonecraft, to moderate the claims of melancholia and hysteria, whose counterparts in aesthetic theory—namely the sublime and the beautiful—are similarly gendered. Yet insofar as it is Wollstonecraft whom we are dealing with here, there is an important question to be asked regarding the political valence of the composure to which picturesque scenery, as both phenomenon and allegory, manages to restore her. Regardless of their extremity, in other words, the largely masculinist sublime, especially as a revolutionary figure (Burke *Reflections*), and the more feminized pathology of excessive sentiment are clearly challenges to the normative order, all of which makes the version of health modeled on a picturesque equilibrium more than just a corrective to certain female difficulties as Wollstonecraft understands them. It makes health, such as she construes it, a correction, again, that recapitulates the fundamentally conservative and probabilistic aims of picturesque theory, especially amid velocities of change. The defense of woman, both in the letters that Wollstonecraft writes on her Scandinavian tour, as well as in her other writings, turns out (with no small irony) to be the discursive complement to picturesque hegemony, where the coordination of opposed elements, however seemingly salutary, has the concomitant function of masking as well as mystifying the disciplinary function that the picturesque routinely performs.

Similarly, in discussing the late eighteenth-century agricultural tours of Arthur Young, Benjamin Colbert notes how Young melds the aestheticizing tendencies of the picturesque with a more material or georgic element that does not shy away from examining the actual work of cultivation. In observing this about Young, Colbert means to revise certain assumptions, by John Barrell especially (*Dark Side*), regarding the denial to which the aestheticization of the landscape, and the particular distance that the picturesque routinely interposes between subject and object, are perforce tantamount. Still, in stressing the integrative function of a vantage from which beauty and utility are both visible and representable in Young's tour, Colbert ironically concurs with Barrell in confirming the absence of any real alterity in Young's representational alternative. Young's variation on the picturesque can be said rather to accord with the picturesque—and with the related initiatives of a painter like Constable (Rosenthal)—in the mythico-cultural work his attention performs. For the integrated landscape, whose working inhabitants are necessarily held in aestheticized relief, is far closer to a propagandistic tool, serving a greater or integrated Britain, than it is to a democratic vista. Although surely a necessary part of the visible field, the material realities that Young addresses are not simply seeable in ways that enlarge and revise the picturesque. They are also seeable in ways that are inseparable in the end from issues of status and difference—so that to account for something as Young does, far from being merely integrative, is to assign it at the same time to its proper place.

Stabler's position on the picturesque is perhaps the most provocative. Recurring to that aspect of the picturesque on which its disciplinary function depends—namely, its concerted, if also qualified, embrace of “aesthetic liberty and disorder”—Stabler goes on to show that for certain woman writers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the playful or unruly aspects of the picturesque proved a means for them to contest the very systems of order to which such discord had been recruited in the masculinist, more authoritarian, schemas of Gilpin and others. At the same time, it is scarcely coincidental that these writers, including Hester Piozzi, Marianne Baillie, Charlotte Eaton, Mary Shelley and Lady Morgan, all have recourse to Italy as the site of this counter-aesthetic. For apart from the fact that there were actual painters, notably Salvador Rosa, on whose Italian settings many of these writers actually modeled their own picturesque descriptions, the romance of resistance they pursue by picturesque and related means recapitulates as much as it apparently vitiates the containment, once again, to which the picturesque (as Stabler readily concedes) is generally marshaled. This accordance is evident not only in the displaced setting, where subversive possibilities are entertained so long as they are elsewhere. It is evident more importantly in the way resistance, figured in, for example, the sympathetic treatment of such previously decorative elements as *banditti*, implicitly derives its moral and radical authority from an alien, or in this case British, vantage, where suffrage and enlightenment are comparatively close at hand. That is, just as the picturesque at home embraces play and discord in conjunction with a teleology of wholeness and order, so it is the case, too, that the picturesque abroad, simply by being abroad, proves a way to go native—and by figurative extension to go feminist—without also abandoning one's birthright as a “free” and enlightened subject of Great Britain.

Finally, in his treatment of the picturesque in Austen, specifically *Emma*, Thomas Hothorn focuses on the question of aesthetic distance and the version of individualism—in this case “suburban ideology”—with which it is apparently coextensive.

In Austen, needless to say, Hothem has certainly identified an author who can teach us a great deal about the picturesque and its social and cultural filiations. But the key point in Austen, with important bearing on her narrative practice—where the claim to omniscience is critically and reflexively tried in *Emma* by the narrator's ignorance of, among other things, the relationship of Frank and Jane—remains the *homology* between a social hierarchy, with which both narrative authority and picturesque practice are coextensive, and the notion of the liberal individual, whose antecedents are primarily aristocratic and at odds with the seemingly progressive orientation in which the individual, especially in romantic discourse, remains central (Barrell, *Birth* 41–62). To the degree, then, that the picturesque privileges the concerns of the individual or the “gentleman” (as Barrell calls him), it also privileges the origins of individualism to an extent that Austen found difficult to countenance and to which the narrator's arrogance in *Emma*, no less than her cryptic observations regarding Pemberley, bear melancholy witness.⁴

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NOTES

¹ Knight was not the only contemporary reader to lament “character inconsistency” in Richardson or the “status inconsistency” that, as Michael McKeon notes, some of Richardson's contemporaries saw as central to the “linguistic incompetence of an author who clownishly confounds the language of servants with that of their masters” (411–12).

² Although various English gardening practices in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were scarcely naive regarding their impositions on or idealizations of the landscape, “landscape garden in their turn,” as John Dixon Hunt observes, “came to be revised in the light of the growing taste for ‘natural’ scenery.” Thus even as a given garden “could not” necessarily “accommodate a landscape imagery comparable to that of Scotland or the Lake District,” it “could adapt itself to be less artificially contrived.” And “the man largely responsible,” according to Hunt, “for such changes in design, perhaps the most radical of all landscape gardeners, was ‘capability’ Brown” (187). All the same, for theorists of the picturesque the more “natural” scenery developed by Brown and his follower Humphry Repton was—like the almost probable fictions that Knight criticizes—sufficiently artificial to call attention to its naturalizing work, but insufficiently natural to obscure its artificiality to begin with, or the fact that its “nature,” as it were, was no less an idea, no less a fiction, than the nature of earlier gardening practices. In this way, then, the premonitions of postmodernism that Rosalind Krauss detects in the writings of Gilpin are more readable in the work of Brown and his followers, whose “nature” again is more natural by being artificial rather than by approximating a more mystified, more essentialist, nature such as picturesque theory advocates.

³ See, for example, Liu, pp. 61–137, and the collection of essays edited by Copley and Garside. See also Barrell, *Dark Side*.

⁴ For an altogether different reading of Austen's relationship to and use of the picturesque in which its tendencies are consistent with, rather than opposed to, a moderated or Wollstonecraftian feminism, see especially Jill Heydt-Stevenson.

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