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# Public Parks and Private Ideologies: Building Nineteenth-Century British National Identity Through Landscape

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PUBLIC PARKS AND PRIVATE IDEOLOGIES: BUILDING NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
NATIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH LANDSCAPE

PUBLIC PARKS AND PRIVATE IDEOLOGIES: BUILDING NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
NATIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH LANDSCAPE

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in English

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

This project examines how nineteenth-century landscape theories shaped national identity and were influenced by it. Predominant is an investigation of how the desire for a more egalitarian class structure underlies the changes in British landscape design from an attachment to classical exclusivity through pastoral tropes to a limited acceptance of middle and working classes within public landscapes that represented patriotic values. Although poetic works inform the study, novel-length fiction and non-fiction prose and periodicals are also a primary source of consideration. Novels demonstrate how fictional geography generates the constructs of national ideology, and although canonical works typically referenced in study of nineteenth-century landscape and the development of urban centers drive the discussion, other, less canonical novels and non-fiction historical texts contribute to the study's approach, which diverges from the rich history of literary criticism involving landscape and urban development in this respect. In addition to adding to the established criticism on landscape and literature, this study traces chronologically the changing attitudes of private and public ownership toward the land and physical environment. Conducting the study through the lens of Marxist economic considerations extends the reach of this research beyond literary scholarship – particularly Victorianist scholarship – to scholars of post-colonial studies, cultural studies, leisure theory, city planning, and the study of the history of public parks.

This dissertation is approved for recommendation  
to the Graduate Council.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate my work here first to my husband Brent, whose dedication to me has supported me through the process. He has tolerated my late nights and grumpiness, and he toted three little kids across the Fort Smith and Northwest Arkansas region to keep them occupied while I was writing. He motivated me by assuming me capable of completion.

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**Public Parks and Private Ideologies: Building Nineteenth-Century British National Identity  
through Landscape**

**Chapter 1**

**The Neo-Classic Landscape and Its Classical Genealogy: Grounding Nineteenth-Century  
Ideology**

Nationality is the generation of a collective self-image, a series of definitions and shared values that a discrete set of people adopts for personal and political motivations. At first, geography might appear immune to the vicissitudes of culturally constructed ideologies, like a stable, immutable force; however, in fact, the land itself is critical to a nation's self-image, and a people's perceptions of their nation's terrain – whether they perceive it as aesthetically contemplative, a challenge that builds character, an isolated landscape that inspires philosophical explorations, or a landlocked country that interacts socially with its neighbors in a constant process of inter-cultural influence – are driven by the same psychological and sociological forces that build all other paradigmatic constructs for understanding and negotiating life. The process of defining national identity can be observed through theoretical discussions of landscape design, texts composed by landscape architects themselves, the writings of philanthropists who argued for the landscape rights of the disenfranchised, and literature that draws on the symbolic meaning of landscape and relies on a common understanding of landscape symbols and signs. This project will examine how nineteenth-century landscape theories shaped national identity and were influenced by it. Predominant will be an investigation of how the desire for a more egalitarian class structure underlies the changes in British landscape design from an attachment to classical exclusivity through pastoral tropes to a limited acceptance of middle and working classes within public landscapes that represented patriotic values.

Benedict Anderson notably defined a nation as “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” – and it follows that nationalism involves the methods for imagining and constructing the community. Anderson unpacks his own terms by elaborating on the language within his concise definition:

It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.

The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations.

It is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm.

Finally, it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship (Anderson 5-7).

However, in his elaboration of terms, Anderson neglects to explain how the imagined communities are *inherently* limited and sovereign, but perhaps the assumption in declaring the traits are intrinsic to national identity lies in communities’ relationships to geography, for geography represents the most “inherent” of national spaces since nations build themselves around an epicenter or ideological gravitational focal point.

Public parks provide a lucid example of spaces loaded with ideological weight since they are sculpted to represent an image the community wishes to project of itself, and parks also suggest a synthesis of two ideas that are usually respected as binaries: the rural and the urban. An obvious starting point in defining the urban and the rural is a consideration of how the two compete for aesthetic and economic dominance. Raymond Williams famously frames the rural versus urban discussion in terms of capitalism's influence on geography, and many scholars have addressed how landscape architects of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries influenced the visual arts and literature of the nineteenth century, including Alistair M. Duckworth, John Dixon Hunt, and Peter Willis, who document how the specific details and tropes of eighteenth-century landscape design translate into class signs for exclusion of the aesthetically uninitiated, but these discussions have overlooked how spaces become defined as public or private, and how the private *parc* evolved into the public park during the nineteenth century, and these points stand to inform literary study through their impact on the most basic of New Critical terms, *setting*.

This study seeks to explain how the limned gradations between private and public, urban and rural, sublime and beautiful, and global and insular coalesce in the evolution of parks from spaces in the late eighteenth-century noble estate, inspired by classical traditions, into the democratic ideals embodied in public parks established through the National Trust at the *fin de siècle*. The genealogical ancestry of eighteenth-century landscape aesthetics involves two major influences, pastoral mode and theories of the sublime. In addition to examining how these themes influenced landscape theory, this study will consider how these two influences converged to generate a British national identity that was committed to ideological boundaries that were reified through landscape borders which marked exclusion of "others," yet will also consider how this eighteenth-century exclusion become more inclusive through the nineteenth century to reach the middle class, albeit in controlled ways. Thus, the binaries listed above demonstrate conflicts in national identity, primarily

in the way national identity can be viewed through the lens of social class. Even the two major genealogical sources of landscape aesthetics – the pastoral and the sublime – demonstrate a groundedness in noble entitlement and authority that would buckle under the weight of shifting ideological and philosophical values in the nineteenth century.

### **The Pastoral Vision**

The impulse for aesthetic design of a utopian landscape dates back to the concept of the garden of Eden, and the impulse to describe the ideal landscape is just as ancient; the desire for authorship of the ideal landscape is as dominant as the desire to create and exist within it. John Milton's *Paradise Lost* stands both as an early example of British literary appropriation of landscape for development of national aesthetic ideals, particularly in its use of pastoral tropes, and as an example of addressing those themes through foundational mythology. Largely speculated to represent a Mesopotamian location, Eden appears more as an international amalgam and less as a realistic Middle Eastern site for Milton. For example, in Book IV when Satan breaches the vernal border of Eden, he finds wildness representative of innocence that needs no bridling. Milton suggests that man's natural state before sin and the ensuing order of civilization is state of noble savagery, but the landscape he uses for this metaphor is one that references European vistas in addition to the Middle East. For example, descriptions of the garden as a "woody theater," the "prospect large," "hill, and dale, and plain" and "the undergrowth of shrubs and tangling bushes" (101) ring prototypically English, even before Eve appears with her "golden tresses" (107). It seems obvious first to accuse Milton of appropriating the Middle Eastern landscape and reshaping it in the image of England, but Milton's use more follows those who came after him in their appropriation of multiple foreign aesthetics in the development of an image of Britain. So, yes, Milton anglicizes the Middle Eastern garden, but he also retains many representations of the relevant Mesopotamian landscape, too. The image of an Anglicized Eden is an imperialist vision that absorbs the exotic and

adds it to existing European and British aesthetics, which themselves represent experiences that were limited to the leisure class.

As early as Milton, the British approach to developing a national geographic identity involves not only comparing the English landscape to those around it for similarities and differences, but pretending that the differences are somehow inherently British, too. The same *Paradise Lost* passage that describes Eden also suggests the significant pastoral theme that permeates British landscape writing when Milton compares Satan's entrance to the approach of a wolf intent on poaching a shepherd's flock:

At one slight bound high overleaped all bound  
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within  
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,  
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold (102);

The metaphor Milton establishes of Satan as a wolf breaching a secured pen to feed on sheep extends beyond the wolf as thief and conjures pastoral imagery by describing the shepherds themselves and their work through an image of a civilized place with the inclusion of constructed fences and secure fields. Milton moves from describing the wildness of Eden, encircled by the entirely natural barrier of trees, shrubs, and tangled vines, to sketching the manmade structures of a grazing pasture, and thus acknowledges one of the basic tenets of the pastoral mode: that the pastoral must consider the complications between the urban and the rural, the human longing to participate in both worlds, and the difficulties in articulating gradations between the two spheres.

Milton's allusion to pastoral themes, not unexpected since he is recognized as a master of pastoral mode for authoring arguably one of the most important pastoral elegies *Lycidas*, conforms to Paul Alpers's definition of pastoral in his seminal *What is Pastoral?* as a mode that represents "shepherds and their lives, not ... idyllic landscapes" (24). The distinction is critical to Alpers's further classifications of works that deserve to be called pastoral and works that merely address bucolic, utopian settings, and Alpers's position that the pastoral concerns navigation between rural and urban settings applies to the tradition of landscape aesthetics from which public parks evolved. Milton's suggestion of the shepherds' work creates a vision for readers of the shepherds' previous toils to establish a safe space for the flock and the actual action of herding them into the secure pen. The analogy that places Satan in the place of a hungry wolf sets newborn humanity – Adam and Eve – in the role of the sheep and God in the role of shepherd, a common metaphor. Milton's glorious Satan plays the central role in *Paradise Lost* just as his wolf analog does in this metaphor, but the emotive center of the metaphor is with the shepherd, not the sheep or the wolf, and since the sheep are not individually identified but mentioned only as "flocks," we feel little empathy for their danger. Milton characteristically allows readers to empathize with the wolf, whose sinister actions we recognize as motivated by the natural impulse of hunger, but we also see this brief scene as typical of the life of a shepherd. The implied scene is that of shepherds who have toiled to construct a safe location for their sheep to rest, worked throughout the day tending them, and secured them for the night, only to have them stolen by a natural rival. Even though Milton does not describe the eventual carnage the wolf intends, the reader knows the result of the breach. Reading the scene through Alpers's lens of description of shepherds' lives changes the tone of the metaphor so that it expands the dialectic of civilized versus wild (pens and cotes versus the wilderness outside the fence and outside of Eden) to consider instead the *movement between* the two areas and the nuances as one transitions to the other.



Another vital component of Alpers's definition is the use of Kenneth Burke's "representative anecdote" for the diachronic progression of the pastoral mode. Burke explored the concept of representative anecdote in a study which sought to answer the question, "What is involved when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it?" Burke narrows this global question by examining how drama generates meaning through symbolism, and in doing so considers the distinctions between reality and art and the difficulty of representing reality. Burke writes,

Men seek for vocabularies that will be faithful *reflections* of reality. To this end, they must develop vocabularies that are *selections* of reality. And any selection of reality must, in certain circumstances, function as a *deflection* of reality. Insofar as the vocabulary meets the needs of reflection, we can say that it has the necessary scope. In its selectivity, it is a reduction. Its scope and reduction become a deflection when the given terminology, or calculus, is not suited to the subject matter which it is designed to calculate (59).

Burke's representative anecdote is a system of symbols that reflect reality instead of deflecting it, or it is "a *summation*, containing implicitly what the system that is developed from it contains explicitly" (60-1). Basically, Burke advocates finding the "least common denominator" (61) of a symbolic system in order to understand how the system's components work together to create meaning, and to understand that meaning accurately and fully.

For Alpers, the shepherd is a representative anecdote, or place holder, that morphs as cultural norms change so that the shepherd and his work are the literal subjects of Virgil's and Theocritus's eclogues, but actual shepherds may not remain the central characters in modern pastoral writings. The role the shepherd plays in classical pastoral poetry is that of a common, rural proletariat who is sometimes threatened by encroaching civilizations, but also attracted to elements of urbanity. The

landscape itself may appear to be secondary to the life of the shepherd, but it is, in fact, a part of his definition, since the representative anecdote for shepherd changes, which requires redefining the rural and the urban<sup>1</sup>. The pastoral representative anecdote evolves as much as the application of sublime theory does over the course of the two centuries. Sublime theory begins in the classical tradition as a rhetorical strategy, is translated into visual aesthetic theory in the eighteenth century and in that way guides landscape architects in the design of estates, and is then subsumed by the British picturesque movement in the late eighteenth century as England grew to dominate the field of landscape design and developed its own national representations. The pastoral mode remained a guiding metaphor for writers of elegies including Percy Bysshe Shelley (“Adonais”) and Matthew Arnold (“Thyrsis”), but the pastoral implications of the landscape itself evolved as the other classical influence, the sublime. The representative anecdote of the shepherd shifted from the landowner who moved his presence and influence between his estate and the urban social center to a more public representation of bucolic tending when by the second half of the nineteenth century writers advocated a middle class husbandry of the land that implicated also an oversight of the working class. Therefore, the pastoral anecdote described by Alpers begins as a shepherd, changes into a wealthy landowner on whose authority the land is kept, altered, and viewed, and changes again into a middle class philanthropic public, no longer a single individual.

Alpers’s focus on the lives of shepherds, and not the idyllic landscape, contradicts Judith Haber’s deconstructivist account of pastoral, which argues that creators of idyllic landscapes actually deconstruct or destroy their bucolic ideal by their insistence to distinguishing it from the urban. Haber situates several scholars of the pastoral mode as historicists, including Adrian Montrose and Annabel Patterson, but Haber’s use of them is deconstructivist. When she cites Montrose, writing

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<sup>1</sup> We find a tidy example of representative anecdote in Amy Heckerling’s interpretation of *Emma* in *Clueless*, when Heckerling substitutes Cher’s loss of virginity for Emma’s marriage to Knightley to accommodate shifting cultural values.

that “pastoral itself progresses from the literal pastoralism of the countryside to the metaphorical pastoralism of the court by means of verbal formalization” (3), she contends that the metaphorizing process has always complicated the implicit simplicity of pastoral poetry, which suggests that pastoral’s simplicity is actually negated by the complications of formalizing it. Haber finds this same contradiction in Patterson, saying she “provides a diachronic perspective..., and she makes it clear that literary referentiality and poetic utility have been explicit problems in pastoral at least since the *Eclogues*” (4). Haber criticizes Patterson for the “creation of a stable category of pure, ‘empty’ idyllic formalism [which] allows for the simultaneous creation of a category of pure ‘full’ political meaning, of an unmediated real uncontaminated by ‘the mirror of art’” (5), and it is here that Haber’s critique becomes a fully deconstructivist account of previous work on the pastoral mode, excluding Alpers’s. The citation of Montrose and Patterson as proponents of binary systems for the description and classification of pastoral begs identification of marginalized space that cleanly fits neither category. The pastoral appears at first to act as setting for the war between rural and urban – or between simple and complex, or between nature and artifice – and while these binaries certainly inform pastoral works, they do not account for the complexities between the two camps or the spaces that are not easily classified as either. Haber declares political readings of the pastoral fair game and suggests they are “inescapably relevant...to the poems that appear to erect boundaries around them” (7), a claim that also permits for readings of the pastoral mode as a vehicle for defining national identity.

If the writers of pastoral mode sought to distinguish the rural setting as the true utopian by setting it apart from the contaminated, dissolute urban, a deconstructivist reading would be appropriate, for the encroaching civilization changes the rural, even as it holds up a mirror to define itself against urbanity. However, following Alpers’s reasoning that the pastoral actually concerns the lives of shepherds – or their representative anecdote in other times and cultures – we find that duality

of landscapes –urban and rural – is necessary for shepherds’ daily lives. So, in its most raw form, the representative anecdote we see in a classical pastoral shepherd can be described as someone whose roots are rural but is torn by “‘a double longing after innocence and happiness’; that is based on the philosophical antithesis in Art and nature; that its universal idea is the Golden Age” (Alpers 10-11).

The longing for a “Golden Age” contributes to the development of the English landscape park, since the British park’s genealogy begins with Italian literary ancestry through the lines of Virgil’s pastorals, but also through the landscape design of the actual grounds, as British aesthetic tastes in landscape architecture were influenced by Italian and French<sup>2</sup> designs. The genesis of literary treatments of garden design can be traced as far back as classical aesthetics in the letters of Pliny, which lay a foundation for later developments in landscape taste, including flaunting conspicuous consumption, introducing picturesque peasantry into the actual and represented picture, balancing between order and chaos (a balance which later translates into an element in defining the sublime and the beautiful), but his most important contribution is acknowledging Foucauldian control over the viewer’s gaze, which undergirds later theories on the sublime and beautiful.

Pliny effortlessly combines these fundamentals of landscape design and theory in his letters to Gallus describing his Laurentine villa and to Fuscus and Domitus Apollinaris describing his Tuscan villa, and the rudiments of picturesque design and eighteenth-century landscape theory can be teased from Pliny’s assertions of what makes the villas aesthetically pleasing. Foremost, Pliny assumes the wealth of the landowner, since his estates (*plural*) are expansive and populated by numerous servants, and Pliny lingers on the description of how he summons and uses his “secretary” to address the thoughts he has conjured through leisurely seclusion: “I then call my secretary, and, opening the shutters, dictate to him what I have put into shape, after which I dismiss him, then call him in again, and again dismiss him” (86). This opening foray into attributing his increased

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<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the French landscapes were themselves derivatives of Italian influences.

efficiency to the supreme location of the villa assigns Pliny the classic role of Hegelian master in the master-slave dialectic, and he emphasizes his role through the capricious reversal of orders, summoning the secretary to and fro, that demonstrates to Fuscus his complete command of his servants. Thus, the basic assumption is that landscape aesthetics exclude the lower classes because they are part of the landscape, not observers of the landscape, which implies Foucauldian classifications of viewing subjects and viewed objects, a pairing which collapses itself as neatly as the Hegelian dialectic.

According to Michel Foucault, “visibility is a trap” (200), which exposes the viewed to the domination of the viewer, whose power “is manifested only by its gaze” (188) and which has become institutionalized into a “carceral continuum” of oversight systems. For Foucault, viewing is control because the viewer, or subject, collects knowledge of the viewed object, and knowledge leads to dominance. Foucault quotes Jacques Antoine Hippolyte de Guibert, saying, “‘Discipline must be made national’” (169) in his description of military subjugation of soldiers into docile bodies. The statement extends to the carceral continuum of domination through landscape, as architectural systems regulated movement under the watchful eye of estate owners. The impulse to create landscape “prospects” in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, then, becomes the desire to control the landscape; however, the constructed prospect implies that the view itself has been arranged, limited, and often truncated to filter the subject’s access to objects.

Pliny offers examples of the collapse of viewing subjects and objects when he describes the ‘prospects’ from various parts of his estate. He says of the approach to the Tuscan villa, “My house, although at the foot of a hill, commands as good a view as if it stood on its brow, yet you approach by so gentle and gradual a rise that you find yourself on high ground without perceiving you have been making an ascent” (44). Eighteenth-century landscape architects avoided this placement for a house (backed against a hill), and Pliny himself apologizes for it, but the description acts as a

forerunner of the preference for serpentine drives that lead to the sudden appearance of the actual manor, and the passage introduces the master's seeing and being seen, as Pliny places himself – the landowner – within the house itself in the rest of his descriptions. Pliny described his view of visitors' approach to his manor among other of the views of his estate, just as later landscape architects designed the prospect, or point from which the viewer surveyed the land, with the intent of recreating the view they themselves enjoyed and directing the viewer's eye toward a prescribed image of the land. Through controlling the view or image, architects constructed not only the actual landscape but also the viewer's response to it, much as a photographer frames an image through a camera lens to exclude what he considers extraneous, thus abrogating the viewer's autonomy in seeing. This approach to Pliny's home demonstrates how the designer, who keeps the visitor unaware of the intentional design until he reaches the house, controls the visitor's advance and realization of its elevation. This controlled access satisfies a voyeuristic desire in the viewer as he can watch his visitor react first with surprise at the sudden appearance of the estate and then with understanding that the surprise was intentional and part of the artifice of the landscape experience. However, this panoptical design leaves the landowner exposed himself, just as the views from its windows reveal the gardens but also leave the viewer vulnerable to the gaze of those below:

Facing the alcove (and reflecting upon it as great an ornament as it borrows from it) stands a summer-house of exquisite marble, the doors of which project and open into a green enclosure, while from its upper and lower windows the eye falls upon a variety of different greens (LII 46).

The terms collapse because the viewer is also viewed, and the act of viewing exposes him to the gaze of others.

## Moving the Sublime from Rhetoric to Real Estate

Besides pastoral, the other major classical influence on eighteenth-century British landscape is Longinus's *On the Sublime*, a treatise that launched hundreds of responses centuries after it was penned, despite its sketchy printing history. Speculated to have been written somewhere between the first and third century, *Sublime* was not published in modern Europe until 1544 by two printers, one of which, Manutius, also published *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, which influenced eighteenth-century landscape design aesthetics, although in the contradictory direction of French formalism. The number of works that alluded to Longinus exploded in the eighteenth century, as literary culture reflected on Greek and Roman influences while simultaneously exploring scientific taxonomic classifications for human experience.

Longinus's *Sublime* intends to provide a structure for rhetoric based on five principles: grandeur, passion, figures of speech, diction, and structure, or as he phrased them, "grandeur of thought," "a vigorous and spirited treatment of the passions," "a certain artifice in the employment of figures, which are of two kinds, figures of thought and figures of speech," "dignified expression, which is sub-divided into (a) the proper choice of words, and (b) the use of metaphors and other ornaments of diction," "majesty and elevation of structure" (14).

It seems an unlikely genesis for landscape design, but the sublime's origin in rhetoric suggests an innate relationship between words and landscape. Early in the treatise, Longinus argues for an innate existence of rhetorical structures that govern human responses to writing:

It is a law of Nature that in all things there are certain constituent parts, coexistent with their substance. It necessarily follows, therefore, that one cause of sublimity is the choice of the most striking circumstances involved in whatever we are describing, and, further the power of afterwards combining them into one animate whole (17).

In addition to claiming that particular rhetorical structures naturally influence human imagination, Longinus suggests authors create a rhetorical *gestalt* through the combination of different sublime elements, an argument Edmund Burke revives in his reinterpretation of Longinus's sublime into landscape theory. Immanuel Kant's use of the sublime taxonomy differs from Longinus's in its philosophical stance. Translator John T. Goldthwait labels Kant's theoretical foundation for his *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* as different from the rationalism of the *Critiques* and sharing "with empiricism a concentration upon the particulars of experience and a use of the method of inductive generalization rather than deduction from first principles" (Kant 10). Goldthwait muddies this argument later with his acknowledgment that "The beautiful and the sublime are aesthetic categories, but since they (the sublime especially) can be attributes of human subjects and since the sensitivities toward them are human sensitivities, they can also be guides to conduct" (20). Because the sublime/beautiful aesthetic categories can be applied to human nature, and human response to the potentially sublime or beautiful objects classifies them according to feeling, taste, genius, or whatever term is used to describe the aesthetic faculty, the categories themselves collapse into relativism that cannot be broached by attempts to define a taxonomy based on innate qualities. Instead, the attempt to codify aesthetic response becomes at best nationalist and at worst imperialist in the sense that all persuasion is coercive<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Ernesto Laclau describes the forceful nature of persuasion by comparing persuasion to mathematical algorithms. For Laclau, knowledge is transferred by either persuasion or algorithms, with algorithmic transfer occurring through demonstration for which "there is no possible subjective variation" (97). Persuasion, however, requires "a plurality of arguments which do not coalesce into a single logical structure but which create the verisimilitude of the course of action suggested" (97). Persuasion requires force because in order to be persuaded, one must experience "that subjective moment of acquiescence" (97), and, therefore, "There is no such thing as a peaceful and unilinear accumulation of knowledge" (94). By prescribing aesthetic responses, Longinus and those who follow him attempt to recruit a community of "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson, 7) that is the foundation for national identity through establishing a community of shared aesthetics that are reified in landscape design.



Longinus also lays a foundation for later authors to expound on the connection between the rhetorical sublime and the visual sublime in his description of images as figures of speech. He writes:

The dignity, grandeur, and energy of a style largely depend on a proper employment of images, a term which I prefer to that usually given [‘fictions of imagination’]. The term image in its most general acceptation includes every thought, howsoever presented, which issues speech. But the term is now generally confined to those cases when he who is speaking, by reason of the rapt and excited state of his feelings, imagines himself to see what he is talking about, and produces a similar illusion in his hearers (21).

Here Longinus instructs the would-be author in generating imagery that affects readers by stirring the same passions the topic inspires in himself, claiming that the author must have a true passion of his topic in order to communicate it through sublime tropes to his reader and instill the same passion in them. Using the term “image” to express the necessity for an author’s conveyed passion connects the linguistic to the visual, and the idea of placing the reader in the author’s imagination suggests later attention to the landscape’s prospect.

Longinus’s goal of stirring mimetic passion coerces the reader, through the tropes of persuasion, and moves toward fostering a common national feeling or perspective. His goal is for writers to persuade readers to see with the writer’s eyes, and once readers have aligned themselves with the author, they connect to the extended “imaginary community” of other readers of the work, thus generating a national culture. Longinus’s essentialist stance also aligns him with the idea of the imagined community being “inherent,” a view of the sublime that Kant later complicates by labeling some people and nations sublime and beautiful.

As with many of the influences on British landscape design, the theory of the sublime initiated in classical texts appears next in French texts before adoption into English discourse. In 1674, Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux published his French translation of Longinus's *On the Sublime*, although he claims to have translated the work for his own instruction in rhetoric, not with the intention of publication, but as an afterthought on the publication of *L'Art Poétique* the same year because *L'Art* owed "several precepts" to *On the Sublime*.

The re-publication of Boileau's *Traité* within *Oeuvres de Boileau Despréaux*<sup>4</sup> in 1772 added critical commentary that demonstrates the impact of Boileau's translation on the theoretical community, including the growing English market for works on the sublime and aesthetic theory in general. Among the "different notes and reviews" several contributors, including François Silvain, Antoine Houdar de La Motte, Raimond de S. Mard, and le R.P. Caftel attempt to capture the complexity of the sublime in succinct definitions that express the difficulty in articulating all the connotations literature expects to communicate in the term. For example, de La Motte writes,

I know not whether the nature of the Sublime is still being clarified. It seems that so far, there have rather been provided examples rather than definitions. It is nonetheless important to fix the idea, because examples are only means of comparison, subject to thousands of errors, whereas definitions are judging things by unchanging principles, without the need of analogies which are always very imperfect. So I dare expose thereupon my guess, which can be useful when finding something to excite the false,

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<sup>4</sup> The full title of the 1772 publication is "Works of Boileau Despréaux with historical clarifications given by himself, and by M. Brossette, increased by several Pieces, both from Author, having contrast with the early works, with different notes and reviews."

& oppose the truth. I think the Sublime is nothing but truth & novelty, united in a great idea, expressed with elegance & precision.<sup>5</sup>

Despite Longinus's popularity in French, sublime theory in English experienced a decline between Manutius's publication of *On the Sublime* in 1544 and the eighteenth century; Lawrence Kerslake credits the British for the explosion of works on the sublime in the eighteenth century. John Dennis began the British resurgence of writings on the sublime when he referenced Longinus in *The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry* (1704) to support his argument that good writing requires passion, as found in Longinus's sublime rhetoric. In 1716, Richard Blakemore's *Essays Upon Several Subjects* maintains the classical essentialist foundation that objects are sublime (or not) by nature:

Thoughts are then sublime, when they are conceived in an extraordinary manner, and are elevated above obvious and familiar sentiments; and this sublimity of ideas imparts internal heat, vigour and majesty to the narration, as the judicious and happy choice of pure, proper and expressive words, and splendid and polite diction, give outward richness, elegance, and magnificence (Ashfield and de Bolla 41).

Blakemore privileges the process of sublime conception above sublime treatment, which Longinus promoted. For him, the rhetoric embellishes an already sublime subject, but he maintains that human shaping of an "idea" or "thought" endows sublimity, not attributing a sublime essence to any topic.

Although there were detractors of the sublime, like Tamworth Reresby (1721), who dismissed the sublime experience as "the simple effect of energy and number" (Ashfield and de Bolla 43), the movement gained momentum quickly, and in 1731, Thomas Stackhouse was among the first critics to transfer sublime rhetoric to other natural sublime experiences, which opened the opportunity for other writers to follow by assigning sublime and beautiful attributes to landscapes,

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<sup>5</sup> I have translated the quotations from Despréaux from French to English, as no English translation of the text is extant.

architecture, genders, and nationalities. Stackhouse writes in *Reflections on the Nature and Property of Language*, “As nothing is more grand and admirable than nature, that which imitates it perfectly, and presents us with lively and resemblant images, will always appear truly great and sublime...” (Ashfield and de Bolla 50). Stackhouse follows the deviation from associating the sublime with only rhetoric by listing the causes of the sublime in writing, a contradiction of the claim that sublime nature can be imitated by sublime art, for the artifice in intentional use of the “causes” of the sublime would not yield a “natural” expression in writing. Thus, Stackhouse more nearly approaches Edmund Burke’s understanding of the sublime experience as something dependent upon the viewer’s response, not innate to the object viewed.

Just four years later, Hidebrand Jacob published *The Works*, where he addressed “How the Mind is rais’d to the Sublime.” Jacob permits the reader who has not yet experienced the sublime “in poetry” or “in writing,” as Longinus described, to access the sublime experience through the “noble works of nature, and of art” (53) in order to develop a taste for recognizing it later in literature. He extends Stackhouse’s brief mention of sublime in nature to specific natural phenomena:

All the vast, and wonderful Scenes, either of Delight, or Horror, which the universe affords, have this Effect upon the Imagination, such as unbounded Prospects, particularly that of the Ocean, in its different Situations of Agitation, or Repose; the rising and setting Sun; the Solemnity of Moon Light; all the Phænomena in the Heavens, and the Objects of astronomy. We are moved in the same Manner by the View of dreadful Precipices; great Ruins; subterraneous Caverns, and the Operations of Nature in those dark Recesses. The like is often produced by that Greatness, which results from the Ornaments, and Magnificence of Architecture; the Sight of numerous Armies, and the Assemblies of People. We are no less inspir’d, if it may

be so call'd, by that kind of Ardour from the charms of Beauty, or the Resemblance of beautiful Persons, and Things in fine Statues, or Paintings (421-2).

Jacob's essay into sublime taxonomic classification foreshadows Burke's pseudo-psychological analysis of the sublime's affect on the human eye and sensory processing, and Jacob privileges the act of artifice in sublime construction as he titles the essay as pedagogy: "How the Mind is rais'd to the Sublime." Thus, the intent is to describe the psychological process that occurs when a viewer encounters a sublime scene, but also – like Longinus – to instruct authors on how to achieve the sublime effect in writing and in landscape.

For the purpose of examining Jacob's contribution to developing a sense of national community through landscape writing, we should give special note to his description of "the Sight of numerous Armies, and the Assemblies of People," which conjures the image of both overwhelming imperial conquerors and either the passive, conquered colony, or perhaps, of other national assemblies. The pairing of armies and assemblies could represent an image of submission in the face of insurmountable imperial power, or of armies returning to cheers from the thrones in their own nation. The images that follow, beautiful persons represented in statues and paintings, suggest an imperialist control of the conqueror's narrative; through monuments and visual representations, the colonizer represents the conquest in his own terms. Edward Said's seminal discourse on imperialist strategies describes the colonizer's impulse to project a filtered image of the act of dominating:

There is in all nationally defined cultures, I believe, an aspiration to sovereignty, to sway, and to dominance....Studies such as Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* have accentuated the extraordinary influence of today's anxieties and agendas on the pure (even purged)

images we construct of a privileged, genealogically useful past, a past in which we exclude unwanted elements, vestiges, narratives (15).

Said later describes the act of building a national identity: “Self-definition is one of the activities practiced by all cultures: it has a rhetoric, a set of occasions and authorities (national feasts, for example, times of crisis, founding fathers, basic texts, and so on), and a familiarity all its own” (37). Jacob’s classification of armies and assemblies as sublime spectacles generates British national identity through building a complex relationship between the theory of rhetorical sublime, landscape, and the imperialist impulse. Together, these components create a British national identity that is patriarchal, and entitled to colonize landscape beyond and within its borders by the *inherent* and *sovereign* nature of its sublime essence.

Sublime theory acts as an ideological framework for undergirding British national superiority and right to conquer, but it also provides a framework for the cultural constructs that support the nationalist operational ideology through the development of landscape as the “rhetoric, set of occasions and authorities” for oppression<sup>6</sup>. And while much of the rhetorical oppression of sublime writings takes aim at foreign or exotic cultures as a means of establishing a British aesthetic and identity, the rhetoric also oppresses the working and middle classes who remain pointedly excluded from participation in the aesthetic perspective.

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<sup>6</sup> A lucid example of this is the cultural phenomenon of the Byronic spectacle. James Kirwan notes, “it was the figure rather than the work of Byron that was Byronic” (120); however, the figure and the work are at times difficult to tease apart, particularly in *Childe Harold* and *Manfred*. Kirwan surely bases his assertion on the autobiographical influences on these works, but it is part of the national imagination (in Benedict Anderson’s terms) to conflate the two into a representative British image, and that iconic emblem is a British expression of the sublime, embodied in the persona of Byron and the Byronic landscape. Just as Byron defined and was defined by the figure he created of the Byronic hero, sublime theory contributed to the development of a national character while also generating opportunities for reinforcing that character.

The cultural constructs of the British nationalist sublime include gendering the landscape, and Ashfield and de Bolla's introduction to the "Rhapsody and Rhetoric" division of their history of the sublime describes the evolution of sublime theory into gendered spheres, the masculine sublime and the feminine beautiful:

Finally, although moral sense theory stressed the Platonic concepts of beauty, order and decency above the vast, grand and novel, the empirical analysis of passion into two distinct and gender-based forms brought sublime, 'masculine' virtues into play, leading to the further offshoot of gender-based 'aesthetic' passions developed out of the identification of moral powers with the imagination. Thus we find initial emphasis on beauty, decency and order being displaced by the emergence of 'masculine' qualities such as the vast and magnificent (61).

This displacement is critical to the further evolution of the sublime into defining national sentiment and identity, especially as demonstrated by the end of the century by Immanuel Kant. Heretofore, the sublime, as Longinus defined it, existed as a category unto itself, without a binary; however, the expansion of the theory to include greater aesthetic categories and extend beyond rhetoric into visual prospects opened the opportunity to expand the canon of examples and analogies (criticized by French writers as insufficient definitions) into counter-examples, which in turn led to the necessity for an analogous term for the competing category. Ashfield and de Bolla credit Joseph Addison with moving sublime theory out of the realm of the absolute (language is, or is not, sublime) into a binary relationship with the beautiful, and thus potentially measurable by degrees on a continuum between the two.

Ashfield and de Bolla reference Addison's entry in *The Spectator* on June 23, 1712, as emblematic of the development of bifurcated aesthetic theory; however, they do not address an

important lacuna in the article: Addison describes many aspects of the sublime experience, but he never uses the term ‘sublime.’ Addison begins: “I shall first consider those pleasures of the imagination, which arise from the actually view and survey of outward objects: and these, I think, all proceed from the sight of what is *great, uncommon, or beautiful*” (62). As Addison unravels the aesthetic connotations of these three terms, he maintains three separate categories, with greatness including objects not just of bulk, but those spectacles which consume the entire viewable prospect or would fill a viewer’s vision and which generate in the viewer a sense of “astonishment” or a “delightful stillness and amazement” (62). The uncommon “fills the soul with an agreeable surprise” and “gratifies its curiosity” (63) as the continual change in scene provided by the moving water of a waterfall or fast-moving stream, or the sudden appearance of spring buds at the change of seasons. Addison credits the beautiful for the most direct access to the human soul and for diffusing “joy,” “cheerfulness,” and “delight,” primarily through an intensity of color and stimulation through sounds such as the songs of birds and smells, “fragrancy” and “perfumes” (63).

Although Addison’s three categories deviate slightly from the standardization into two, they are easily collapsed into two, as the great and uncommon become criteria of the sublime, but his division of aesthetic groupings beyond the single sublime is not his only contribution to developing a uniquely British philosophy of the visual. Addison also resolutely removes the idea of the sublime (if not the sublime in name) from application solely to rhetoric and applies the idea along with the beautiful to any pleasurable experience. In addition to “rocks,” “precipices,” “mountains,” “the ocean,” and “clouds,” Addison describes many other “landskip” features. Translating rhetorical theory into aesthetic theory and into the sub-category of landscape aesthetics contributes to a national artistic culture, in part, because of Anderson’s concept of the “community” of readers, but also because that community already shared an understanding of, and visual image of, British landscape. When Addison writes of natural landscape features, his readership must conjure the same images of



England. Sure, many of *The Spectator*'s readers had access to images of other landscapes, but the images that built the community of readers were those they shared of British landscapes and natural features.

To further a distinction between British aesthetics and other nations,' Addison continues the discussion over several days in *The Spectator*, emphasizing the difference between British sensibilities and others' in an exercise that solidifies British identity through its singularity. For example, Addison describes the Great Wall of China and Egyptian pyramids before quoting from Roland Fréart de Chambray's *A Parallel of the Ancient Architecture with the Modern* (1650). The Fréart passage describes two styles of architecture, one "great and magnificent" and the other "poor and trifling" (June 26, 71) which demonstrates the difference between the French and English categories. Addison's secondary category, the beautiful, is more obliquely low in his heuristic, than Fréart's "poor and trifling" is in the French example; however, the introduction of diverse examples of worthy landscape features demonstrates Addison's English preoccupation with self (Britain) and other nations.

France has historically acted as the "other" for British self-identification, perhaps in part because of its geographic proximity, in addition to long political competition, but Addison also suggested the differences in French and English languages were indicative of cultural characteristics. In *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*, Michéle Cohen credits Addison with developing national identity through gendering French language as feminine as opposed to masculine British. The gendered assignment of languages aligns with the gendering of sublime and beautiful aesthetics and in developing British sensibilities as separate and superior to other nations', particularly French. Addison's quotations from Fréart de Chambray take on an imperialist overtone when we consider that Addison provides them in English translation in *The Spectator*, an act that, in addition to eliminating the reader's access to the original 1650 text and

assuming authorial authority in providing an interpretation of the text, also colonizes the original text into something new and British. This is, again, the colonial act of subsuming another culture, in which British culture adopts something foreign or exotic with a token acknowledgement of its source, while also integrating it into something novel and English. Homi Bhabha identifies the colonial process as one that “undermines our sense of the homogenizing effects of cultural symbols and icons” (35). The process requires “iteration and alterity” (29), but it also requires subtlety to avoid cueing resistance. It would be difficult to argue that the translation is purely for the benefit of readers’ convenience, since Numbers 412 and 414, published within days of the French quotation, include untranslated Latin quotations. Instead, Addison develops his reading community as an educated group who can read the Latin without his assistance, but for whom he prefers to control the access to French philosophy; therefore, the established British identity is allied with classical Italian roots and diverges from French thought.

Addison had already launched an effort to differentiate the English and French culture earlier in *The Spectator* Number 135, when he wrote “The English delight in silence more than any other *European* nation, if the Remarks made on us by Foreigners are true” (1747, 310). Cohen cites Addison as a contributor in gendering the English language as masculine, opposed to a feminized French. Cohen attributes British taciturnity to the Grand Tour as an educational institution, coupled with the limited number of schools available to English boys; governesses, of course, usually schooled girls at home. The concentration of English education into four schools – “Eton, Westminster, Winchester, and Harrow” (101) – generated a common experience: learning Latin. For boys of the better classes, the ability to read Latin, thus, became a mark of manhood, while girls learned French from their governesses and tutors because the similarly syntactic language could be learned through imitation more easily than the inflected Latin. Therefore, Addison neglects translating the Latin passages while providing French translations in order to emphasize the

masculine elements of English and the British sublime and to rally his audience of educated white men. Samuel Johnson's 1755 entry in his *Dictionary of the English Language* supports the argument that the British consciously subsidized the sublime from the French: "'The grand or lofty stile. *The sublime* is a Gallicism, but now naturalized" (Ashfield and de Bolla, 111). Johnson completes the naturalization himself by removing the reference to sublime's Gallic genealogy from the 1766 edition of the *Dictionary*.

John Baillie, whom Ashfield and de Bolla consider a precursor to Burke's "study of psychology within the sublime tradition" (61), makes the next movement toward the culminating works on the sublime of Burke and Kant. Baillie allies himself with the established Longinian tradition and its followers, but immediately takes the path of applying the sublime to the more general realm of aesthetic theory, without limiting it to rhetoric. Baillie also supports an assertion made by Addison, that God, or a supreme being, qualifies as sublime, although Addison relegated God to his own category, and Baillie merely cites God as an example of the sublime which draws its impact from vastness, immensity, and power. Baillie also considers the essentialist conundrum, questioning whether the sublime is an unchanging phenomenon or an experience that differs with each viewer. He writes,

Such affections, then, or passions, as produce in the person who contemplates them an exalted and sublime disposition, can alone with propriety be called sublime: but affections which are only felt by him in whose breast they are, can never be the immediate object of another's knowledge; and when we contemplate passions out of ourselves, we know them only at a kind of second hand (Ashfield and de Bolla 93).

Baillie wants to reconcile the problem of the sublime experience's relativity, as he admits we can never know the exact effect any stimulus has on another person, and the impulse to use the sublime

to establish national identity heightens this challenge. As the sublime becomes nationalized, it is no longer a standard human experience, but dependent upon cultural variables, and because of the relativity that Baillie privileges here, he redoubles his efforts to provide a guide for his reading community to classify the sublime, and therefore to coalesce as a national, “limited” community/nation. In other words, if the sublime experience is relative, it is even more critical that the British sublime experience be solidly defined. Baillie does just that (although not with the depth or specificity accomplished by Edmund Burke) when he provides ample illustrations of the sublime in nature and society, and when he limits the sublime to what can be seen and heard, saying that “Taste, smell, nor touch convey nothing that is great or exalted” (100), which supports Addison’s assertion on “fragrancy.”

Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1757) marks a British apotheosis of sublime aesthetic theory that was possible through Addison, Baillie, Stackhouse, Dennis, and Jacob. Adam Phillips names Addison as an influence on Burke’s through Burke’s reading of Addison’s 1744 *Spectator* series on the sublime, which Phillips describes as having reached “something of a cult status among the literary” (x) by the 1750s. Adams credits Burke for linking “the experience of certain kinds of ‘great’ literature with the experience of that other recently fashionable eighteenth-century pleasure, the natural landscape” (x-xi); however, his sound and useful introduction neglects to extend the link further by attributing the desire to combine sublime theory and landscape aesthetics to a nationalist impulse, a connection that seems natural considering the remaining rich body of Burke’s writing.

In addition to Burke’s corpus of revolutionary political writings, his own nationality complicates interpretation of his imperialist overtones and contributions toward building an English and/or British national identity. Born to Irish parents – his mother Catholic, his father Protestant – Burke later aligned himself with England more than Ireland through membership in the House of

Commons and life in London and his estate at Beaconsfield. John C. Weston speculates that Burke spent time between 1761 and 1763 – just four years after the initial publication of *Enquiry*, and two years after the publication of its second edition – penning the beginnings of a history of Ireland that would act as analogue to his earlier *Essay towards the Abridgement of the English History*. Weston bases his assertion of the “possibility, perhaps a probability” (397) on Burke’s correspondence with members of the Catholic Association of Ireland, whose mission he describes as “to show the ancient history of Ireland, particularly its learning and high culture, and thus to refute the claims of English historians such as Hume that the native Irish had always been savages” (398). Weston argues that Burke’s consideration of an Irish history in 1761 marks his move “from a man of letters to a politician...reflected in his abandoning the Irish history for political writings on Ireland which were to use some historical material,” (403) which obscures the idea that Burke’s earlier philosophical and historical works as a “man of letters” were infused with political ideology also. Such was certainly the case with *Enquiry*. Burke’s own biographical influences pressed him to develop a sublime national sensibility that was British, not merely English.

Critics have addressed Burke’s nationalist tendencies primarily through the obvious *Reflections on the Revolution in France* and other overtly political writings, but his aesthetic treatise establishes many of the same imperialist and sovereign themes that appear in the later works. Burke’s politicized sublime is colonially British, Christian, masculine, white, and taciturn. Although Burke ostensibly posits the sublime and the beautiful as equivalent categories, he clearly privileges the sublime, primarily through introducing its description first and distinguishing the beautiful through contrast to it. Establishing the sublime as the aesthetic category against which all else is measured immediately suggests its supremacy, Burke grounds descriptions in sometimes subtle, sometimes overt, connections to the English landscape, making England the exemplum of sublime nationality. For example, in the first paragraph of his “Introduction on Taste,” Burke establishes a

monolithic culture – “...it is probable that the standard both of reason and Taste is the same in all human creatures” (11) – in a sense, colonizing all aesthetics into British standards. His latitudinal bias evidences itself later, when he writes, “Light is more pleasing than darkness. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are serene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when every thing makes a different appearance” (15). A self-consciously psychological work, *Enquiry* makes many claims about human reactions to various stimuli; however, the expectation that all nations receive summer and winter weather the same assumes an earth with identical climates throughout the latitudes, in addition to assuming that all nations of people prefer the same weather. Burke fails to consider climates where summer is unbearable and winter provides relief.

Burke later sums up his exposition on the beautiful by succinctly stating the differences between it and the sublime:

There is a wide difference between admiration and love. The sublime, which is the cause of the former, always dwells on great objects, and the terrible; the latter on small ones, and pleasing; we submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us; in one case we are forced, in the other we are flattered into compliance (103).

If a reader, then, wishes to align herself with the sublime or the beautiful, her choice is using force or being forced, and the former is ultimately more appealing. The imperialist impulse aligns easily into the sublime as an act of forcing the small to submit. Burke’s description of one aspect of the sublime, the “difficult,” reinforces the image of an innately sublime British imperial nation:

Stonehenge, neither for disposition nor ornament, has any thing admirable; but those huge rude masses of stone, set on end, and piled each on other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work. Nay the rudeness of the work increases

this cause of grandeur, as it excludes the idea of art, and contrivance; for dexterity produces another sort of effect which is different enough from this (71).

Burke uses Stonehenge to demonstrate the respect commanded by a visual spectacle by the immense work implied in its construction, yet choosing Stonehenge as the example implies a British architectural history tied to the colonnades. Burke also describes them as sublime by their impression of infinity, and thus, the classical architectural sublimity of Greece and Rome is the genealogical ancestor of British national sublimity, a birthright deserved by the English.

Burke also aligns British nationality with sublime descriptions by criticizing other nations' governmental structures, an act which generates alterity, for although Burke does not cite British governmental structures as norms, he does disparage other nations' political acts, and suggests that they commit violence beyond the tolerance of British sensibilities. Therefore, the implied standard is British rationality, as compared to surrounding savagery.

When Burke addresses the effect of obscurity on the sublime experience, he again critiques other governments:

Those despotic governments, which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose too the druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening or of setting terrible things,

if I may use the expression, in their strongest light by the force of a judicious  
obscurity, than Milton (54-5).

Here, Burke hints at the later-defined sublimity of God, but more important, he attributes much of the sublimity of religion to human staging, reserving the superlative for Milton, English literature, and Christianity. Burke commits to an evolution of religion, one that moved from heathen druidism in the depth of the dark forest to Christian “judicial” use of obscurity to heighten passion, with an emphasis on rational and controlled use of elements that stir powerful emotions. Through the evolution of passions into controlled use, the British emerge superior to contemporary Americans with “barbarous temples.”

The final component of Burke’s British nationalism is a preference for solitude, and thus, a reputation for taciturnity. Burke argues for occasional respite from society, saying,

Good company, lively conversations, and the endearments of friendship, fill the mind with great pleasure; a temporary solitude on the other hand, is itself agreeable. This may prove, that we are creatures designed for contemplation as well as action; since solitude as well as society has its pleasures; as from the former observation we may discern, that an entire life of solitude contradicts the purposes of our being, since death itself is scarcely an idea of more terror (40).

Burke does not promote isolation, but he does consider lone “contemplation” a relief from too much lively society, a stance that supports Michèle Cohen’s categories of language as masculinized English and feminized French. In addition to the masculinizing influence of boys’ grammar schools, which associated boys with manly Latin while girls learned prissy French from their governesses, Cohen cites loquacity as a trait assigned to the French and to women. She writes, “taciturnity had also been considered a problem, But, though it was one associated with the English national character,



it was English *men*, not women, that were said to be taciturn” (104). She references Addison again, writing that “because the English language was ‘abounding in Monosyllables’, that it was perfectly suited not only to speakers wishing to utter their thoughts frugally, but to the taciturn English character. ‘Loquacity’ was the ‘enemy’” (35). The English national character for Burke is one that enjoys solitude and, as Cohen phrases it, spends *its* words “frugally.”

When Burke made his *Enquiry* into the sublime and beautiful, he moved England from the ranks of followers of landscape fashion into a much smaller group of fashion innovators. Burke expanded the Longinian tradition of sublime so far as to become a new category of aesthetic, not bound by the limits of rhetorical description. By clarifying the “beautiful” as an analog of the sublime, Burke created the opportunity for the multitude of landscape architects to develop their own recipes for mixing the two elements. The continental tradition of compartments, knots, and symmetry became the “other” that British landscape aesthetics could work against, while occasionally subsuming and morphing key elements. The convergence of Burke’s sublime theory with the traditional continental styles of Colonna and de’Crescenzi allowed for the possibility of the writings of John Evelyn, William Gilpin, Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, William Chambers, Richard Payne Knight, Uvedale Price, Humphrey Repton, and their influence on novelists such as Jane Austen.

## Chapter 2

### **Establishing Autonomy: Development of a Distinctly British Landscape Aesthetic**

As Edmund Burke contributed to British landscape aesthetics through his elaboration of Longinus's theory of the sublime, he also participated in landscape fashion by adopting for his own Beaconsfield estate the mode of design he helped popularize, and he demonstrates malleability of the national character that began to morph at the same time that it was being constructed. Burke's entry into land ownership demonstrates class mobility as a national characteristic, and mobility as possible through acquisition of estate and the estate park. While Burke's class mobility demonstrates one sort of permeability of the previous wall that excluded many from national identity, the key concept in national identity in the second half of the eighteenth century was permeability itself. Formerly, inclusion in national identity primarily required innate and immutable characteristics such as maleness, whiteness, and inherited membership in the leisure class<sup>7</sup>; however, landscape writings reflect a change toward determining national inclusion based on acquired attributes such as taste, rationality, and education. As both of these attributes are often associated with class distinctions, using a Marxist lens clarifies the source of class anxieties and their contributions to the shifts in landscape design. The evolution that embraced the middle class into British national identity appears throughout the eighteenth century in the writings of landscape architects and their critics, and the literary realization of the inclusion of the middle class by Jane Austen at the end of the century marks the shift.

Burke published his *Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* in 1757, and he did not purchase his estate at Beaconsfield until 1768, but his longing for the legitimacy

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<sup>7</sup> Religion remained a characteristic of national identity, and for the most part, it was not an inherited trait, although the tendency toward Protestantism was certainly conveyed from one generation to the next.

of British land ownership established through owning an estate pre-dated both. Biographer Elizabeth R. Lambert writes,

In essence, Burke's desire to become a property owner was influenced and honed by his childhood experiences in Ireland. Natural enough. However, the magnitude of his Beaconsfield purchase, the financial measures he went through to buy it, and his ultimate decision to risk all for this property, alert us to the fact that, for Burke, the Beaconsfield estate was much more than a piece of excellent real estate (45).

Lambert identifies in Burke a growing sense of commodity fetishism focused on the landscape that increased throughout the eighteenth century, and which was evident in the works of other writers on landscape and the British picturesque. At the same time Burke himself composed landscape and aesthetic theory that established a narrow vision of British national character, he also deconstructed that narrow vision through his own response to the Beaconsfield estate, as an example of national identity that expanded eventually to include the middle class. This double standard mirrors Rachel Crawford's description of Humphrey Repton, who she says, "championed social distinctions while simultaneously producing innovations in garden design adaptable to the restricted prospects of ordinary people" (19).

Burke was a member of the class of ordinary people when he purchased Beaconsfield, and his lust to become landed gentry was compromised with a little self-loathing, which is demonstrated in his hesitation to claim Beaconsfield's greatness to certain acquaintances. Lambert cites Burke's correspondence with his friend Richard Shackleton as evidence that Burke was ashamed of the extravagant purchase and perhaps of the favors he depended upon to purchase it: "I have purchased a house, with an Estate of about 600 acres of Land in Buckinghamshire 24 Miles from London; where I now am; It is a place exceedingly pleasant; and I propose, God willing, to become a farmer

in good earnest” (60). Burke mitigates the extravagance of the 600 acres by his plan to become a farmer; however, suspicions of corruption haunted the acquisition, as Burke did not have the £20,000 to buy the estate on his own. He received loans from friends and acquaintances to buy the home, and the mortgage was barely reduced by the time of his death. His wife kept the estate until she could no longer afford it, but she did sell it for £38,500. Burke’s commitment to retain land he could not truly afford supports the claim that he had fetishized the land, or imbued it with abstract qualities extending far beyond its actual physical aspects. Burke’s purchase, stay, and death at Gregories demonstrate the permeability of class distinctions if they are at least partially defined through estate ownership. His middle class, Irish heritage would not have predicted his entry into the landed gentry. Despite Burke’s friendship with landscape progressive Whately, the estate design suggests an allegiance to the formal continental landscape fashions Burke tried to mitigate in his commitment to agrarian efficiency. His dedication to utility illustrates the emergence of a line of British landscape theorists and architects that started with John Evelyn and full emerged with “Capability” Brown.

Lancelot “Capability” Brown’s respect for naturally occurring features of the land and his rejection of French formal garden design marks the British division from continental landscape style, but Brown was not the first British landscaper to promote a more utilitarian use of the land. John Evelyn’s *Sylva* in 1664 advocated practical use of land for a nationalist cause, supporting the British navy. *Sylva* was written and presented in 1662 to the Royal Society<sup>8</sup>, of which Evelyn was a member, and although its initial intended audience was not the general public, its popularity upon publication commanded four editions by 1706, of which the final edition expanded to include writings of interest to a wider readership.

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<sup>8</sup> The Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge.

While his *Sylva* delineates appropriate planting and care of a great variety of trees, Evelyn starts his argument for reforestation by blaming the previous political administration for deforestation at the time of his writing:

But what shall I then say of our late prodigious Spoilers, whose furious devastation of so many goodly Woods and Forests have left an infamy on their Names and Memories not quickly forgotten! I mean our unhappy Usurpers, and injurious Sequestrators; Not here to mention the deplorable necessities of a Gallant and Loyal Gentry, who for their Compositions were (many of them) compell'd to add yet to this Waste, by an inhumane and unparallel'd Tyranny over them, to preserve the poor remainder of their Fortunes, and to find them Bread (356).

Evelyn's call to preserve English forests shows both a nationalist fervor and a proto-environmentalist zeal. His diction regarding destruction of the woods ("unhappy Usurpers," "injurious," "deplorable," "inhumane and unparallel'd Tyranny") reveals more vehemence than his desire to protect a national resource warrants. We should note that he does not fault the "Loyal Gentry" who were forced to cooperate with Cromwell's administration in order to survive. Evelyn's sense of *noblesse oblige* requires greater responsibility for protecting natural resources fall on the wealthy, and in this case, the head of state, yet he holds all classes accountable for conservation. Each edition of *Sylva* included radical changes, yet it was not until the fourth edition in 1706 that Evelyn chose to make the work more accessible to a less educated audience, although "Foresters and Wood-men" (as that edition addresses them) seem to be the very sort of audience necessary to make his plan work. While it is true that a major thrust of his work was to prevent a capitalist wholesale by the landed gentry of their timber, merely for profit and without regard for the rate of deforestation or the time necessary

for re-growth, the work also criticized timber poachers, poor who slunk onto the land of the wealthy to cut and collect wood for heating their homes and cooking.<sup>9</sup>

Just as the elements of parks act as sliding signifiers of wealth and taste, the etymology of the term park itself follows Veblen's pattern of pecuniary emulation, or the chase of imitation by lower classes. Originally *parc*, the Germanic term signified "An enclosed tract of land held by royal grant or prescription and reserved for keeping and hunting deer and other game" (*OED*), and around 1200 usually described the grounds of the king or other royalty. By the mid-1300s, the spelling had changed to our current *park*, and the use had broadened: "Any large enclosed piece of ground, usually comprising woodland and pasture, attached to or surrounding a manor, castle, country house, etc., and used for recreation, and often for keeping deer, cattle, or sheep" (*OED*). The use of the term to name an estate (such as Jane Austen's Mansfield Park) evolved around 1750, and around a hundred years later the appellation was added to the names of suburbs such as Tufnell-park and Asbury Park. It was during this century, also, that the term became used for public areas of recreation:

A large public garden or area of land used for recreation. Formerly also the Park n. any of the London parks where it was fashionable to promenade, esp. (in the 17th cent.) St James's Park and (later) Hyde Park (*obs.*). This use had its origin in the trend for some of the enclosed royal parks (e.g., St James's) to develop into ornamental grounds to which the public were admitted (*OED*).

The etymology reflects the trickle down of park access from the king, to nobility to landed gentry to the general public who could visit national parks.

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<sup>9</sup>Wordsworth addresses this cause in "Goody Blake and Harry Gill" (1798), although Wordsworth falls on the opposite side of Evelyn's argument by supporting Goody Blake's need to collect firewood after a storm has blown dead branches to the ground.

Evelyn also praises Wotton's location, being twenty miles from London, but feeling much more removed. Edmund Burke's Gregories also claimed a prestigious location about twenty miles from London, and the convenience of access to town is not the only advantage of the slight remove. Both writers' veneration for land that provides proximity and isolation aligns with Paul Alpers's understanding of the representative anecdote for pastoral shepherd. Despite a desire to participate in the urban culture of wealth and conspicuous consumption of the city, they also are drawn toward the precepts of simplicity, utility, and agricultural redemption, just as Evelyn's Adam and Eve draw redemption from agricultural labor in exile. As pastoral representative anecdotes, Burke and Evelyn demand that our attention be on their lives in transit and the movement between city and country, a movement which manifests itself in the private estate park, which they both promote as ideally situated near, but not in, London. Both also demonstrate the increasing permeability of national identity as the image of the country estate and its gentry owners expanded to include their urban concerns.

The park at Blenheim designed by Sir John Vanbrugh and completed later by "Capability" Brown fits the sliding definition that moves from addressing royal grounds to signifying noble grounds. Blenheim was a gift from Britain to Sir John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, in gratitude for his victory at Blindheim, Bavaria, in August 1704 in the War of the Spanish Succession. Parliament ratified the grant of the estate at Woodstock from Queen Anne to Churchill, making the offering of this gift a matter of national pride. The British considered Marlborough a national hero, and affirmation of British superiority merited the generous gift, but Blenheim failed as an emblem of British national superiority in its excesses and debt, although it succeeded through rallying popular opinion against such excesses, which further developed rationality and conservation as British national traits, and the reaction against Blenheim's national excesses demonstrates a turning tide of

attitudes toward wealth and extravagance – and therefore a patriarchal leisure class – as emblems of British values.

Blenheim was Brown's best known landscape, showcasing his signature design of a bare lawn dotted with "clumps" of trees. Evelyn's exhortation to protect timber was well known and long-lasting, and may have influenced Brown's clumps of trees. Although Brown was prone to sweeping elimination of many landscape elements in creating swaths of open grounds, he peppered them with clumps and often extended his vistas from the manor to bordering forests. Evelyn had suggested "'bringing the park to comprehend the house [by] planning avenues [of trees] on its east and west axes'" (Hunt and Willis 155), but Brown's greatest contribution to creating a recognizably English landscape was eliminating the axial symmetry typical of French and Italian designs in favor of a more "natural" design that better consulted the "genius of the place," as Alexander Pope famously advocated in 1731. As Brown cleared the land of continental structure and ornamentation, his redefined "natural" itself became a term loaded with ideological connotations.

The concept of a more natural landscape aesthetic was not new to the eighteenth century – in fact, almost every landscape design claims some connection to the natural world, no matter its degree of artifice – but the manipulation of the term 'natural' at the height of British landscape fanaticism in the eighteenth century demonstrates an allegiance to defining national identity through an innate – natural – order of class distinction. Simon Pugh uses Theodore Adorno's Marxist theoretical foundations to unpack the use of the term "natural" to describe eighteenth-century landscapes, saying,

The 'natural' is the cultural meaning read into nature, meaning determined by those with the power and the money to use nature instrumentally, as a disguise, as a subterfuge, as a pretence that things were always thus, unchangeable and inevitable, which they never were. Adorno argues that whatever the bourgeois delusively define



as nature is merely the scar of social mutilation, and what passes for nature in ‘civilisation’ is furthest of all from nature (2).

Thus, for Pugh, labeling Brown’s landscapes as natural conceals the immense amount of labor required to create such a view. Instead of becoming more natural, Brownian landscapes demand disguise of what William Gilpin would later call “the affairs of the plough, and the spade” (Colbert, 298). To extend Pugh’s use of Adorno, we might also consider that rendering a landscape “natural” suggests that nature controls the land’s appearance, when crediting nature for the view truly acknowledges man’s (the owner’s) control of nature through ‘allowing’ or ‘preserving’ the natural view. Creating a ‘natural’ landscape privileges man above nature because man is capable of using or discarding natural elements in the landscape.

Vanbrugh’s and Brown’s talents combined on another iconic landscape – Stowe. John Dixon Hunt labels Stowe’s gardens “the most famous of all eighteenth-century landscapes” (1982, 1), and their fame can be attributed to their notable designers, their beauty, and their literary impact. Pope’s call to design landscapes that conform to the “genius of the place” refers to Stowe gardens’ alignment with the natural elements of the landscape, and James Thomson’s popular poem *The Seasons* praises Stowe as exemplary. Brown assumed responsibility for the grounds from Vanbrugh in 1741 and for ten years shaped them into his typical rolling greens surrounded by forests and dotted with clumps of trees. Stowe represents Brown’s zenith, as it popularized and legitimized his style as representative of British aesthetic taste. To solidify Stowe’s representation of English achievement, the landscape included a Temple of Worthies which housed sixteen busts of notable Britons.

Gilbert West addressed his poem “Stowe, The Gardens of the Right Honourable Richard Viscount Cobham” to Pope, and references Pope’s epistle to the Earl of Burlington concerning Stowe, West opens with a justification of expanding upon Pope’s initial praise for the estate. He humbly

apologizes for addressing the same topic of the greater poet, but argues that their muse is the same, despite Pope's superiority. West also asserts that the muse that inspires poets is the same muse that inspires landscapers, suggesting that landscaping and gardening deserve the same respect as artistic domains, which in turn implies British aesthetic superiority through its landscape achievements. West writes, "All great, all perfect Works from Genius flow, The British *Iliad* hence, and hence the Groves of Stowe" (Hunt, *The English Landscape Garden*, 2). With these lines, West acknowledges the greatness of Pope's translation of the *Iliad* into English, but also draws a comparison between literature and landscape that suggests the achievement of British landscaping, as witnessed in Stowe, is epic and unsurpassed, while also aligning British superiority with classical heritage. Just as the *Iliad* stands as the great work of classical Rome, Stowe will be the apotheosis of landscape design.

West and Pope's praise of Stowe's innovative style and its aesthetic impact in establishing England foremost among practitioners of landscape design is not mere bluster. The French had already begun to acknowledge the new English style as superior and progressive. In his introduction to Claude-Henri Watelet's *Essai sur les jardins* (published in 1774, although Watelet began his picturesque garden experimentation in 1754), Joseph Disponzio writes,

By the mid-eighteenth century on both sides of the English Channel the regularized French garden of the Le Nôtre style had yielded to a contrived irregular, indeed natural, garden typology. In fits and starts, beginning with William Kent's deliberate designs for Chiswick, dating from the 1730s, the picturesque garden began to transform the landscape of Europe (3).

Kent was an influence on Stowe as well as Chiswick, although Stowe's innovations have been more widely celebrated in literature. Watelet begins his essay into picturesque theory with an apologia for borrowing landscape design:

One should, no doubt expect to find in these creative endeavors the same diversity that nature bestows on the individuals who undertake them. But while nature is careful to make each person different, the irresistible urge to imitate makes men resemble one another when they live side by side. Imitation, subjecting everything to its power, imposes laws on trees, flowers, water, greenery. Most of the designs of our gardens, the shapes of our flower beds, the layouts of our groves, the ornaments we use, are borrowed or copied from one another ( 21-2).

Although Watelet obfuscates the source of imitation, he clearly references the British picturesque as his and his fellow gardeners' source, and the generalization is meaningful in that it suggests hesitation to credit England in writing, even though his readers would understand the reference.

Watelet later writes,

The parks laid out according to the new principles are designated by the name of a nation that we imitate in certain uninteresting practices with an affected eagerness that is often ridiculous. And this nation, it is said, borrowed the ideas for its own gardens from the Chinese, a people too distant, too different from us, too little known not to give rise to extraordinary notions and countless fables (34).

The omission, which modern editor Samuel Danon rectifies with a footnote as England, signifies Watelet's resentment of Anglophilic aesthetics to the point of undercutting the credit for English taste by attributing it to Chinese influence, which definitely affected the English style, but was not the sole catalyst for the shift in landscape fashion.

Despite some accusations of emulating Asian styles, Brown's designs were generally considered innovative and original. "Capability" Brown's sweeping lawns marked British allegiance to pastoral aesthetics in theory, if not in actual practice, as the lawns were not always used for

grazing sheep. The move toward a less obviously structured view of land and garden was a return to a landscape that appeared more productive and practical. Simon Pugh corresponds the initial “birth of the pastoral” with “the decline of the ancient *polis* and the appearance of the quasi-modern metropolis” and later the revival of pastoral in eighteenth-century England with the rise of the industrial city. Pugh argues,

The margins between country and city are often blurred; at least from the vantage of the city, each expresses nostalgia for the other. From the city, shepherds appear more innocent, happier, than city dwellers, yet the terms of contentment are dictated by the urbanist not the peasant (23).

Pugh’s assessment of urban yearning assumes volumes about the nature of the urbanist and the shepherd. Shepherds only appear innocent and happy in a singular idealized version that distorts the true nature of the pastoral as described by Alpers. While the shepherd’s life may appear simple, with problems extending no further than attracting the pretty shepherdess, Alpers explains that the pastoral mode addresses real peril in the shepherd’s life, despite the surrounding bucolic beauty. Jane Austen would later reify the urbanist assumption in the character of Willoughby in *Sense and Sensibility*, as she demonstrated class conflict embedded in landscape aesthetics and politics.

Brown’s contemporary William Gilpin contributed greatly to the development of the British picturesque aesthetic, both through his own landscape designs and through his codification of picturesque principles in essays written over the course of his landscaping career. Gilpin’s most influential work, *Observations on the River Wye and several parts of South Wales, etc. relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty; made in the summer of the year 1770*, was not published until 1782, but his interest in landscape design and literary treatments of it far preceded that opus. In 1748, he published *A Dialogue upon the Gardens of the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Cobham at Stow*

*in Buckinghamshire* based on his visit to Stowe the previous year. The eponymous dialogue occurs between two fictional characters – Calophilus and Polyphthon – who debate the aesthetic value of the overtly artificial elements of the Stowe landscape. Gilpin sides with Polyphthon, who states,

From *Sterling* to a little Village upon the Banks of the River, by Land it is only four Miles, and yet if you should follow the Course of the Water, you will find it above Twenty. – There is an House likewise that stands upon a narrow Isthmus of a Peninsula, formed by this same River, which is mighty Remarkable: The Water runs close to both Ends of it, and yet if you sail from one to the other, you will be carried a Compass of four Miles. – Such a River winding about this Place, would make it a Paradise indeed (257)!

Polyphthon argues for the moving water of a stream over a still pond, and his diction suggests that in addition to the variety of moving water – literally, the water changes constantly – Gilpin believes that the serpentine lines expand the landscape. For Polyphthon (and Gilpin), the serpentine path of the stream extends the reach of the estate by miles, and although he accurately describes a phenomenon of measuring a convoluted line, since the shoreline is lengthened, the estate gains no more acreage. The concern with size, shoreline, and water seems natural for inhabitants of a small island nation. Shoreline is an almost universal real estate value, since it remains in limited supply, but Gilpin's suggestion of increasing shore footage artificially does not inflate aesthetic or economic value. The desire to increase shoreline, like John Evelyn's concern for national security evidenced through conservation of wood for the navy, reveals national insecurity about vulnerability because of the size of the island. By introducing serpentine lines into the landscape through streams, lanes, and plantings, Gilpin seeks to simulate a larger prospect because the eye must travel over greater linear feet and visitors must travel greater miles by walking or riding to achieve their destinations.

Gilpin reveals a national insecurity, and he maintains class distinctions to British landscape aesthetics when Polyphthon describes the beautiful prospects he has viewed on travel in the “North”: “Sometimes I found myself hemmed with an Amphitheater of Mountains, which were variously ornamented, some with scattered Trees, some with tufted Wood, some with grazing Cattle, and some with smoaking Cottages” (257). The mountains, trees and wood are all natural elements, but the cattle and cottages suggest human intervention, which Gilpin reduces to objects of aesthetic pleasure. The inhabitants of the landscape must be farmers who keep the cattle and live in the cottages, and therein lies the class distinction. Gilpin’s fictional speakers exist in an England that can view prospects and reduce the working class to aesthetic objects without considering them to be citizens in a common nation. The England of the viewer is not the same England of the viewed, and Gilpin and his characters command the tools that shape national identity, language, and landscape. Thus, at mid-century, Gilpin’s England stands resolutely as a nation of the wealthiest class.

Edmund Burke’s colleague and friend Thomas Whately also considered the impact of water on landscape, writing that, “In considering the subjects of gardening, ground and wood first present themselves; water is the next, which, though not absolutely necessary to a beautiful composition, yet occurs so often, and is so capital a feature, that it is always regretted when wanting” (302). And Whately addresses Gilpin’s same preoccupation with water extending the perception of size, when he says, “If the water at Wotton were all exposed, a walk of near two miles along the banks would be of a tedious length, from the want of those changes of the scene, which now supply through the whole extent of succession of perpetual variety” (303). His 1770 treatise *Observations on Modern Gardening* aimed to define landscape theory and its “aims, methods, and achievements” (Hunt and Willis 301). In addition to his heuristic for the role of water in the landscape, Whately explains the value of ruins, real or fabricated, to the view:

Whatever building we see in decay, we naturally contrast its present to its former state, and delight to ruminate on the comparison. It is true that such effects properly belong to real ruins; but they are produced in a certain degree by those which are fictitious; the impressions are not so strong, but they are exactly similar; and the representation, though it does not present facts to the memory, yet suggests subjects to the imagination..." (305).

Whately's theory of the use of ruins taps into a sense of nostalgia through two different fictional viewers. The first viewer that Whately assumes is one who knows the history of the landscape and upon looking at a building in ruins, sees its present state and mentally reconstructs its previous undecayed state. Whately asserts that the viewer finds pleasure in contemplating the two views side by side, apparently through a consideration of the changes that have occurred. The second fictional viewer observes the ruins but has never seen the previous state of the building and must instead imagine it as it must have been. The first viewer experiences a sense of true nostalgia, and the second experiences manufactured nostalgia, or longing for something he never experienced himself.

Whately also permits the construction of artificial ruins, or buildings that were never intended to be functional as anything but a representation of decay, and these artificial ruins in turn can stir only manufactured nostalgia, or the type of longing experienced by his second viewer. Whately expands on his justification of artificial ruins when he explains the appeal of "direct *imitation*":

Artificial ruins, lakes, and rivers, fall under this denomination; the air of a seat extended to a distance, and scenes calculated to raise ideas of Arcadian elegance, or of rural simplicity, with many more which have been occasionally mentioned, or will obviously occur, may be ranked in this class; they are all representations...the defect is not in the resemblance; but the consciousness of an imitation, checks that train of

thought which the appearance naturally suggests; yet an over-anxious solicitude to disguise the fallacy is often the means of exposing it; and forced; and the affectation of resemblance destroys the supposition of a reality” (305-6).

Here Whately suggests that ruins and other structures that imitate historical or fictional elements please the viewer through “Arcadian elegance” and “rural simplicity,” but only as long as the viewer is not led to make too close a comparison between the landscape and the original scene. Thus, the imitation should remind the viewer of another scene but not seek to recreate it exactly, lest imperfections in the imitation become evident.

Despite his allegiance to imitation, Whately also promotes originality in landscape design, writing, “the art of gardening aspires to more than imitation: it can create original characters, and give expressions to the several scenes superior to any they can receive from allusions” (306). Hunt and Willis assert that Whately’s goal in *Observations* was to establish an aesthetic theory of landscape gardening as had been accomplished for painting, “namely, a treatise on its aims, methods, and achievements” (301). Whately justifies the need for his treatise by claiming that “Gardening...is as superior to landskip painting, as a reality to a representation,” which could, in turn, privilege British aesthetic accomplishments above French painting aesthetics, even as those British landscapes often imitated the scenes in French paintings. As demonstrated in Watelet’s *Essai sur les jardins*, by 1774 the French recognized British landscape achievements as superior to their own, and thus Whately aims to compound British successes by legitimizing them through theory.

While Whately bolstered the reputation of British landscape aesthetics, William Chambers altered the British style through the addition of Chinese elements, most notably the pagoda. While Chambers’s writings influenced British landscape, his greatest impact on the aesthetics of his profession probably derived from his work in at Kew Manor. Kew Gardens gained their popularity



and notoriety under the ownership of Fredrick, Prince of Wales's, widow, Augusta, Dowager Princess of Wales. Chambers built several structures at Kew, including the Chinese pagoda, which when completed in 1762 was the tallest imitation of a Chinese building in Europe, and he wrote about his "improvements" at Kew in *Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surry*, published in 1763. As Chambers describes Chinese landscape architecture, he refers to the estate land as "plantations," a term which in the eighteenth century carried imperialist connotations. The *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the word's etymology to Latin (in Pliny), and finds its first English usage in the fifteenth century to mean "Something that has been founded, established, or implanted, as an institution, a religion, a belief, etc." and soon after finds it used to identify areas of colonial domination: "The settling of people, usually in a conquered or dominated country; esp. the planting or establishing of a colony; colonization." By the seventeenth century (1626), the term evolved to suggest the land of an estate: "An estate or large farm, esp. in a former British colony, on which crops such as cotton, sugar, and tobacco are grown (formerly with the aid of slave labor)." And soon after, the term expanded to include other green areas: "An area planted with trees, esp. for commercial purposes." The *OED* begins its citation list to support this definition with a reference to Samuel Sturmy's use of "plantation" in *Mariner's Magazine* in 1669: "You will have the true Plott of your Ground, or Park, or Wood-land, or Plantation."

Thus, in addition to Chambers describing the Chinese use of land, he also extends British imperialist reach into Asia by calling the land plantation. For example, when he writes in 1757's *Design of Chinese Buildings*, Chambers says,

What we call clumps, the Chinese gardeners are not unacquainted with; but they use them somewhat more sparingly than we do. They never fill a whole piece of ground with clumps: they consider a plantation as painters do a whole picture, and groupe

their trees in the same manner as these do their figures, having their principal and subservient masses” ( Hunt and Willis 287).

Chambers’s criticism of “what we call clumps” stems from his dislike of “Capability” Brown’s relatively sparse landscapes, which included vast rolling greens occasionally spotted with his trademark “clumps” of trees or bushes. Hunt says Chambers disliked Brown’s designs because they were “insipid, and his landscape[s] too limited in the range and intensity of their mental involvement” (318).

The Chinese elements Chambers introduced into the British landscape invited criticism, and the most notable detractor was William Mason, who in 1773 composed *An Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*, a mock epic in heroic couplets satirizing Chambers’s Chinese style. Mason’s *Epistle* ran fourteen editions in four years, demonstrating its popularity and public interest in landscape discourse. Mason criticizes Chambers for adopting the three Chinese categories for landscape, saying,

These shall prolong his Asiatic dream,

Tho’ Europe’s balance trembles on its beam.

And thou, Sir William! While thy plastic hand

Creates each wonder, which thy Bard has plann’d,

While, as thy art commands, obsequious rise

Whate’er can please, or frighten, or surprize... (Hunt and Willis 325).

Here, as Hunt and Willis also argue, Mason reveals national insecurity about adopting foreign aesthetics, even as Europe struggled with the idea of English supremacy and influence on the continent through landscape design.

Adopting Chinese elements into the British landscape underscores the continued commitment to a national character that is imperialist. Integrating Chinese elements occurred not as a concession to superior Asian aesthetics, but as a colonial expansion that collects relics of conquered cultures. Placing Chinese elements on the Kew estate, the boyhood home of the future king, suggested extending the reach of the already growing British kingdom. Even though Chinese landscape fashion would not remain in vogue for long, Chambers marks an important point in British landscape's influence on national identity because he so firmly promoted foreign elements and found acceptance for them with royal tastes.

Chambers's contributions to landscape theory are also important because they are literary legitimize landscape writing as part of the landscape aesthetics movement. Uvedale Price, Richard Payne Knight, and Humphrey Repton also wrote extensively on British landscape and created an environment ready for William Gilpin's later writings on the picturesque. The four of them (Price, Knight, Repton, and Gilpin) remain the primary definers of picturesque taste, and their writings became the site for literary and philosophical debate over the appropriate use for land and for the direction of British aesthetic taste. While Brown, Whately, and Chambers legitimated a theoretical approach to landscape, the popularization of the picturesque by Price, Knight, Repton, and Gilpin established a landscape style that was recognizably British and acknowledged in Europe as superior.

Price's *Essay on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful* was published in 1794 and put him at the center of the picturesque debate with Knight and Repton. Price's major contribution was to situate the picturesque as a unique style which blended the sublime

and the beautiful, as the two terms had been described by Edmund Burke. Price writes, “...picturesqueness appears to hold a station between beauty and sublimity; and on that account, perhaps, is more frequently, and more happily blended with them both, than they are with each other. It is, however, perfectly distinct from either” (68). For Price, the dominant feature of a picturesque landscape was roughness, primarily the texture created through decay and time, and time, for Price, becomes a point of departure from “Capability” Brown. Price spends much of his *Essays* discrediting Brown for the smoothness of his lawns and the unnaturalness of his clumps; however, within his critique of Brown, Price also reveals the evolution of British national identity, as it develops through the picturesque, to expand to include middle class ideology, if not to include the middle class themselves.

Price’s treatise on the picturesque sought to distinguish between the aesthetic aims of painting and the aesthetic aims of landscape architecture, and his choice of examples of both media reveals his nationalist cause long before he addresses patriotism overtly. When Price describes landscape paintings, he draws from the catalogue of visual art created almost exclusively by continental painters. In the first dozen pages, he refers to da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, and throughout the work he references Rosa, Claude, and Poussin; however, the only British painter mentioned in the entire work is Joshua Reynolds, and he does not appear until page 135. The weight of these masters accumulates to build an understanding of continental superiority in painting. While Price tacitly allows for French and Italian authority in painting, he simultaneously suggests that British writers, through classical heritage, dominate rhetorical arts. In addition to Virgil and Longinus, Price quotes heavily from Milton and Shakespeare as sources for written descriptions of landscape that inspired paintings and design of actual estates. As he suggests in his title, Price advocates the study of painting for the further development of landscape aesthetics, but he also suggests that Milton and Shakespeare should be consulted along the way. Milton’s connection to the

landscape through his description of the perfect, unsullied Eden<sup>10</sup> fits naturally into any discussion of landscape aesthetics, and Shakespeare's idyllic settings, such as the forest in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, seem logical, also, yet Price's insistence on these two authors and the consistency of his nationalized references, leads to an understanding that the British picturesque trumps continental formalism through its incorporation of superior landscape literary allusions.

The national character derived from Price's landscape preferences is one that recognizes the necessity of variety in British character and one that relies more heavily on the middle class than previous generations did. Price advocates that landscapers study painting for inspiration instead of relying on their own taste when he calls for less clearing and destruction of estates in the name of improvement:

*Painting*, on the contrary, tends to humanize the mind: where a despot thinks every person an intruder who enters his domain, and wishes to destroy cottages and pathways, and to reign alone, the lover of painting, considers the dwellings, the inhabitants, and the marks of their intercourse, as ornaments to the landscape (338-9).

Here Price confronts Brown's taste directly, since in previous pages he has identified Brown as the purveyor of vast, empty lawns. Price's sentiment dehumanizes the cottage dwellers almost as much as the despot who would raze them. Even though Price does not displace his cottagers in the interest of improving his estate, as Brown would, he does reduce them to "ornaments to the landscape." Price, himself a product of a line of wealthy estate owners, adopts a monolithic view of landscape as a place for the noble class to enjoy luxury, but he espouses a *noblesse oblige* that expects the wealthy to respect the needs of their parish. Instead of creating landscape that mirrors a painting, Price

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<sup>10</sup> And Milton's Eden represents another occurrence of spiritual nostalgia for an English Eden that never existed.

encourages landowners to create a kind of giant terrarium with living occupants who increase the landscape's picturesque qualities through their presence.

Price's most ardent nationalist argument critiques other landscape theorists for too much patriotism and calls for a nationalist aesthetic that is both patriotic and rational, something that emphasizes the British characteristic of rational thought<sup>11</sup>:

It seems to me that there is something of patriotism in the praises which Mr. Walpole and Mr. Mason have bestowed on English gardening; and that zeal for the honour of their country, has made them, in the general view of the subject, overlook defects, which they have themselves condemned. My love for my country, is, I trust, not less ardent than theirs, but it has taken a different turn; and I feel anxious to free it from the disgrace of propagating a system, which, should it become universal, would disfigure the face of Europe. It is my wish that a more liberal and extended idea of improvement should prevail; that, instead of the narrow mechanical practice of a few English gardeners, the noble and varied works of the eminent painters of every age and of every country, and those of their supreme mistress nature, should be the models of imitation" (331-2).

Price criticizes the xenophobia in William Mason's heroic epistle on Chambers's adoption of Chinese style and design in landscape, and instead allows for the innovations that followed Brown, including Chambers's chinoiserie. However, Price's openness of foreign cultures does not translate directly into acceptance of a rising middle class. His attitude toward the middle class throughout *Essays* is conflicted by the classist foundation in *noblesse oblige*.

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<sup>11</sup> The preference for rationality instead of overly ardent patriotism supports both an English resistance to French revolutionary zeal and a Wordsworthian Romantic ideal of "strong emotion recollected in tranquility."

While the nobleman should extend his care and protection to the lowest classes on his estate, the middle class are ineligible for the benefits of *noblesse oblige*, in part because they are a threat. Following his argument for a more globally inclusive style of landscape, Price writes,

If a taste for drawing and painting and a knowledge of their principles, made a part of every gentleman's education; if instead of hiring a professed improver to torture his grounds after an established model, each improved his own place according to general conceptions drawn from nature and pictures, or from hints which favourite masters in painting, or favourite parts of nature suggested to him, there might in time be a great variety in the styles of improvement, and all of them with peculiar excellencies (332).

First, the class of citizen eligible for education in painting is that of the wealthy, and this enlightenment is open only to men, not to women, although noble women were routinely tutored to produce simple paintings. But Price extends his classist bias to the exclusion of landscape "improvers," whose profession placed them squarely in the middle class. In fact, landscape improvers often bridged the wealthy class and the working class, by consulting closely with the nobility on plans for improvement and closely supervising the working class men they employed to complete the actual work involved in changing the landscape: digging, plowing, planting, and other agricultural labor.

Price concludes that the intervention of the middle class improver has homogenized the landscape and denied it individual characteristics that express the personality of the owner and that demonstrate the owner's educated taste. The pattern of middle class integration into the noble class's culture demonstrates, again, Veblen's pecuniary emulation: as the middle class adopt the style of the wealthy – here through becoming a part of the process for donning the signifiers of wealth – they

also reduce the variety of signs because as fewer signs exist, the more recognizable they are to greater numbers of people, even though this same process dilutes the impact of those same signs. Jonathan H. Grossman cites Veblen in regard to Jane Austen, describing the wealthy class's "non-productive consumption of time" (144), which contrasts with other classes' productive use of time. Price's exhortation for landowners to eliminate middle class improvers responds to the threat of a rising middle class, but it also requires landowners to assume middle class labor – or productive uses of time – by taking responsibility for the improvements themselves. The exhortation reveals the conflicted role of the professional landscaper.

Price also criticizes landscape improvers for abandoning estate developments once they complete the initial improvements. For example, he writes, "With respect to Kent, and his particular mode of improving, I can say but little from my own knowledge, having never seen any works of his that I could be sure had undergone no alteration from any of his successors" (233). Thus, once Kent's work was done on any of the multiple estates he improved (including Chiswick House, Stowe, Buckinghamshire, and Alexander Pope's Twickenham), others altered the original designs, and the landscape was subjected to the changes wrought by time: young trees and plants grew and matured; water eroded land and changed course; architectural structures decayed or were altered to meet the changing needs of their owners. The owners themselves might also change, through inheritance by younger generations or through transfer through sale when the original owners could no longer afford them. Yet, the owners offer the most probable source of continuity or longevity, especially when inheritance provides a legacy through a gentleman father who has educated his gentleman son in appropriate taste and social obligation. The improver moves on, but the landowner or his family likely remains with the property. Through criticizing the migrant nature of landscape improvers, Price objects to the middle class's mobility, often a necessity of productive labor. Time is the fourth dimension that distinguishes landscape design from the other artistic media, painting and sculpture,



but time also makes the landscape vulnerable to the influence of multiple artists. Price's suggestion that estate owners make their own improvements is an assurance that those improvements are more stable and long-lasting, but the suggestion also defines an aspect of British national character as noble because the wealthy class provides stability through its connection to the land and estate.

Although Price's *Essays* ostensibly sides with the noble class as representatives of British national character, his acknowledgement of the middle class essential part of the British landscape indicates tension as the dominant ideology evolved to become more inclusive. Despite Price's dismissal of middle class improvers as legitimate or respectable participants in defining the British landscape, his need to address them signals their growing influence. Because British national identity was tied closely to the nobility's attachment to the land – to its estates, parishes, and manors – inclusion of the middle class in that identity necessitated that they integrate themselves into the concept of the land in some way besides reliance upon it for subsistence. While the middle class grew in other respectable professions during the eighteenth and nineteenth century (notably the military, the clergy, the law, and in eventually in mercantilism), these professions could not confer a connection to the land the way the profession of landscape improver did.

Richard Payne Knight's *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*, published in 1805, entered the picturesque argument from another angle. Knight references Edmund Burke's distinctions between the beautiful and the sublime, but he focuses on the beautiful, and deviates from Burke's (albeit conflicted) essentialist view that all humanity bases aesthetic taste upon the same innate values. Instead, Knight conjectures that taste is acquired socially. Like Price, Knight cites continental painting masters alongside Joshua Reynolds, whom he quotes: "*if a man born blind were to recover his sight, and the most beautiful woman were brought before him, he could not determine whether she was handsome or not*" (33).

Language and etymology become a recurring theme in *An Analytical Inquiry*, as Knight defines aesthetic taste also through the sounds of different languages, classifying English as “much less prone to the light and ludicrous, and better adapted to the grave and solemn than the French” (54). Thus, he supports Price’s assertion that rationality, not frivolity, is characteristic of British identity, while acknowledging French as the most important source of alterity. Knight’s assertion on the sound of the English language also aligns with Burke’s and Kant’s earlier heuristic for sublime and beautiful, which sorts English nationality on the sublime side of the scale, and Knight demonstrates Michele Cohen’s argument that cultural attitudes toward language further masculinized English and feminized French. Knight also recognizes language’s susceptibility to acquisition by other classes, or, in other words, he notes that specialized language may initially act as a marker of class distinction; however, pecuniary emulation dilutes words’ power of exclusion: “...*picturesque*—a word, that is now become extremely common and familiar in our own tongue; and which, like all other foreign words, that are become so, is very frequently employed improperly” (150).

Knight later revisits the idea of rationality as an English national trait when he describes the difference between the sublime and the pathetic. He writes, “Nonsense can no more be sublime, than darkness or vacuity can be ponderous or elastic; and to controvert either position is, in some measure, to participate in its extravagance” (391). Here Knight consigns nonsense to the lowest forms of literature, implying that most British literature and culture remains at the loftier sublime level. He condemns German culture as nonsense, just as he criticized French as better suited for silliness and folly.

Knight resolutely identifies the British national identity residing in the leisure class, but his bias in these characteristics reveals his primary concern to be class transgression. Like his friend Uvedale Price, Knight divulges his concern with class mobility not through overt criticism of the working classes, but through conflicted statements about the landscape and anxiety over dilution of

class markers. One clear class marker was education, and education included instilling a particular aesthetic taste into the leisure class. Knight writes,

Ruined buildings, with fragments of sculptured walls and broken columns, the mouldering remnants of obsolete taste and fallen magnificence, afford pleasure to every learned beholder, imperceptible to the ignorant, and wholly independent of their real beauty, or the pleasing impressions, which they make on the organs of sight; more especially when discovered in countries of ancient celebrity, renowned in history for learning, arts, or empire. The mind is led by the view of them into the most pleasing trains of ideas, and the whole scenery around receives an accessory character; which is commonly called *classical*; as the ideas, which it excites associate themselves with those, which the mind has previously received from the writings called *classic* (192).

Only the leisure class could experience this sort of nostalgia for images acquired through reading and study, or through the Grand Tour. Knight admits that ruins do not naturally appeal to the sight of the untrained, that they hold no innate beauty besides that imbued to them through education and association.

He advances his argument for the role of the leisure class by discrediting the assumption that taste alters for fashion:

It may be said, perhaps, that the language and manners, as well as the dress of a well-bred gentleman, may vary with the capricious changes of fashion.... It matters not whether a letter be begun with *Citizen*, or *Sir*; or ended with *farewell*, or *your humble servant*....Neither do the principles of good breeding vary more in manners and dress, than they do in language... (284-5).

Knight acknowledges that some of the superficial aspects of manners and fashion may change over time, but he disputes the idea that the underlying principles of taste and politeness change over time. Instead, true taste endures while the more superficial fashions shift with social preferences. In addition to suggesting that the leisure class acts as a foundation or an immutable force for English culture, Knight demonstrates the triviality of fashionable choices through his examples of epistolary language. His choice of examples supports his classist argument, especially if the choices are paired respectively: “*Citizen*” with “*farewell*,” and “*Sir*” with “*your humble servant*.” Gabriella Del Lungo Cammiciotti posits that while epistles and commerce are both ancient endeavors, business writing is a relatively recent development, perhaps because “the merchant class is a constantly evolving community of traders, rather than an institution, built on oral rather than written traditions” (153). Her linguistic study considers nineteenth-century letter writing manuals, examining 270 letters, and focuses on the use of modals to convey “politeness,” a term Del Lungo Cammiciotti claims “can be traced back to the eighteenth century, when it was associated with metropolitan aristocracy and opposed to rural life and cultural provinciality” (159). Although her goal is to dissect the use of modals, Del Lungo Cammiciotti addresses the conventionalities of greetings and closings, particularly the use of adjectives and the terms for addressing the recipient and identifying the author: “Terms of address used in salutations and closing formulae are thus very differential, indicating the relative status of the interactants as utterly unequal. This usage conforms to the traditional paradigm of politeness expressed in terms of the master/servant metaphor” (161). Thus, the respective pairing demonstrates an epistolary communication first between equals, and second between a correspondent who is classed below his intended reader. In fact, Del Lungo Cammiciotti lists the “humble” or “faithful” servant closing as a very common one in nineteenth-century business correspondence, which demonstrates the increased interaction between the business class and the leisure class throughout the nineteenth century.

Knight completes his discussion of the stability of leisure class mores by writing,

In short, good breeding, whether it be shown in language, manners, or dress, is nothing more than that dignity, elegance, and amenity of mind, whether natural or acquired, which I have stated to be the genuine principle of all exterior grace of person, and of all elegance and dignity of attitude and gesture. It is, therefore, the same good taste, displayed in the ordinary intercourse and business of society, as is otherwise employed in the productions of imitative art, or the embellishment of improved nature (287).

Key here is that Knight allows for leisure class taste to be “natural or acquired,” which suggests the gradual shift away from requiring aristocratic pedigrees, and toleration of upward mobility as long as the *nouveau* members acculturate appropriately.

Knight’s description of landscape design as an “embellishment of improved nature” suggests also a conflict between art and nature, and on this topic Knight proposes a graded distinction, with which Humphrey Repton concurred. Knight castigates Brown for his sweeping, vast expanses of green lawn, and instead proposes that the estate should be laid out so that the residence represents the most civilized space with the evidence of organization and civilization decreasing as a viewer moved farther away from the house. He writes,

At all events, the character of dress and artificial neatness ought never to be suffered to encroach upon the park or the forest; where it is as contrary to propriety as it is to beauty; and where its introduction, by our modern landscape gardeners, affords one of the most memorable instances of any recorded in the history of fashions, of the extravagant absurdity, with which an insatiate passion for novelty may infect a whole nation (150).

Knight's diction conveys a simmering vehemence against the popularity of Brown's designs that transcends dislike of the designs themselves. Calling the aesthetic obsession one of the most memorable in recorded history, and using the terms "extravagant," "absurdity," "insatiate," "passion," "novelty," and "infect" suggests a real threat lurking in the frivolous diversion. Since Knight establishes British national character as rational, and not frivolous, labeling Brown's designs as a novelty and absurdity damns them. The concern that the passion for the absurd could "infect a whole nation" betrays insecurity for British rationality that could be threatened by the triviality of landscape fashion, and, perhaps later, other fashions. Knight argues for British traditionalism and intellectualism to outweigh transient trends.

For Knight, the crack in the British façade that has admitted vapid fashion is the movement of the middle class into the landscape of the leisure class. While the previous heuristic for estate ownership primarily involved a wealthy estate owner who objectified the working class as part of the landscape vista, the introduction and increase of the middle class estate tour altered the landscape so that the landscape became an object of consumption itself. Knight instructs estate owners who are considering future designs to construct their home so that its best views are upon approaching it, not from its windows outward: "In choosing a situation for a house of this kind, which is to be a principal feature in a place, more consideration ought to be had of the views toward it, than of those from it" (219). As the middle class embarked on country tours, the leisure class became more self-conscious of the appearance of their estates as they compared to others. Knight provides Castle Howard and Blenheim as examples of situating the homes where "[t]he views from the principal fronts ... are bad, and much inferior to what other parts of the grounds would have afforded; but the situations of both, as objects to the surrounding scenery, are the best that could have been chosen" (221). Knight praises Vanbrugh's obeisance to an Hegelian dialectic that demands the leisure class bend to the will of lower classes, despite their own putative authority.

Humphry Repton's 1806 *An Enquiry into the Changes of Taste in Landscape Gardening* adopts an even more overtly classist and nationalist stance toward landscape design. Repton begins his *Enquiry* with an explanation of the need to discuss changes in taste: "Every revolution in the Taste of a country may be accounted for on the same principles with the revolutions in its laws, its customs, and opinions – the love of *change* or *novelty* in a few, and of *sameness* or *imitation*" (1). Repton, too, aligns British national character with respect for tradition, and expresses scorn for the influx of fashion or change, and he later aligns British national character with classist values when he describes the differences between French formal gardens and the English picturesque:

When the artificial but magnificent style of *Geometric Gardening* of Le Nôtre was changed to the more natural style of Landscape Gardening, it often happened that too little respect was paid to the costly appendages of English palaces; for although near the small houses of country gentlemen the barns and rick-yards, and kitchen gardens, might give way to the shaven lawn in the front of such houses; yet to place a palace in the middle of a grass field was one of those excesses of innovation, to which all kinds of reform are ever liable (29).

While Repton elsewhere criticizes French formal geometric designs, his attention here is to the excesses that displace the working class in favor of Brown's expansive lawns. Repton defended Brown, in general, as an innovator who transformed all landscape design and marked English aesthetic culture as worthy of international admiration, but Repton withheld praise for too expansive of a sweeping lawn. In this way he entered the picturesque debate as both a defender and critic of "Capability" Brown.

Repton complicates his defense of Brown with his concern with class divisions, which perhaps is derived from his own biography. Born to a middle-class merchant, Repton was raised to

become an agent of commerce himself; however, when he proved unsuccessful in this pursuit, he turned to purveying his landscape sketches into a profession in landscape architecture. Although his designs were used in dozens of estate renovations, he experienced neither wealth nor the notoriety of Brown, who partially inspired his career. He lauded the profession of landscape gardening, claiming that a good gardener needed knowledge in “painting, ...gardening, ...surveying, mechanics, hydraulics, agriculture, botany, and architecture” (44-5). Repton reveals his conflicted attitude toward class mobility when he defends Brown’s abilities, despite being a “man bred, and constantly living, in the kitchen garden” (45). He attributes Brown’s elevation of taste to “being at first patronized by a few persons of rank and acknowledged good taste” (45), not to his own faculties or judgment. Repton himself spent time abroad, where he associated with families from wealthier classes, and may have credited his own aesthetic values to the time spent with them. Thus, for Repton, education can justify upward mobility from a life of middle class commercialism to become a middle-class recipient of patronage who is worthy of collaborating alongside the leisure class in artistic work, and working-class Brown legitimately achieved the same advance from manual laborer to designer. However, Repton strongly objects to overreaching, ambitious class mobility that involves actual movement across class boundaries. He writes,

Within the last forty years the property and even the characters of individuals have undergone more change than in any period of the English history: we daily see wealth acquired by industry, or by fortunate speculations, succeeding to the hereditary estates of the most ancient families; and we see the descendants of these families reduced, by the vain attempt to vie in expence with the successful sons of commerce: this will often account for the increase of novel or fantastic edifices, and the decrease of those venerable specimens of former grandeur, the baronial castle, or the castellated mansion (65).



Repton blames individual economic destruction on middle class aspirations to move into the leisure class; the destruction does not occur because the middle class gained wealth, but because those seeking upward mobility purchased estates and attempted to compete with other wealthy estate owners.

Thus, lower classes should remain content with their role in society, even if they seek to increase their wealth; wealth and social status are not synonymous for Repton. He also calls for the leisure class to maintain the responsibilities of *noblesse oblige* when he derides the estate owner who lives on the property, “merely for the purpose of collecting his rents” and enjoys “ostentatious refinements of luxury and parade” instead of sharing “the produce of his estates with his humble dependents” (67). While these issues extend far beyond the realm of landscape design, the landscape does act as a symbol that reveals class conflict and change in class structure. Repton’s early call to adhere to tradition echoes in these passages that caution against social climbing and reprimands the wealthy who have strayed from obligations and responsibilities toward their tenants. Repton sums up his attitude toward class distinctions when he writes,

In this country there will I hope for ever exist different orders and degrees in society, which must often depend on the proportion of property either inherited or acquired by different individuals; and so long as such distinctions remain, it will be proper that the residence of each be marked by such distinct characters, as may not be easily mistaken (104).

His appeal for class markers in landscape and homes suggests that, for Repton, class transgression is the most insidious of all “passings.” While passing for another race or gender is possible, physical markers betray dissemblance, but passing for another nationality or class is more difficult to detect, as long as the passing individual has learned the right signs of membership, and class passing also

transgresses national identity, as British should remain in their distinct class categories. Randall Kennedy's definition of racial passing holds significance for the concept of class passing, also: "Passing is a deception that enables a person to adopt certain roles or identities from which he would be barred by prevailing social standards in the absence of his misleading conduct" (1). While Kennedy's definition applies as easily to class transgression as it does to racial transgression, neither Kennedy nor Repton considers the possibility that passing might occur unintentionally. Accidental misreadings of class are central to plots in multiple nineteenth-century novels, particularly Jane Austen's, and some of the misreadings occur because of the "roles or identities" or "distinct characters" displayed through knowledge of the picturesque and other landscape fashions, most notably *Northanger Abbey*, when Catherine Moreland's picturesque and gothic sensibilities connote to the Tilneys and Thorpes that she possesses a much greater fortune than she actually does.

To consider the changes in picturesque aesthetics over the second half of the eighteenth century, we might return to William Gilpin, who partly initiated the picturesque discussion in 1748 with *A Dialogue upon the Gardens of the Right and Honourable Lord Viscount Cobham at Stow and Buckingham* and continued to publish on the topic through the 1790s with *Three Essays on Picturesque Beauty; on Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape* in 1792. At the end of the century, Gilpin maintained his earlier assignment of the working class to the category of objects in the picturesque landscape. In the third essay, which addresses "sketching," he writes,

In *adorning your sketch*, a figure, or two may be introduced by propriety. By figures I mean moving objects, as wagons, and boats, as well as cattle, and men. But they should be introduced sparingly. In profusion they are affected. Their chief use is, to mark a road – to break a piece of foreground – to point out the horizon in a sea-view – or to carry off the distance of retiring water....But in figures thus designed for the

ornament of a sketch, a few slight touches are sufficient. Attempts at finishing offend” (77-8).

While this passage at first may appear to suggest little change from the 1748 exchange on landscape aesthetics, Gilpin reveals a bias for movement that appears elsewhere in his later essays. In addition to censoring artists from including too many peasant figures (which might become threatening in their number) or too specific or “finished” a representation of a peasant figure (which might imbue the figure with individualism or humanity), Gilpin calls for the figures to be “moving,” just as in the first essay he explained that “the human body will always be more picturesque in action, than at rest” (12).

The occupation with movement and action suggests production, and applied to working class figures suggests productive labor. Peter Hitchcock describes the occupation with working class activity as a form of commodity fetishism:

Commodity fetishism is the process through which a social relation among persons becomes transmogrified into an apparently autonomous relations among things, or commodities in exchange....for capitalist societies are defined by the extent to which they exclude any culture that does not ‘appear’ through commodity relations in general” (24).

Considering the contemporary rise of the industrial – and capitalist – city suggests that foregrounding agrarian working class figures in landscape sketches and in actual landscapes fetishizes them as a result of the desire “to confirm that class is there and negotiable in stable and unthreatening ways” (21). Hitchcock refers to the film *Brassed Off!* as an example of representation of the working class, and in the context of the film’s setting in an economically depressed colliery town writes, “The fetishism consists not in a love of coal but in coal’s abstract equivalence: activity and livelihood”

(25), but the sense of his claim also applies to Gilpin's multiple references to working class activity as part of the picturesque landscape. It is the motion – and at times just the implied activity of the working class figures, as when Gilpin claims that the “cart-horse, the cow, or the ass” are preferable to picturesque scenes over “*more beautiful*” objects (15) – that is fetishized and comes to symbolize national identity.

Although activity and production represent national character, the working class remains excluded from British identity. Working class productivity is ‘owned’ through its representation and working class productive labor represents British national identity only through its ownership, collection, and concentration by the leisure class. Yet, attention to their presence in the landscape raises a question of their own aesthetic relationship to the land. Hitchcock notes that “Neither Marx nor Eagleton argues for an aesthetic practice as the primary means to this end – living aesthetically” (26), or that although Eagleton argued that Marx endowed productive labor with a “sensuousness” that was denied from alienated labor, neither extended the claim far enough to suggest that labor was itself a work or art, or that the goal or life was aesthetic pleasure. However, Eagleton's idea of sensuous labor is absent in Gilpin's discussion of landscape and landscape sketches. Gilpin in no way implies that the laborer, who is the owner of the cart-horse, the cow, or the ass, enjoys the aesthetic impact of the landscape. The landscape architect and artist commodify and package the landscape for the leisure class owner or the middle class landscape traveler. The working class inhabitant of the scene is excluded from its aesthetic pleasure, which is another way of excluding him from national identity.

As Gilpin stands as one of the most influential non-fiction writers on the British landscape in eighteenth and nineteenth century, he also marks a transition from landscape's classical heritage and its legacy in Burke's theories of the sublime and beautiful to a more purely British theory of the picturesque. The growing dominance of picturesque taste did not discard the earlier national values

of patriarchy, wealth, nobility, and whiteness, but class came to outweigh the other values, even as it was complicated by the intrusion of the middle class. As the middle class became consumers of the commodified landscape through acquired wealth and through travel, they slowly gained recognition as part of British national identity. The growing prevalence of middle class concerns in landscape theory paralleled the growth of that particularly middle-class genre, the novel, and perhaps no author better illustrates the interaction of landscape and class concerns in early nineteenth-century England than Jane Austen. Austen critics have assigned her landscape aesthetics different roles in developing themes and characterization, but the most consistent way to view her use of landscape taste is to consider how she leverages landscape aesthetics to demonstrate the fragile state of class roles and distinctions.

### **Jane Austen, Landscape, and Class**

Jane Austen's plots often hinge on questions of middle-class ownership, identity, stability, and roles within the larger scope of society. The problems caused by entail and primogeniture are often key to plot complications, and Austen's critique of the entail demonstrates a national problem of middle class land ownership that has outgrown leisure class (and royal) customs. Austen depends upon the tropes of landscape aesthetics when she accesses understanding of the pastoral mode to demonstrate how the leisure class objectified the middle class in *Sense and Sensibility*. During his courtship of Marianne Dashwood, whom he later abandons, John Willoughby extols the beauty and virtues of the cottage to which the Dashwood girls have retreated following the death of their father. When Mrs. Dashwood describes her financially unrealistic plans for spring improvements to the cottage, Willoughby exclaims,

Improve this dear cottage! No. *That* I will never consent to. Not a stone must be added to its walls, not an inch to its size if my feelings are regarded....To me it is

faultless. Nay, more, I consider it as the only form of building in which happiness is attainable, and were I rich enough, I would instantly pull Combe down and build it up again in the exact plan of this cottage (62).

Willoughby's nostalgia for the simple pastoral life proves insincere when he is later induced by the withdrawal of favor by his patroness Mrs. Smith of Allenham to marry Miss Grey for her inheritance instead of Marianne for her pastoral innocence. But even before Willoughby's integrity is tested, we as readers recognize that he romanticizes cottage life.

As if Willoughby has internalized the pastoral scenes painted by Salvatore Rosa and Claude Lorrain – which were models for English landscapes – Austen's would-be hero seems to believe he can enter their fictionalized settings without consequence, and in fact, there is little consequence to him personally. But the risk to Marianne is great. With her "sensible" disposition, hysteria truly jeopardizes her health and threatens death, but another peril threatens in the form of the unseen Eliza Williams, Colonel Brandon's ward whom Willoughby seduces and discards. We know that Willoughby imposes upon Marianne in ways that suggest a formal engagement (he shares secrets with her, rides un-chaperoned with her, and carries tokens of her affection); however, Marianne later confesses that none existed. Willoughby carefully observes the line between real and implied betrothal, and the Dashwoods' curiosity into whether an engagement existed is more than familial curiosity.

Austen's use of landscape aesthetics demonstrates the threat that middle class access to landscape parks posed. Through much of the nineteenth century, a gentleman's declaration of love to a lady implied betrothal, and betrothal somewhat legitimized premarital sex. As many as fifty per cent of all firstborn children in England in the nineteenth century were conceived out of wedlock

(Ehmer 318).<sup>12</sup> The Dashwoods' concern over Willoughby's declaration of an engagement extends to the fear that Marianne has given herself to him during one of the many excursions they take unchaperoned, and his abandonment would therefore leave her ruined and possibly pregnant. The family's growing concern throughout the courtship as they wait for an announcement of engagement reflects a sinister aspect of the landscape's availability to middle class and leisure class touring: the land provides opportunity for sexual transgression, in addition to class transgression.

Willoughby's romanticizing of cottage life began before the Dashwoods' residence there, as he later tells Mrs. Dashwood:

“‘How often did I wish,’ added he, ‘when I was at Allenham this time twelvemonth, that Barton cottage were inhabited! I never passed within view of it without admiring its situation and grieving that no one should live in it....And yet this house you would spoil, Mrs. Dashwood? You would rob it of its simplicity by imaginary improvement! And this dear parlour in which our acquaintance first began, and in which so many happy hours have been since spent by us together, you would degrade to the condition of a common entrance, and everybody would be eager to pass through the room which has hitherto contained within itself, more real accommodation and comfort than any other apartment of the handsomest dimensions in the world could possible afford’” (63).

Although Willoughby's exaggerated attachment to the cottage is part of what endears him to Marianne (and the reader), Austen undercuts his romanticized view with Willoughby's fickleness. Austen wants us to believe that Willoughby legitimately loves Marianne but is swayed to marry for money

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<sup>12</sup> This explains Lydia Bennet's expectation in *Pride and Prejudice* that George Wickham will marry her after their runaway escapade. If he had stated his love for her, they were considered engaged, with some expectation of the benefits of espousal.

once he is disinherited by Mrs. Smith; however, his own tendencies to romanticize the landscape reveal him to be unworthy of Marianne's devotion. His criticism of Mrs. Dashwood's intended "improvements" leads to the realm of extensive Austen criticism that seeks to determine Austen's attitude toward landscape, picturesque taste, and "improvement," but most critical attempts to categorize Austen's characters by their opinions on picturesque landscape do not take into enough account the influence of pastoral mode.

When Willoughby confesses that he had often wished Barton cottage were inhabited, it is because he succumbs to a sentimental fallacy created by picturesque aesthetics through paintings, landscape theorists, and the wealthy, who were capable of reifying fictional landscapes as part of their estate architecture and design. These were the class who could populate the hermitages, which were built on their estates to resemble ruins, by hiring "hermits" to live on the estate and act the part. While the newly constructed ruins delivered a patina representative of long-established wealth, the presence of working poor as part of the tableau demonstrated not only domination of inferior classes, but also the capacity to live in a fictional world unburdened by the demands of reality. In Willoughby's case, he anticipates membership in the wealthy class that can participate in its own fiction, the false nostalgia for a simpler, pastoral life which never represented the true pastoral existence. His desire to see the cottage inhabited is a desire for a fictional world where shepherdesses are also beautiful, well-read, and bear themselves as gentlewomen, and Austen's critique of landscape improvements leans more toward arguing against sentimentality, or application of fictional values to real-world circumstances, than toward a consistent aesthetic theory.

Willoughby also participates in a form of pastoral fallacy by demanding that the cottage remain unchanged for the sake of his romantic nostalgia. He argues that the "many happy hours" he has spent in the parlour demand the room's preservation, which suggests that he temporarily privileges the past over the future. He does not consider the possibility of future happy hours in an



improved parlour, not because he does not imagine a future with Marianne, but because he seeks a Keatsian “Grecian urn” status for their courtship so that the cottage becomes a shrine to their blossoming love. Like other Austen characters, Willoughby’s tendencies toward enacting art do not meet Austen’s test of realism.

While Willoughby played at acting the part of the pastoral shepherd, Austen’s use of this pastoral fallacy demonstrates the beginning of permeability of masculinity as part of national identity. The pastoral established a masculine British national identity, since the point of view was always that of a shepherd, and he frequently bemoaned the unrequited love of a shepherdess, in addition to his conflicted desire for bucolic bliss. His longing for the shepherdess objectifies her as something to be sought and gained, not as an equal partner in the herding enterprise. Picturesque landscapers did nothing to redress the pastoral objectification of women, but Austen manipulates the tropes of picturesque landscapes that picture women as objects to redefine national identity to include women. By demonstrating the consequences for objectified women who are reduced to a romantic pastoral type instead of being considered for all they and their circumstances truly are, Austen warns women from adopting sentimental characteristics or allowing suitors to induce them into romantically determined roles; Austen also justifies women’s place in British national identity beyond “sensibility” as participants in British rationality. Finally, Austen tangentially – but significantly – addresses two major influences on landscape in the nineteenth century, imperialism and enclosure. Her treatment of these two concerns reinforced her support for the middle class within the British national image. Their place was further cemented by an increase of Parliamentary Enclosure Acts and the growth of the industrial city, which in turn necessitated open spaces for recreation that were not part of royal or noble estates.

## Chapter 3

### Enclosure and Exhibition: Contracting and Expanding National Identity

#### Enclosing the Commons and Excluding the Commoners

Evolution of British national identity to include the middle class resulted in part from the development of the uniquely British picturesque style, but also from ideological disruptions. Ian Watt famously associated the changes in the realm of literature with social and economic changes, specifically, “Watt relates the growth of the novel’s form to changes in the intellectual and social milieu of the eighteenth century” (Schwarz 59). Thus, novels represent changing social tides, including the evolution of the ideologies surrounding landscapes and their use. In addition to the eighteenth century rising popularity of the novel the latter half of the century witnessed a shift in literary and political values toward romantic sensibilities. Thus, Jane Austen’s works demonstrate both Watt’s theory of the novel’s tendency to subsume other genres (in part as a middle class phenomenon) and the romantic tendency to privilege the individual, particularly as the individual interacts with the landscape. Thomas Weiskel traces Romantic era linguistic disruption between words and their meaning back to Alexander Pope and the eighteenth century, with Pope’s definition of *bathos* as assigning an “un-natural” meaning to a word through irony (19). Weiskel claims that the emphasis on irony was so strong in eighteenth-century literature that words were disrupted from their true meaning to the degree that there was no longer a clearly “high” or “low” language, and he claims that Wordsworth furthered the disruption through his use of vernacular language, settings, and characters to convey sophisticated themes. Obliteration of the lines between high and low language reflects the changes to landscape definitions, also.

Weiskel writes of the imagination’s need to reconcile “the particular and the universal” (59) as part of the Romantic’s desire to comprehend the sublime in a description that demands both high

and low language. While interaction with land and space is universal, the Romantics described experiences that were particular to classes. Only the lowest of classes might experience Wordsworthian Goody Blake's situation, reduced to poaching fallen timber as found in "Goody Blake and Harry Gill" (*Lyrical Ballads*, 1798). Only the highest of classes might experience Lady Catherine de Bourgh's indignation at an interloper's perceived attempt to gain access to her ancestral estate through marriage, as told by Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice*, 1813. The Romantic imagination's struggle to reconcile the particular and the universal required careful determination of which experiences fit each category. For example, Wordsworth clearly saw Harry Gill's stinginess as universal, or becoming universal, just as Austen's characterization of Lady Catherine demonstrates a universal class concern for controlling upward mobility. Yet, both of these examples demonstrate the slipperiness of labeling any experience universal. One goal of literature is to foster empathy for those in different positions, for the Harry Gills and Lady Catherines to understand the Goody Blakes and Elizabeth Bennets, yet all of these positions are at once universal and particular, and Romantic writers of fiction and poetry reconcile the two by recognizing how they coexist. Lady Catherine's class distinctions can be at once universal and particular because Austen lays a sufficient foundation of Elizabeth Bennet's singularity (in part by distinguishing her from her sisters and from other eligible women in *Pride and Prejudice*) so that Lady Catherine's condescension transcends the superficial strokes with which she herself is painted.

Stephen Hancock explores a similar instance of collision between the particular and the universal when he considers the "body of the king," which, through using Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and relying on the criticism of Ernst Kantorowicz, he imbues with sublimity, or at least with sublime command. Hancock writes, "The sublime mode was part of a transition from a paradigm of overwhelming power exemplified by the body of the king to the pervasive power of surveillance utilized by the rising middle class" (3). The sublime for Hancock coincides with power and authority,

via Foucault, as the sublime possesses the ability to instill fear. Kantorowicz describes the ideology of the “body politic,” or the simultaneous abstraction of government authority and the reification of it in the “body” of the king. Hancock also depends heavily on Mary Poovey’s description of the development of a coherent social consciousness in *Making the Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830-1864*, which delineates the evolution of the center of authority from the king as the “body politic” to the “great body of people” that grew to be comprised primarily of the “laboring poor” who claimed authority “through the ability to find commonality at an absolutely small level of experience” (Hancock 14). Thus, social and political authority follow the path of pecuniary emulation from king, to nobility, to middle class, to working class, although the British working class would not gain authority until the middle of the nineteenth century. The major influence on perspectives on land in the first half of the nineteenth century was enclosure, between the first General Enclosure Act in 1801, and the third and last in 1845. The second half of the century was greeted by the 1851 Exhibition, which marked a shift from the political turmoil roused by enclosure, While enclosure divided class, the Exhibition presented a unifying effect on the classes and nation.

Between the extremes of the body of the king and the great body of laboring poor, Hancock transfers the authority of the sublime from the king and the leisure class to the growing middle class, when in Foucauldian fashion, he writes that “ability to constitute moral law to which the sublime is equivalent is also connected to the right to punish” (9). So, did the “right to punish” convey to the middle class during the nineteenth century? Jane Austen provides compelling examples of middle class characters grasping the reins of moral authority, as they also accepted more legal authority through the increasing number of younger sons excluded from inheritance through primogeniture who pursued careers in the justice system, one of the few avenues for respectable professional employment available to them. Austen authors the conveyance of moral authority from leisure class to middle class by allowing her middle class characters to adjudicate the wealthy.

Austen's narratorial voice extends beyond the reach of her middle class characters' reactions to pass judgment on the weak, amoral, selfish, or stuck-up and condescending wealthy and titled characters. We should note that although the Austenian narrator often criticizes the wealthy, she also provides fair-minded and respectable citizens of the leisure class. *Persuasion's* Lady Russell wrongly advised Anne Elliot not to marry Wentworth when she was young, and although the mistake was made because of undue deference to rank, she accepts culpability for the mistake when Anne and Wentworth renew their relationship. The narrator introduces Lady Russell as she advises Sir Elliot on a "scheme for retrenchment" to salvage his family financially while saving face socially. Austen writes:

She was of strict integrity herself, with a delicate sense of honour...She was a benevolent, charitable, good woman, and capable of strong attachments; most correct in her conduct, strict in her notions of decorum, and with manners that were held a standard of good-breeding. She had a cultivated mind, and was, generally speaking, rational and consistent – but she had prejudices on the side of ancestry; she had a value for rank and consequence, which blinded her to the faults of those who possessed them (17).

Lady Russell's acquiescence to the renewed romance later appears through both Anne's and the narrator's perspectives. Anne hesitates to reveal the romance to Lady Russell because of the advice formerly bestowed, and Anne's internal monologue shows her empathizing with Lady Russell at the same time she expresses trepidation about how her mentor will accept the news. Austen blends the two perspectives, writing,

Anne knew that Lady Russell must be suffering some pain in understanding and relinquishing Mr. Elliot, and be making some struggles to become truly acquainted

with, and do justice to Captain Wentworth. This however was what Lady Russell had now to do. She must learn to feel that she had been mistaken with regard to both; that she had been unfairly influenced by appearances in each....There is a quickness of perception in some, a nicety in the discernment of character, a natural penetration, in short, which no experience in others can equal, and Lady Russell had been less gifted in this part of understanding than her young friend. But she was a very good woman, and if her second object was to be sensible and well-judging, her first was to see Anne happy (234-5).

The quick but fluid shift from Anne's perspective to the narrator's confirms that the narrator shares Anne's middle-class sensibility, for the choice between Mr. Elliot and Captain Wentworth is one steeped in class distinctions. Both perspectives portray Lady Russell positively, yet realistically, in her mistaken elevation of status and her willingness to revise her initial opinion of Wentworth.

Austen's characterization of other members of the leisure class reveals more middle-class bias, but Austen's realism maintains a balance between universal stereotype and specific caricature. For example, Sir Walter's effete finances threaten his insistent vanity, and Austen addresses his narcissism directly through his preoccupation with reading the Baronetage and his obsequious interest in Lady Dalrymple, but Austen conjures some sympathy for him when she reveals in *Persuasion's* conclusion that Mrs. Clay and Mr. William Elliot had been plotting together to ensure Mr. William Elliot's inheritance. Although Sir Elliot neglects Anne for his own egotism, his conceit also leaves him vulnerable to flatterers like Mrs. Clay and Mr. Elliot. And as Mrs. Clay was an inappropriate match for Sir Elliot because of her superficiality and lack of pedigree, Austen demonstrates succinctly how upward mobility through marriage opens the possibility of yielding a stronger upper-middle class, but also the danger of social climbing.

When *Persuasion*'s narrator provides the background of the Elliots' marriage, she bestows Lady Elliot with the rationality her husband lacks:

Lady Elliot had been an excellent woman, sensible and amiable; whose judgment and conduct, if they might be pardoned the youthful infatuation which made her Lady Elliot, had never required indulgence afterwards. – She had humoured, or softened, or concealed his failings, and promoted his real respectability for seventeen years....She had, however, one very intimate friend, a sensible, deserving woman, who had been brought by strong attachment to herself, to settle close by her, in the village of Kellynch; and on her kindness and advice, Lady Elliot mainly relied for the best help and maintenance of the good principles and instruction which she had been anxiously giving her daughters (10-1).

Through Sir Walter's perusal of the Baronetage, we know that Lady Elliot was the daughter of "James Stevenson, Esq. of South Park in the county of Gloucester" (9), which places her a social level below her husband. Although *Sir Walter* legitimately nudges the edges of nobility with his rank as a baronet and his genealogy from an "ancient and respectable family" that served in the office of High Sherriff (10), his wife, we are told, came from a solidly middle-class background and allowed his rank and good looks to dazzle her. Despite her socially beneficent but intellectually bankrupt alliance, Lady Elliot influenced her husband for his own improvement and for the improvement of his daughters. Mary Elliot, the youngest daughter and, thus, the one with the least time for maternal influence before her mother died, follows her father's tendency toward self-involvement, although hers manifests itself more often in her health concerns and self-pity, yet she joined an "old country family of respectability and large fortune, and had therefore *given* [emphasis Austen's] all the honour,

and received none” (12) when she married Charles Musgrove, “Esq<sup>13</sup>.of Uppercross, in the county of Somerset” (10). The oldest daughter Elizabeth should exhibit her mother’s influence more, but her close relationship to her father has shaped her into a vain image of him. Anne, alone, escapes Sir Walter’s genetic heritage by the close alliance she forms with Lady Russell, who like Lady Elliot, married above her own rank but maintained her sense.

So, while Sir Walter escapes becoming merely a flat stereotype of class conceit, Austen balances his character flaws by allowing him to be tempered by his sensible middle-class wife, at least for as long as she lives, for he resumes his folly after her death, even to the point of taking his family to the brink of financial ruin. When faced with his debts, he absolutely refuses to sell Kellynch Hall, and he even resists renting it to take a smaller residence within the parish. Austen’s attitude toward middle-class influence on the leisure class – even its tentative hangers-on, like those in Sir Walter’s class as a baronet – is generally positive, although Austen carefully evades making this a universal trait with all her characters. For example, Emma Woodhouse’s influence on her friend Harriet Smith propels Harriet dangerously toward social overreaching that threatens to eliminate her true opportunity for conjugal happiness with Robert Martin; however, we see little influence from Harriet Smith on her leisure class friend Emma Woodhouse. Ivor Morris speculates that “the simple means of association with her patroness” is supposed by Emma to be the vehicle for her disadvantaged friend’s improvement. Morris even pushes his interpretation of Emma’s reasoning so far as to say that her “mere acceptance is seen as conferring an immediate dignity and worth” which Emma finds to fail, as Mr. Elton declines to accept Emma’s friend as an equal to Emma herself. At the novel’s denouement, Emma acknowledges Harriet’s good nature to be as strong as her beauty, but Austen provides no evidence that that good nature has improved Emma’s social sense

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<sup>13</sup> Note that Sir Walter gives Charles Musgrove the honorific “Esquire,” which Lady Elliot’s father also bore, and it is his internal monologue that proclaims Mary the giver of honour to the family.



or sense of ethics. Instead, we see Knightley to have been a greater influence on Emma's maturity.<sup>14</sup> While Austen demonstrates the potential hazards of class mobility, she also allows for the opportunity for lower classes to improve those above them socially.

*Persuasion* ends enigmatically as Austen concludes with descriptions of Anne Elliot's future happiness:

His [Wentworth's] profession was all that could ever make her friends wish that tenderness less; the dread of a future war all that could dim her sunshine. She gloried in being a sailor's wife, but she must pay the tax of quick alarm for belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance (237).

Juxtaposing domestic virtues with national importance implies a level of mutual exclusivity, but the marriage of Anne and Wentworth suggests just the opposite, that domestic virtue leads to national importance, which in turn entails a change to the "body politic" to become more inclusive, particularly to include women and other classes, at least in limited ways.

Austen's primary themes revolve around social mores and women's shifting roles (and particularly middle class women's shifting roles) in society and their tenuous position in a society that left them few possibilities for supporting themselves or acting autonomously, but she also touches, at least tangentially, other important concerns of her day, including Britain's imperialist conquests and the impact of Enclosure Acts on others besides the landed gentry. Imperialism and enclosure may seem unrelated since the first considers external and the second considers internal

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<sup>14</sup> Another example of the failure of class mixing to improve the leisure class occurs in *Mansfield Park*'s Miss Maria Ward of Huntingdon, who hardly enhances the integrity of Sir Thomas Bertram when she becomes Lady Bertram and bears him three insolent children – Tom, Julia, and Maria – and only one rational son, Edmund.

acquisition of land; however, focusing on acquisition and use of land and resources reveals that the motivation for both methods of expansion share the same desire for increased wealthy, power, and control. Exploring Austen after Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* may at first appear disingenuous, but considerations of Austen's take on imperialism that consider only Said or work only against Said omit significant allusions and novel approaches to Austen's attitude toward colonial conquest. For example, Austen alludes to the complications of imperialism at the end of *Persuasion* when she resolves Mrs. Smith's financial troubles by having Wentworth recover "her husband's property in the West Indies," requiring him to write for her, act for her, and see "her through all the petty difficulties of the case, with the activity and exertion of a fearless man and a determined friend" (237). Mrs. Smith has been left nearly penniless after her husband's death, and besides Anne, she remains friendless, too, without an advocate to correct what Austen presents as complicated financial and legal affairs. Redressing the loss of her husband's property places Wentworth even more in the role of military colonizer than just his attachment to the navy. While we know from the beginning of the novel of his naval affiliation, and we know he has been fortunate in his naval career, Austen does not present a direct picture of him as a conqueror. However, with his attention to Mrs. Smith's West Indies affairs, we can square him through Said with Sir Thomas Bertram as a covert representative of British transgression through imperialist conquest, which aligns him with patriarchal tradition and authority, despite his initial class status.

Jocelyn Harris deciphers Austen's descriptions of Wentworth's naval success in terms that are certainly imperialist and border on sinister. She argues compellingly that Austen's characterization of Wentworth alludes not only to Robert Southey's "hagiographic *Life of Nelson* of 1813" (181), but also to Napoleon and Captain Cook, as well as the fictional Othello, and Byron's *Giaour*, and *Corsair*. While many of Harris's comparisons between Wentworth and real or fictional sailors offer insight into Austen's aim in developing his character, key to Wentworth's imperialist

concerns is Harris's description of how Wentworth's account of his naval activity signals conquest, not merely peace-keeping duty. For example, Harris writes,

...when Wentworth talks about the money he made in the *Laconia*, after a "friend of mine, and I, had such a lovely cruise off the Western Islands [Azores]," and "again the next summer, when I had still the same luck in the Mediterranean" (67), he means not an idle pleasure trip, but the quasi-piratical liberty to prey on enemy shipping. Such lucrative raiding trips were often given as a reward for post-captains, such as Wentworth, who distinguished themselves in action. By acting independently, they could gain more freedom, more responsibility, and potentially more money. Wentworth made "a handsome fortune" by his "successive captures" (30), for his prize money of £25,000 equates to a stunning £1.25 million in today's currency (185-6).

Despite the complications inherent in finding equivalencies in modern financial terms, Harris's explanation of Wentworth's missions as at least somewhat piratical paints a decidedly different portrait of him from usual interpretations. From his own excursions, Wentworth has gained familiarity with the West Indies enough to assist Mrs. Smith in removing the "incumbrances" (198) that sequester the property from her.

The connection to Mrs. Smith reveals Austen's attitude toward a different conquest, seeking money through marriage. Mrs. Smith must request assistance from Wentworth because Mr. Elliot, formerly an intimate friend and the executor of her husband's will, refuses to help her, and in explaining the difficulties she has encountered in requesting his assistance, Mrs. Smith also exposes the extent of Mr. Elliot's exploits. She discloses that his only goal had been acquiring a fortune, despite his former wife's low family connections, and among his reasons for pursuing Anne for

remarriage is desire to ensure Sir Walter does not marry Mrs. Clay, with the possibility of their producing a new heir who would intercept his inheritance of Kellynch and the title of baronet. Thus, Austen juxtaposes Mr. Elliot's domestic conquest for riches alongside Captain Wentworth's piracy, and while Wentworth curries our respect for his foreign exploits, which are obfuscated by their distance overseas, their vague descriptions, reliance on the audience's understanding of naval posts, and the culture of honor attributed to the military, Mr. Elliot is vilified for his deception and lust for wealth. For Austen, conquests are best left abroad.

Said associates domestic values and colonial, too – Austen's "domestic virtues" and "national importance" – in his discussion of *Mansfield Park*, where he says Austen "synchronizes domestic with international authority, making it plain that the values associated with such higher things as ordination, law, and propriety must be grounded firmly in actual rule over the possession of territory" (87). Said proposes that the younger Bertrams indulge in excesses of drama and romance because they are left without a patriarchal ruler, just as Sir Thomas's Antigua properties decline in his absence when he returns to England. Said's take is that the social disintegration at Mansfield is "explicitly associated with feminine 'lawlessness'" (86); however, feminine lawlessness does not describe the chaos in Antigua. Austen hardly implies that Lady Bertram could ever have been a matriarch who ruled a controlled domestic space, yet she does suggest that the right, rational partner can confer and maintain order. Consider the expectations for the future households of Elizabeth and Jane Bennet, the reformed Emma Woodhouse, Anne Elliot, and Elinor Dashwood, which Austen leads us to imagine as organized and responsive to feminine authority. In this way, she strikes a balance between the universal and the particular, since the successful union depends upon the right combination of masculine and feminine rationality, or upon a combination of masculine and feminine "sense" tempered by masculine and feminine "sensibility."

Said references J.A. Hobson's 1902 treatise, *Imperialism, A Study*, which he says defined imperialism as "the expansion of nationality, implying that the process was understandable mainly by considering *expansion* as the more important of the two terms, since 'nationality' was a fully formed, fixed quantity" (Said 83). As Said argues, nationality was not then, nor ever is, a constant that was fully formed or fixed, and because national image constantly transforms itself, the expansion of nationality is, in fact, already the injection of an already outdated image or ideology. Thus, as the Enclosure Movement converges with a period of tremendous British imperial expansion both movements simultaneously reshaped national identity. Runjiang Xu and Yucheng Li note the parallel development of the two social revolutions:

With the large-scale Enclosure Movement at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the old organic rural communities were dissolved and new ones forged under the impulse of industrialization. Meanwhile there occurred a new process of relocating England within a much larger circle of the world map. Living in an era when Britain was busily engaged in its wildest domestic exploitation of the poor and overseas colonization of other countries in the world, Austen is certain to be familiar with the idea of imperial expansion (185).

Xu and Li's assertion that Austen was familiar with imperial expansion is not novel, but their perspective that imperialist expansion and the Enclosure Movement shared genesis in the same impulse is. The two drives complicate each other, as the colonial impulse implicates, tangles, and subsumes so many other political actions. Rachel Crawford describes the intersection of imperialism and enclosure, writing, "Political expansionism was paralleled in landscaping treatises by the celebration of unrestricted views in the vast parks of the gentry and in popular literature by the elevation of the sprawling form of English georgic poetry" (5).

The exact number of acres enclosed during the span of years designated by the Enclosure Movement varies, but all reports confirm that the amount of land removed from common access was massive. Helena Kelly states that

Around half of all the Enclosure Acts passed between 1727 and 1845 were enacted during the twenty-year period between 1795 and 1815 when more than three million acres of wastes, commons, and heaths were enclosed. This figure equates to just under five thousand square miles, an area one tenth the size of England.

Others estimate the amount of land enclosed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries amounted to as much as twenty-one percent, which sounds exaggerated, but may include land that was legislated to different owners, or repeatedly enclosed. The act of enclosure (or the Enclosure Acts) affected three realms of English national identity: political, financial, and aesthetic. These three realms could probably be parsed differently, according to theoretical motivations, but dividing them into these three overlapping categories allows for those other theoretical structures to overlay and explicate the social and literary impact of enclosure.

Logically, an understanding of the Enclosure Movement begins with its political machinery. The movement was comprised of a series of Parliamentary acts, and although enclosures occurred before the eighteenth century – through Parliamentary acts and without them – enclosure increased substantially then. Jerome Blum defines enclosure as “the consolidation of scattered parcels of land into one (sometimes more than one) piece by exchanges of land of equal quality and by the extinction of rights of common, that is, the right of a person to take things from the surface of the land that he did not own,” which included the rights “to graze cattle (common of pasture), to cut turf or gorse for fuel (common of turbary), and to take wood for building, repair, or fuel (common of estover)” (478). A Marxist examination of the movement immediately implicates the capitalist landowners in the

“extinction of rights” that denied agricultural laborers of their independence and made them into hired wage-earners, dependent upon the landlord/landowner, with the eventual consequence of driving many of the agricultural laborers toward urban centers in search of better employment. In fact, it is difficult to view the Enclosure Movement as anything but detrimental to agricultural laborers, but there are, perhaps, other considerations that, if they do not exculpate capitalist landowners, do explain additional causes and effects of the movement.

In addition to his succinct definition of enclosure, Blum summarizes criticism that has sought to determine the cause for the sudden increase in enclosure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries:

The earlier writers believed that the reason lay in the domination of English society by the landlords, their commercialization of agriculture, and the establishment of capitalistic farming. The more recent scholars agree that large proprietors seeking increased revenues from their land initiated enclosures. However, they point out that the reasons for, and especially the timing of enclosure, were much more sophisticated than the earlier historians seemed to think. Price movements, improvements in transport, proximity to markets, fluctuations in interest rates, the possibility of a higher rate of return than that offered by other investments, shortage of grazing land, and simply imitation of neighbors who had enclosed, are among the explanations suggested to account for increased enclosure... (481).

Blum suggests neighborly competition or emulation toward the end of his list of causes, but he and other historians of the Enclosure Movement do not linger long on cultural influences of effects that literary examinations reveal, namely the growth of the picturesque aesthetic and the Romantics' privileging of the individual. I will examine the pervasive influence of the picturesque, and England's attachment to it as a national aesthetic, emblematic of British intellectual strength

throughout Europe, later in this chapter as the third of the three realms of British national identity affected by enclosure, but the growing Romantic emphasis on the individual as a component of national identity and as a way of addressing the balance of the particular and the universal belongs within the realm of the political.

As Stephen Hancock relocates the “authority of the sublime” along the descent from the body of the king to the “body politic,” he also privileges the individual along the way. As the scope of moral authority widens, each group or class included assumes the authority of the king, which elevates each individual within that class to the level, at least metaphorically, of the king. Literary Romanticism has long been associated with elevation of the individual, as a philosophical movement born of the French Revolution’s respect for individual (at least some individuals’) rights. Carl Woodring includes all contemporary aesthetic expression in the movement toward the individual, writing,

Nineteenth-century art is the art of the individual and the particular. Early nineteenth-century art is of the particular observed at a particular time in a specified place by an individual mind....For the Romantics, whether or not nature could exist independently of the human mind, it was the human imagination that bestowed oneness and value upon external nature (195).

Even though Austen endorses existence within most social norms and castigates the characters who stray from social and moral consciousness, celebration of the Romantic philosophy of the individual echoes faintly in her novels through characters that resist becoming types, such as Catherine Moreland’s anti-Gothic heroine behavior. The existence of a Romantic Hero demands emphasis on the individual, and the Enclosure Movement both reflects and fosters the emphasis.



That the bulk of enclosures were Parliamentary reflects the growth of democracy, as historically enclosures often involved little official process beyond the landowner's claim of common lands adjacent to his own. Taking the route of Parliamentary act emphasized the demise of feudal rituals (land was not bestowed by the king or a single high-ranking authority) and demonstrated how politicized land ownership was, especially land that belonged to no one individual. The process for Parliamentary enclosure was long, complex, and expensive. The Berkshire Record Office lists eight involved steps to the process. First, the landowner who was seeking to enclose land had to "obtain the agreement of local landowners" that the land could be enclosed. Although the encloser was not required to gain the consent of all area landowners, he was wise to seek their approval at the beginning of the process to avoid being held captive to their monetary requests later in the process. Next, a Bill of Enclosure was drafted by the village and read before the House of Commons twice, submitted to a committee for alterations, read a third time, and then passed to the House of Lords. Once the House of Lords approved it, the Bill was given Royal Assent and became law. The third step required public posting of the Act, sometimes on a church door or sometimes in the local newspaper, by a committee of enclosure commissioners and surveyors. Early in the Enclosure Movement, the committee involved dozens of these officials; however as the momentum grew and the number of acts increased, the size of the committee shrank to just three or four appointed commissioners and surveyors. The committee met, swore to act impartially, and then requested that anyone who had claims to the common land submit them for public display and comment. The surveyor(s) drafted a map of the new apportionments, as villagers with legitimate claims to common land were allotted land elsewhere that was supposed to be of equal value<sup>15</sup> to the land claimed through enclosure. The final act of the committee was the submission of the Enclosure Award, a document that should accurately describe the reapportionment of land including a new map. Two

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<sup>15</sup> Most accounts assert that the land awarded in compensation was of less value than the land taken for enclosure.

copies of the Enclosure Award were signed and sealed, with one remaining in the town or village and the other copy filed with a court.

Modern historians have found the Enclosure Awards, their maps and accounts, to be inaccurate, although they have found little to sustain contemporary accusations of overtly unfair or unethical practices. Difficulty in categorizing the common land as turbary, estover, or pasture problematizes lucid readings of the documents since many times the land qualified in more than one of these categories. Since the commissioners were local before the first General Enclosure Act of 1801, the complications of categorization within the awards and the technicalities of the map proportions likely made sense to those involved and cannot be interpreted now as evidence of unethical practices. Blum describes the commissioner appointment process:

Usually they were named in the bill for enclosure presented to Parliament.

Typically the lord of the manor named a commissioner, the tithe owner named one, and the third was selected by the owners of the major part of the value of the parish. Each commissioner was expected to represent the interests of his sponsor (484).

The growth of enclosures led to the three General Enclosure Acts of 1801, 1836, and 1845, which directed a specialized group of commissioners to tour the country and ensure the legality of multiple land transfers, which meant that the land involved in General Enclosure Acts was not handled by local officials. The General Enclosure Acts and the acts that preceded them were intended to consider the needs of the poor; however, the nature of the awards disenfranchised many who had previously had access to the commons. Only those who legally held commons rights could benefit from the reapportionment of land, and therefore renters were given nothing. Blum writes,

Ownership of rights of common adhered not to a person but to certain dwellings in the parish, or to a piece of land. The individual had rights of common by virtue of his ownership or tenancy of the dwelling or the piece of land. Only those who owned or rented cultivated land had the right to pasture animals on the fallow fields of the arable. The villagers who did not hold land or did not live in the appropriate cottages did not possess rights of common, though by sufferance some of these rights were often allowed them (478).

Those who did not have legal access to commons were not given any land in compensation for their enclosure. The legal particulars are critical in determining the financial impact of enclosure, as critics have been divided on the intent and outcome of the acts since their rise.

Largely viewed as a machination to take some of the few resources available to struggling villagers and award it them to already wealthy landowners, Enclosure Acts were enacted, at least sometimes, with an intention of consolidating local resources for more efficacious use by all. Leigh Shaw-Taylor dissects the problem of defining the impact of enclosure on the working class by distinguishing between proletarianization and immiseration. By proletarianization, Shaw-Taylor clearly seeks to determine the processes through which enclosure transformed agricultural laborers whose labor was their own into day laborers dependent upon the landlord/landowner. Immiseration, by contrast is the process of “becoming poorer” (641). Shaw-Taylor references J.L. and Barbara Hammonds’ 1920 *The Village Labourer*, which, despite its age, continues as a seminal resource for agricultural historians, when he identifies “seven mechanisms by which the poor may have lost direct access to resources at enclosure” (643). He first lists that many claims were not recognized by commissioners. Merely making a claim during the award process did not guarantee compensation from the encloser, and many – some legitimate, some illegitimate but still costly – were rejected.

Next, he notes that “lands awarded in lieu of common rights were often worth less than the rights they replaced” (643). Shaw-Taylor and others have estimated the monetary worth of the resources villagers accessed through using the commons to be between £31 and £55 annually, including the right to graze cattle, the right to feed pigs, space for small vegetable gardens, gleaning rights, and the right to collect fuel. The land villagers received in compensation rarely produced this amount of resources. Villagers also suffered when the confiscated property reduced their finances, leaving them unable to afford the rent on their cottages and forcing them into urban centers for work and less expensive housing.

Those who rented common-rights cottages were not compensated, since their landlords were. In many cases, the landlords claimed the newly apportioned land for their own uses and did not provide alternative land rights to their renters. Also, those who grazed cattle on common land illegally could not be compensated, and although their use of the commons had been trespassing, they still suffered without its use. Likewise, squatters did not receive enclosure compensation, and no one received compensation for fuel rights or commons of turbarry. Together, these mechanisms of disenfranchisement increased both proletarianization and immiseration. In his effort to measure the scope of the enclosure’s impact on agricultural laborers, Shaw-Taylor uses data from representative counties that show for the period between 1791 to 1846 the percentages of laborers that were owners, tenants, and occupants of “common-right dwellings” (652). He found that for the counties examined, an average of four percent of agricultural laborers owned common-rights dwellings; an average of nineteen percent were tenants of common-rights dwellings; and an average of eighteen percent were occupants<sup>16</sup> of the dwellings. Because laborers owned little of the commons, they had little input into the choice of commissioners for the awards.

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<sup>16</sup> For Shaw-Taylor’s study, occupants were essentially sub-lessors of common-rights dwellings. He cites as common the practice of a laborer leasing several dwellings in order to access more of the

John Chapman's claim that the "movement, taken as a whole, was principally concerned with land reclamation, and the reorganization of open arable into compact, individually held plots was a secondary feature" (33) takes the perspective of the encloser, usually a wealthy land-owner. To assert that the effort was one of "reclamation" implies that the landowner, or his ancestors, once held the land *in toto*, yet the commons provided for agricultural laborers and the village at least as far back as feudal law. The effort to "reclaim" the land through enclosures promised increased income to the landowner, but was often quite costly.

If we return to Austen's depictions of land ownership and class in *Sense and Sensibility*, it becomes clear that the landowner and those around him saw the costs of enclosure through very different lenses. Austen reflects the landowners' perspective through John Dashwood as he complains to Elinor of the costs of improvement. John mentions that Mrs. Ferrars has kindly given him and Fanny two hundred pounds to help with "great expense" of living in London. Elinor restrains her irritation and responds with just a little chiding, "Your expenses both in town and country must certainly be considerable, but your income is a large one" (193). After all, Elinor has some idea of John's income since he inherited her father's estate, and she remembers the quality of life she experienced there just a few months earlier. John argues that his income is not as large as people suppose and that he hopes it will increase in time because of his efforts at enclosure:

The enclosure of Norland Common, now carrying on, is a most serious drain. And then I have made a little purchase within this half year: East Kingham Farm; you must remember the place where old Gibson used to live. The land was so desirable for me in every respect, so immediately adjoining my own property that I felt it my duty to buy it. I could not have answered it to my conscience to let it fall into any

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common resources, but then sub-leasing the dwelling or cottage to others, as he required only one residence for himself.

other hands. A man must pay for his convenience, and it *has* cost me a vast deal of money. (194).

Elinor inquires whether John has paid more than the land was “intrinsically worth,” to which he replies,

Why, I hope not that. I might have sold it again the next day for more than I gave; but with regard to the purchase money, I might have been very unfortunate indeed, for the stocks were at that time so low that if I had not happened to have the necessary sum in my banker’s hands, I might have sold out to a very great loss (194).

Through Elinor’s perspective, the reader sees John as egocentric and wanting in empathy for his disinherited half-sisters, whom through neglecting his father’s dying request, John has relegated to a class purgatory where they lack the financial means to maintain their social status. John’s explanation that he has bought East Kingham Farm does not include any details on the fate of “old Gibson,” who quite possible could have faced eviction upon John’s purchase. He describes the potential for loss at selling stocks at an unprofitable time as if the loss were real, and the fact that he maintains enough liquid resources to make the purchase actually speaks to his wealth, not the relative penury he argues for.

John’s callous behavior accurately reflects the *zeitgeist* among enclosers, according to Jerome Blum:

Contemporaries referred frequently and usually bitterly to the heavy costs of enclosure. They argued that the costs often discouraged proprietors, especially of smaller estates, from enclosing. When proprietors did enclose they often found the costs so excessive that they severely reduced the profits enclosure should have produced, or worse still, enclosure costs drained the proprietors of capital needed to

introduce improvements on their now consolidated farms. The favored remedy that these critics proposed was a General Enclosure Act that would eliminate the considerable expenses involved in getting a private bill through Parliament (487).

Blum describes John Dashwood's complaints exactly, even though *Sense and Sensibility* was published in 1811 and written around 1795, when Austen was nineteen. Although Parliament enacted the first General Enclosure Act in 1801, Austen's initial composition of the text as an epistolary novel titled *Elinor and Marianne* predated the 1801 act, and she likely drew on experiences familiar to her before the streamlined process. Blum lists enclosure costs to include solicitors for shepherding the individual bill through Parliament, surveyors, commissioners, fences, poor allotments, roads, draining, and embankments. He estimates enclosure costs to be £3 per acre for actual enclosure, another £3 per acre for post-enclosure improvements such as drainage, fencing, and hedges, and as much as another £6 per acre if other improvements were made, such as adding buildings, to make the total per acre price of enclosure between three and twelve pounds (491). John Dashwood seems primed for the upper end of these costs, as he relates to Elinor his and Fanny's plans for a new greenhouse and flower garden.

Robert Clark cites Austen's close familial ties as a source of her knowledge of the process and cost of enclosure. Austen's maternal cousins inherited Adlestrop Park at Balliol and engaged "energetically" (106) in enclosing surrounding commons in the eighteenth century. Her cousin James Leigh "set about preparing for an Act to enclose by effecting exchanges with tenants and reducing the leaseholds and copyholders from 8 in 1763 to 2 in 1774" (107). Clark writes that no consideration was given to the poor whose resources would be displaced by enclosure of the commons, and that even though James Leigh died in 1774 before the act was ratified, the family followed through to its completion, resulting in 926 acres of 1307 acres of the parish being enclosed. When the heir of Adlestrop, James Henry Leigh, inherited the property, he enclosed adjoining lands

in neighboring parishes Broadwell and Longborough. Clark refers to parish records when he finds that James Henry Leigh expected the cost of enclosing Longborough to run around £3000, which he borrowed at five percent interest, and expected Longborough revenues of £1035 annually, which was an increase of £210 per acre after interest. Clark finds bills for the Longborough enclosure of “£178 for hedging, £284 for obtaining the act, and £400 in fees to commissioners, surveyors, and solicitors” (107-8).

Clark’s details clarify the Austen and Leigh families’ involvement in enclosure, and although Jane Austen could stand implicated in taking too sympathetic a stand on the issue, her perspective on enclosure typifies her overall political stance. Clark describes Austen’s “progressive conservatism” demonstrated in her desire to “work out a compromise” between classes and her “general preference for intelligent reinvigoration of the established landed class” (119). For Austen, that reinvigoration occurred through intermarriage between classes, excluding the laboring class. Thus, Austen’s works represent movement of the wealthy as the only bearers of national identity to the introduction of the middle class as representatives of British nationalism. Repeatedly, her characters obscure their class distinctions by marrying across the lines established by wealth and pedigree.

Raymond Williams writes about the impact of enclosure as establishing a Janus-like bifurcated vision of British nationalism:

The links with the Industrial Revolution are again important, but not as the replacement of one “order” by another. It is true that many of the landless became, often with little choice, the working class of the new industrial towns, thus continuing that movement of wage labourers to the towns which had long been evident (98).

Williams continues by attributing the rise of the Industrial City not only to the Enclosure Movement, but also to the general growth in population and poverty: agricultural labor could support a limited



number of workers, while the innovations of the Industrial Revolution increased the capacity of cities, particularly London, to provide livings. Thus, enclosure reshaped the English landscape literally as it also defined the bifurcated vision of modern industrial progress and nostalgic agricultural pastoralism.

Rachel Crawford compares “qualities that idealize the open-field system” and those which “derogate the enclosed system” (56). She provides the following list:

Table 1 Qualities of Enclosed and Open Field Systems

<b>Enclosed Field</b>	<b>Open Field</b>
Great Britain	Old England
Hedge-rows or fences	Unimpeded view
Owner-employer	Benevolent Paternalism
Individuated labor	Communal labor
Wage labor	Wage-in-kind
Contracts	Customary agreements
Machinery	Handiwork
Artificial grasses	Indigenous crops
Urban markets	Village economy
Dispersion, mobility	Self-contained circumference
Market demand	Season calendar
Secularization (endless uniformity)	Ritual (identity in difference)
Poor rate/vagrancy	Parish benevolence
Time supervision	Otium/independence

Crawford's list of differences represents ideological distinctions, not confirmed differences. For example, although records indicate that the poor rate increased in the decades following enclosure in individual parishes, the cause and effect relationship often cannot be determined. While it is likely that enclosure resulted in increased immiseration and reliance on the parishes poor relief which was funded by taxes, it is unclear how much of the cause was enclosure, and how much was a result of other factors, such as those Williams lists: increasing population, poor crop yields, and dwindling *noblesse oblige*. While many of these distinctions evolved with enclosure and the growth of the Industrial city, it is important to emphasize the *perception* over the reality of the differences.

National image at the time of enclosure morphed to include a nostalgic yearning for “Old England” and its beneficent paternalism (that was itself a myth) and a pride in technological progress that was evidenced in mechanization identified with enclosure and the Industrial City and capitalism.

The third realm affected by enclosure, in addition to the political and financial, is aesthetic, and in this aspect, too, enclosure both influences, and is influenced by existing artistic preferences in landscape. As Crawford charts, the open-land system differed from the enclosed system in the method used to demarcate ownership. Crawford contrasts “hedgerows or fences” with the “unimpeded view,” although this reading of ideological perception conveys its own ideologically loaded assumptions. Enclosure required fencing or hedging to signify ownership, and security in ownership displaced desire for implied ownership of open expanses represented by the ha-ha. The ha-ha was essentially a ditch that indicated a property line, and it enabled the landscape observer to view past the property line and created an optical illusion of greater acreage. Of the ha-ha, Jill Heydt-Stevenson writes

Imperceptible from a distance, the ha-ha was a "sunk fence" that prevented livestock from crossing from the park into the garden, while also allowing the viewer to maintain the fiction that the grounds were seamlessly connected. The ha-ha was so named because viewers would react with both surprise and laughter when they realized they had been deceived by this earthy *trompe l'oeil* (311).

Horace Walpole credited Charles Bridgeman for developing the ha-ha, and he became the assumed author of the feature, but several recent historians have challenged the conventional acceptance of his authorship. For example, Alan Fletcher argues that the commonly acknowledged earliest English ha-ha, which appeared in about 1695 at Levens Hall and was introduced by the French gardener Guillaume Beaumont, actually was preceded by a ha-ha at Althorp in the early 1680s (153), and both

followed seventeenth-century French ha-has, whose purpose was “to open up a narrow vista rather than a wide view of the countryside” (146). Despite disagreement over the feature’s origin, the ha-ha came to emblemize English landscapes and their rolling expanses, and their gradual demise with the increase of enclosure became a metonymy for the decline of agricultural simplicity, which was replaced by callous modern efficiency. Crawford uses Susan Stewart’s reflections on memory and longing to determine the “components from which nostalgia is composed”: “a declensionist theory of history, an entropic theory of ethics, the sacrifice of real (that is, direct) relationships for wage-mediated relationships, and loss of national authenticity which had been bound to the simple values of agrarian life” (59).

Nostalgia for an agrarian ideal that likely never existed follows the structuralist pattern of binary division: open versus closed; good versus exploitative. Crawford writes,

The pair[s] [listed in her table] continue to function as a structural opposition in a familiar process whereby the replacement system is perceived by some as the necessary but painful corollary to progress and by others as the decline from an effective economic system which fell prey to the greed of the landed (63).

However, consideration of how the open/closed binary contributes to national identity requires a broadened perspective that includes both because national identity may encompass conflicts or dualities. For England to develop a national identity that was represented in part by the industrial city and prided itself on progress, capitalism, and technology, it had first to find ways of divesting itself of its association with the pastoral ideal. Enclosure may have been a “painful corollary” to some, but painful corollaries make poor national standards. For enclosure and industrialization to transcend from phenomenon into ideology, they required a reverse reification or re-imagined fetishization. The movement toward accepting the bifurcated vision of British landscape and

national identity entailed merging the two into a national identity that at once honored its agrarian past while also glorying in its modern accomplishments.

### **Class Conflict on the New Common Grounds**

Raymond Williams resists blaming enclosure for all of England's early nineteenth-century ills, writing, "Enclosure is then a factor within this complex change, but not a single isolated cause" (104). He balances travel writer Arthur Young's disdain for enclosure – "I had rather that all the commons of England were sunk in the sea, than that the poor should in the future be treated on enclosing as they have been hitherto" (67) – with George Crabbe's "counter-pastoral" which he describes as "a stretch of bad land," "unproductive, weed-ridden soil" (91). Yet as enclosure changed the appearance of the rural English countryside by constructing hedgerows and fences to demarcate boundaries and by forcing disenfranchised poor from villages toward urban centers, the loss of idyllic pastoral vistas inspired new uses for land within cities. The growing urban centers morphed into emblems of national pride, even as they offered the fleeing poor little refuge from their increased immiseration. The differences between the Agas Map of circa 1561 and Greenwood's 1830 *Map of London* demonstrate not only the enormous population growth in that time, but also the attention to developing green spaces within the city as it continued to sprawl. The development of parks as public spaces throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century paralleled the changes caused by enclosure, and class conflict ebbed and flowed in the new spaces until the middle of the nineteenth century with the Great Exhibition laid a foundation for middle class inclusion in public landscapes.

Hyde Park and St. James Park shadowed estates of nobility across England in adopting picturesque landscaping style; for example, in 1728 Queen Caroline initiated renovations at Kensington Gardens by assuming another 300 acres from Hyde Park and employing Charles

Bridgeman as architect for improvements, among which he added his signature ha-ha. The Royal Parks website describes the park's use, saying "The gardens were open on Saturdays to anyone who was 'respectably dressed'. The main path, the Broad Walk, became as fashionable as the Mall in St. James's Park had been during the reign of King Charles II" (*The Royal Parks*). The Broad Walk lost its popularity in 1837, when Queen Victoria moved her residence to Buckingham, which abutted St. James's Park, the oldest of the London royal parks. Charles II had popularized St. James's Park in two ways: first, he redesigned the grounds to add avenues of trees and expanses of lawn, but more important, "he opened the park to the public and was a frequent visitor, feeding the ducks and mingling with his subjects" (*The Royal Parks*). Charles II's circulating with his subjects and Queen Caroline's acceptance of "respectably dressed" garden visitors foreshadow one of the major impacts public parks would have on national identity, the possibility of class integration through shared public experiences.

St. James's Park, Hyde Park, and its adjacent Kensington Gardens represent opportunities for class mingling on royal grounds, but other parks provided this opportunity, too, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The growth of park use can be attributed to the burgeoning pressure of London's population increases (some of which was itself a result of enclosure), and the changes in park access reflect and drive changing attitudes toward class composition within national identity. Though Manchester came in many ways to represent Britain's imminence in industrial progress, London remained more representative of national identity.<sup>17</sup> Although we recognize now the tension

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<sup>17</sup> Manchester, as Elizabeth Gaskell's fictionalized "Milton," threatened national order with its "danger zones of class hostility" (Zemka 7), and Gaskell demonstrates through Margaret Hale the disgust many English felt toward the imagined industrial aesthetic of Manchester, and for those who had actually visited it, the real industrialized difference between the city and a county parish. Daniel Brash writes, "The novel tells the story of Margaret Hale's move from pastoral south to industrial north.... The move from south to north, however, is not merely a symbolic removal from idyllic pastoral life to polluted industrial existence. Margaret's perception of both places undergoes radical change (60).

in evolving cultural standards to include industrial centers as part of national identity, as at the publication of *North and South* in 1855, Gaskell addressed the need to change, not its resolution. London, however, as an urban center considered somewhat dissolute, sharing some of the connotations of ugly mechanical labor with Manchester, but also redeemed through many positive associations – such as being the seat for royalty, Parliament, and literary achievement – remained the figurative center of England, if not the geographic center.

Robert Fishman labels London the “birthplace of suburbia” because of its response to the flood of immigrants and agrarian poor that entered the city in the early nineteenth century. He writes that the growth of eighteenth-century London was initially a “source of pride” (19) for its citizens, and that although the city was generally organized around a theory of affording the wealthier classes greater proximity to the city center, initially even those central segments of the city were integrated and there were no clear class boundaries. The mercantile class crowded as close as possible to the city center, too, to gain access to work and home both within “walking distance,” an important factor with no mechanized transportation. Fishman describes a mid-eighteenth century change from the heterogeneous urban core as the mercantile class moved their residences away from the core, and toward the perimeter of the city, for their increasing wealth allowed them to purchase carriages for transportation to and from work, and the land at the edge of the city offered better real estate value. The migration left the leisure class, with its holdover habits of estate life of access to the park for exercise, novelty, and entertainment, and the laboring class, whose previous experience in agrarian villages had produced routines associated with use of the commons.

These habits continued with removes to London, but Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, St. James’s Park, and Vauxhall Gardens substituted for the accustomed landscapes. As these urban oases of aesthetic landscapes integrated different classes pursuing leisure in London, new sources of class friction ignited. Miles Ogborn narrates an incident from Vauxhall in 1773 that demonstrates

the clash of intersecting classes. He writes of Mrs. Elizabeth Hartley, a beautiful actress who had just made an appearance at a Covent Gardens theatre, perhaps the Royal Theatre on Drury Lane before it was demolished in 1791, and then elected to walk Vauxhall, as was among customary diversions. As Mrs. Hartley strolled with a group of friends, which included Henry Bate, an Essex parson and editor of *The Morning Post*, a group of “fashionable young men” (116) – later identified as Thomas Lyttelton, George Robert Fitzgerald, and Captain Croftes – ogled her. The parson Mr. Bate defended Mrs. Hartley’s honor, despite her husband’s presence, and the affair’s significance grew as it drew attention to the lurking dangers of Vauxhall and as the event was publicized and merited literary responses, even a century after it occurred.

Lyttelton was the son of a politician, and Croftes later served under Colonel Burgoyne in the American Revolution, but the pivotal figure in the gang of three “Macaronis” was George Robert Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald’s reputation for infamy and wild behavior traversed his native Ireland into England, making him a truly British dandy. His “wild freaks and lawless excesses would fill a small volume” (“George”). Ogborn situates the problem of women’s excessive visibility within the context of consumption and, thus, capitalism: “Vauxhall’s cultural geography was part of the eighteenth century’s ‘consumer revolution. Newly commodified pleasures were sold to a broader public than ever before....” (*Spaces* 118). Although there has been speculation that more than Fitzgerald’s gaze ignited Bate’s indignant chivalry, the accounts consistently attribute the confrontation to the Macaronis’ insolent stares at the lady. In previous centuries, landscape architects employed the construction of estate grounds and the situation of the manor so that the estate owner wielded visual control over those on his grounds, although he sometimes exposed himself to his visitors’ views also, as he watched them. Private estates shielded the leisure class from too public a viewing, although as Elizabeth Bennet embarrassingly finds, exposure to the landowner’s vision is always a possibility.



Gardens open to the public, although examples such as Vauxhall were not completely available to the public, exposed visitors to the gaze of others, and that gaze was often sexual.

An 1891 issue of *All the Year Round* recounts the Vauxhall affair and includes an account of the park's history, particularly of Jonathan Tyer's purchase of the grounds in 1730 and his development of them. In an article titled "The Surrey Side: Some Famous Gardens," the author describes Tyer's motive in the purchase as monetary, and after renovations, Tyer re-opened Vauxhall in 1732. "Surrey Side" says that as soon as it re-opened, Vauxhall was a popular attraction for diverse spectators:

All classes are mingled in this general gathering, for the cost of admission is only a shilling, and a certain propriety of dress is the only qualification for admittance to the scene of fashionable gaiety. Swords must not be worn, says an edict; but they are worn, nevertheless, and sometimes drawn, although on the whole order seems to have been very well maintained (162).

The edict against swords anticipates violent outbreaks, and the expression of its defiance, and common recognition of the defiance, demonstrates a lack of accountability for at least some of the protocols for garden use. By 1740, "the price was raised to two guineas," but a complex underground economy ensured that those who might be challenged by the increased price remained eligible for attendance: "As the tickets were transferable, the practice arose of letting them out for hire, and at various taverns on the route a ticket admitting two might be hired for the night for a shilling, on leaving a sufficient deposit for its return" (162). The existence of an underground economy for Vauxhall access signifies class transgression through negligence for its rules, and required visiting a tavern, another step toward less respectable entertainment. Male behavior did not conform as easily, in part, because as Huggins explains, different norms existed for different periods

of the male life cycle. While women were expected to act respectably throughout their lives, men enjoyed a period from adolescence until marriage when wildness was tolerated. Male wildness expressed itself in expected forms – drinking, womanizing, fighting, and gambling – but men were obliged to divest themselves of these vices before marriage in respect to their wives and to avoid financial ruin. Still, controlled or occasional indulgences were permitted before marriage, though mixing classes exacerbated this indulgence.

The Vauxhall incident represents the vulnerability of a “respectable” woman who encounters a group of profligate post-adolescents in a public sphere. Mike J. Huggins asserts that women defined respectability for the middle class, and that respectability was then transferred upward to the leisure class: “Women acted as ideological filters and transmitters, upheld local ‘standards’, developed the appropriate language and exercised class-based judgments about associational life” (587), and if this is true, it follows that the public outcry apparent through publications including *London Magazine*, *The Vauxhall Affray*, and *All the Year Round* declares a middle class feminine voice in determining decency in public, in landscape, and beyond the usual female, domestic sphere. Mrs. Hartley’s husband did not defend her; the parson did, but his profession categorizes him within the realm of feminine decency, according to Huggins’s alignment. Fitzgerald, as ringleader of the three Macaronis in the Vauxhall incident fits Huggins description of young male behavior perfectly. When “respectable” citizens ventured in public for entertainment, they found that “mixing” with others resulted in being viewed by others, and the clear intent of the Macaroni gaze was sexual. The resulting fray that followed the penetrating gaze occurred between Bate and Fitzgerald, although Fitzgerald deferred to his friend “Captain” Mills when Bate agreed to an actual boxing match to settle the argument. After the fight, Bate found that Mills was no captain, but was, in fact, Fitzgerald’s footman, implicating Fitzgerald and the class of single, affluent men again for endangering a servant with no option to decline the fight. Watching and being watched was the goal

of cruising Vauxhall, and so Mrs. Hartley's objection begs the question of what, exactly, offends about being seen.

Peter De Bolla's monograph *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Britain* studies the power of the gaze in public places, including parks, and he examines the Vauxhall affray as an example of the evolution of what he calls "The Visibility of Visuality." De Bolla contends, too, that being seen was among the greatest purposes of attending of Vauxhall, and he extends his argument even to the point of suggesting that those who strolled Vauxhall Gardens for entertainment did so as an act of flirting with, but not committing, sexual transgression:

One of the most compelling attractions of Vauxhall was the possibility of sexual encounter; even the prospect of a relatively free social space in which men and women could interact without the constraints of those polite social codes of conduct that everywhere surrounded eighteenth-century social encounters was titillating (86).

De Bolla classifies the visual transaction as voyeuristic, as he extends the motive for attendance beyond looking and being seen to being "seen looking" (87). The act of being seen looking is erotic, and perhaps autoerotic, as the Vauxhall visitor sought the titillation of the experience. The mirroring of gazes bouncing back and forth impeaches both viewers in the visually sexual act, which could censure Mrs. Hartley herself, and not Fitzgerald alone.

Flaunting oneself at Vauxhall did not figure within the sexual temptations and vices of middle class and leisure class gentlemen, but gardens and parks presented opportunity for vices to breed. Drunkenness was not uncommon, and fighting was evident from Fitzgerald's episode, as some of the narrations of the tale include details of the crowds that formed as physical violence appeared imminent, suggesting that visitors were hungry for yet another stimulating spectacle. Bate

may be best classified with the feminine for his profession, despite his pugilistic prowess, but the outcry against Fitzgerald gendered him, too, as feminine for his dandy-ish Macaroni behavior and dress. De Bolla quotes from Bate's publication *The Vauxhall Affray; or The Macaronis Defeated; or The Priest Triumphant* which contained a mock heroic titled "The Macaroniad" styled after Alexander Pope's *The Dunciad*. The poem impugns Fitzgerald's masculinity thus,

The Macaronis are a sex

Which do philosophers perplex;

Tho' all the priests of Venus' rites

Agree they are *Hermaphrodites* (56).

Yet despite these lines and other contemporary opinion that dandies were effeminate, the Vauxhall case implies that Fitzgerald's visual assault was hyper-masculine, as he was able to sexualize his gaze to the point of offending a woman accompanied not only by her husband, but also by other protective men. Fitzgerald's cowardice in propelling his footman into the fight does not project an image of masculinity, but the cause does, and because "The Macaroniad" was written by Bate or at least sanctioned by him through inclusion in the publication, perhaps the attack on Fitzgerald's masculinity was motivated more by malice than anything else.

The Vauxhall incident and its literary longevity represent eighteenth and nineteenth-century desire to redefine and reinforce ideologically constructed gender expectations, including each gender's role in public spheres, such parks and promenades, as those at Vauxhall Gardens. The Macaronis demonstrate a failed national flirtation with extending male adolescence beyond the time where it could be contained by family and school, as social restrictions seem not to have tamed Fitzgerald's band; however, the public outcry against Macaroni hijinks describes an understanding that

the hyper-sexualized male could not be allowed free reign in public areas, and as parks and gardens such as Vauxhall emblemize the nation through their diverse attendance and their subscription to national styles for landscape design, what was appropriate for the public parks and gardens easily translated into national values appropriate for all.

Access to public gardens allowed women to wield more authority than previously, when the estate landscape remained completely under masculine control, but the example of Vauxhall extended that influence into national identity as Vauxhall's democratic example spread to the continent. Jonathan Conlin writes,

Open to both aristocracy and middling rank, pleasure gardens fashioned a spectacle of order out of a heterogeneous crowd. They have been seen as uniquely British spaces, demonstrating how Britain juggled commerce, politeness and liberty. Yet these resorts had imitators abroad, especially in Paris (24).

Conlin argues that even though Vauxhall set the model for urban pleasure garden, Paris resisted the idea of emulating the British: "Far from being a case of Paris emulating London, they created a playful fantasy that shuttled visitors between the two cities – helping them imagine the ideal metropolis, polite yet policed (24). However emulation is exactly what occurred. To what extent the French believed they adopted British culture can be debated, but the British certainly believed they established a ideal representation of democratic access to respectable entertainment, despite the potential for moral disruption there.

The difference between internal perception and external perception is important to national identity. While British criticized and questioned the activities of Vauxhall visitors, they also prided themselves on the idealized image of the gardens that have their ugliness (the ugliness of class mixing, of class passing, and of class transgression through the impudent, eroticized gaze)

whitewashed. Gregory Nosan suggests that beyond the low price of admission to Vauxhall, another method for creating an egalitarian environment was the use of paintings exhibited in various halls.

Nosan asserts that

Vauxhall's patrons might have used the Gardens' architecture to imagine themselves as *like* the aristocrats who were typically represented as heroes in garden art, and who used their private gardens to display their own cultural power and advance their particular political agendas (101-2).

For Nosan, displays of paintings at Vauxhall could have alienated lower class patrons by emphasizing the differences between their lives and the lives of the leisure class, but instead, the lower classes subverted the symbols of wealth through vicarious experience and, thus, gained some measure of social power. Peter De Bolla agrees when he quotes a 1787 Vauxhall visitor as writing:

The manners of the lower orders of the people have, by almost imperceptible degrees, been humanized by often mixing with their betters; and that national spirit of independence which is the admiration and astonishment of Europe, in a great measure takes birth from the equality it occasioned (87).

Contemporary opinion claimed the lower classes were elevated by mixing with the leisure class, and the diverse event's enlightening the lower classes was the representation of British identity that British wished to present to European eyes.

Moral enlightenment through controlled leisure activity for the working classes surprisingly signals a shift in the working classes' significance to national identity. Because industrial workers were accountable to their supervisors for the quality of their labor, whereas an agricultural laborer was often accountable only to himself, it became imperative for the growing capitalist culture to foster a leisure ethic that would undergird the work ethic. In other words, a drunken farmer might

cost himself if his day's labor suffered from the consequences of the previous night's overindulgence; however, a factory hand would slow down an entire assembly line and affect the output of other workers, which supervisors would keenly watch and disapprove of with a Benthamite panoptic eye. In his discussion of Victorian leisure from 1770 to 1850, Stephen Hall Clark contends that laboring class leisure activities grew out of a need for compactness, activities that took little time or space, since workers in cities had no free access to land. Clark describes the desire for activities to discourage "public rowdiness and drunkenness," which would require moving them from the pub to some other location. Respectable entertainment grew to be as much an economic concern as a moral one, and participation in a public landscape grew in popularity as a morally acceptable opportunity for leisure activity for those who were not a part of the leisure class. While Vauxhall presented that opportunity, sometimes interrupted by rowdiness, by the middle of the nineteenth-century, it fell on hard times, changing hands, closing in 1840, opening under new management in 1842, but closing for good in 1859. While Vauxhall's financial security vacillated between prosperous and bankrupt, other parks periodically gained popularity, as fashion demanded change. For example, Hyde Park's favor grew as its Grand Entrance proclaimed its importance in 1824, but Hyde Park's greatest boast was its hosting the 1851 Great Exhibition, which foreshadowed the foundation of the Kyrle Society in 1875 and the development of the National Trust in 1894.

### **National Spectacle, the Great Exhibition, and Determining Who Is Seen**

Tanya Agathocleous, as others have, cites the Great Exhibition as important because "it was depicted as the apotheosis of mid-century free trade cosmopolitanism and because it played a significant role in cementing London's reputation as a multi-cultural cosmopolis" (30). Duncan Bell, then, would classify Agathocleous with the most current of Exhibition critics. In a review of Jeffrey Auerbach's *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851*, Bell frames past and current studies of the Great Exhibition:

Across the decades, it [the Exhibition] has been rendered as a hopelessly naïve expression of political and economic optimism, a symbol of class and race oppression, a technology of national unity, a hymn to industrial capitalism, a site of the origins of modern consumerism, and an orientalist space for the imperial gaze. In recent years, it has been interpreted in the context of two major historiographical debates: the first concerning the meaning and valences of British national identity, the second regarding Britain and its vast empire. The aim of this volume is to move beyond these analytical frames, and to globalise the Exhibition, situating it in a variety of transnational and global circuits. The Exhibition, from this angle, stood at the heart of an attempt to locate Britain at the centre of a nexus of global power and influence... (726).

As Bell historicizes Exhibition criticism, his rendering of current approaches excludes the intersection of Britain's bid to become "the centre of a nexus of global power and influence" and "the meaning and valences of British national identity," for in fact, construction of British identity assumed and was consumed with establishing that identity as dominant, global, and powerful, and the Exhibition, its "things," its capitalist foundation, message, and ideology, and its location in London *and* in Hyde Park, a royal park, underscore Britain's bid to create a nationalist spectacle with global implications.

The impetus for the Exhibition originated within the Royal Society of Arts and its nationalist envy of France's series of exhibitions. Contrary to its current name, the organization of country gentlemen established in 1754 originally convened to consider improvements in arts, manufacturing, and agriculture (Hobhouse 1), not the arts alone, and thus, an interest in land was contemporaneous with their founding. George III's sixth son, Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, was elected president of the RSA in 1816, and he recruited Prince Albert into the Society in 1840. The RSA had



for decades considered the idea of an exhibition to compete with French exhibitions that featured technological innovations and were popularly attended, beginning in 1798. The Royal Dublin Society held exhibitions every three years from 1827 to 1850 (Hobhouse 4), and in May 1845, the RSA adopted a resolution to mimic other countries in hosting an exhibition, since their examples had rewarded and motivated “cheapness of production and excellence of material” (4). The RSA appointed an Exhibition Commission, which included Sussex, Albert, and Joseph Paxton, and charged the Commission to explore the viability of a British exhibition. The Commission began with a trial run on a small scale in 1847, which attracted 20,000 visitors and encouraged pursuit of a larger spectacle.

In 1849, the Commission directed Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt and Thomas Cole to attend an exhibition in Paris to analyze it and collect ideas for a British version, and Francis Fuller, another RSA member attended separately. Herminone Hobhouse quotes Fuller’s own account of his telling Wyatt that London could “do a much grander work” if it invited “contributions from every nation” and that if Prince Albert were to take the lead, he would become a “leading light among nations” (8), and it seems to have been Albert’s idea to hold the Exhibition at Hyde Park, since he still struggled to determine his role as consort and searched for activities that fulfilled his sense of political duty. Hobhouse credits Thomas Cubitt, who was with Fuller, for conveying this idea to the Prince, and the term “leading light” later became associated with Albert. The connections between Albert, the Exhibition, and Hyde Park call to mind Kantorowicz’s exposition on the “body politic” and the evolution from the body of the king to a public body. Even as Albert assumed some direction for the national and international event, he carefully navigated a line between royal spectacle and national spectacle. His role of Royal Consort, and criticism he had faced as being merely an appendage, or as being too influential on the Queen’s politics on behalf of his native Saxon state in Germany, removed

the possibility of his becoming the true figurehead of British royalty, as that was Victoria's role<sup>18</sup>, but his contribution to Royal Societies allowed him to develop the workings of a public body politic, and hosting a national and international event on royal grounds and admitting all who paid, expanded access of royal grounds into the public realm.

After discussion on the best body to direct the expanding plans for the Exhibition, in 1849 a Royal Commission was founded to supervise the event. James and George Munday offered funding for construction of a building and for prizes to be awarded to exhibitors, who needed persuasion and incentives to commit early to such a speculative project. The contract with the Mundays specified that the loan for capital outlay would be repaid, with "fair compensation for the outlay and risk they might have incurred" (Commissioners xvi). Private investment into a public event drew criticism, most fiercely led by John Potter, mayor of Manchester from 1848 to 1851, but perhaps his objections were assuaged when the Royal Commission availed itself of a clause in the contract with the Mundays which permitted retraction of the agreement when the Treasury reimbursed their investment of £20,000 with an additional £2,250 in interest (Hobhouse 16), and when Potter was knighted in November 1851. The Royal Commission held weekly meetings, often led by Albert, and among their chief tasks was commissioning an architect to construct an impressive, but temporary structure to house the items that were to represent industry and innovation. On 13 March 1850 the Commission "issued an invitation" (18) to those interested in contracting to build the central structure of the Exhibition, including rules and conditions – especially for size – and around 250 potential builders (mostly London architects, but some rural contractors as well) submitted plans (18).

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<sup>18</sup> Thomas Richards explains extensively how the image of Victoria grew out of the Exhibition and reached a saturation point with her Golden Jubilee in 1887, the celebration of her fifty years as Queen. Although the Jubilee was a grand event, and another spectacle of nationalism, Richards writes, "the Empire could do nothing to conceal the fact that Victoria was a domesticated monarch whose public image resided not in the trappings of the upper class but in middle-class ethos of frugality, self-denial, hard work, and civic responsibility" (79), which demonstrates the evolution of national identity to include women and the middle class.

Ironically, many of the designs that the committee preferred were from foreign architects, and among the English-designed finalists, one plan mimicked a French building. When some of the designs became public, their mass and permanence drew an outcry from those who feared such construction would destroy the opportunity for the wealthy to be seen on the “Row” at Hyde Park, and who called for moving the Exhibition to Regent’s Park to improve access for exhibitors and their heavy machinery, but their requests were ignored, demonstrating a privileging of middle class access over leisure class traditions.

The Commissioners of Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works, and Buildings had existed since 1810 and held authority over events on royal grounds, and thus, the Royal Commission required their consent for the Exhibition, which was given, but the Commission of Woods demanded a solid date for the removal of the Exhibition building and restoration of Hyde Park grounds, in addition to restricting Exhibition access to particular Park entrances and mandating the Royal Commission obtain permission before removing any trees.<sup>19</sup> The Royal Commission committed to closing the Exhibition by November 1851 and restoring the park to its previous state within seven months of the Exhibition’s end. Paradoxically, the temporary building was commissioned to a gardener whose reputation was for building a very permanent structure, Joseph Paxton, who had quoted Francis Bacon in his own botanical magazine, “God Almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures; it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handyworks” (iii). In his efforts to cultivate a breed of

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<sup>19</sup> Perhaps not coincidentally, the Commissioners of Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works, and Buildings was split into two bodies in 1851: Commissioners of Works and Public Buildings, and the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues, which divided the responsibilities for public and commercial functions of royal holdings, and listed the royal holdings to include Saint James’s Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Chelsea Garden, Parliament Square Garden, Regent’s Park, Primrose Hill, Victoria Park, Battersea Park, Greenwich Park, Kew Gardens, Hampton Court Park, Richmond Park, Bushey Park, and Holyrood Park.

giant lily, the *victoria regia*, Paxton had built The Great Stove at Chatsworth, a glass and iron structure that provided a temperate climate for the lily to grow to a size at which his daughter Annie could stand on one of its floating leaves<sup>20</sup>. Paxton's work on The Great Stove drew him to consider applying the same iron and glass concept to the building for the Exhibition, which struggled with opposition to the use of Hyde Park still. The novelty of his design, and his proposal of an edifice more easily dismantled, secured the support of the Commission's Building Committee, which then persuaded the remaining decision-makers who were influenced by Paxton's ability to integrate living trees into the Exhibition space. The innovative design of the Crystal Palace caused concern, too, especially for its strength and safety, and in a moment that combined the various ideologies underpinning technological progress, landscape aesthetics, and patriotic idealism, troops of soldiers marched across the galleries under construction to test their suitability for crowds of visitors<sup>21</sup>, and demonstrate their stability and safety.

As further evidence of Albert's contributions and of his and Victoria's concern for access to public spaces by all classes, Hobhouse includes information on the Prince Consort's personal addition to the erection of buildings that would represent British nationality and accomplishment:

A particularly Albertian external exhibit was the pair of Model Cottages, designed by Henry Roberts for the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes of which Albert was President. The Prince had persuaded the Duke of Wellington to make available vacant ground near the Knightsbridge Barracks, it being impossible to put it elsewhere after objection to "bricks and mortar within the Park." He himself

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<sup>20</sup> The 17 November 1849 *The Illustrated London News* carried a drawing of Paxton's daughter in this demonstration.

<sup>21</sup> After the Crystal Palace was built, too, the military was visually associated with the site, as *The Illustrated London News* in 1852 published an engraving titled "The Last Promenade at the Crystal Palace," which showed British soldiers in full regalia parading through the visiting throngs under the glass ceiling of the Palace. Thus, the image of the Palace was often linked to the strongly nationalist symbol of British dominance.

paid the cost of erection, some £458 14s 7d. and the cottages not only won a Council Medal, but were seen by quarter of a million visitors during 1851, being re-erected in due course as a lodge for Kennington Park (38).

The construction of the cottages seems typical of the mid-century royal desire to remain representative of national identity, but at the same time shows Albert as torn toward occluding his own imprint by privileging the focus on altruism. The 250,000 observers who toured the cottages demonstrated the construction's popularity, but in no way compared to the estimated six million visitors who attended the Crystal Palace while it was erected in Hyde Park, and consider that 25,000 paid to attend the opening ceremony of the Exhibition, just one day. Richards extends Marx's claim that "members of the dominant class produce the dominant representations, [but] what he forgot to add was that...they first try them out on themselves" (7). What Albert tested with the cottages extended beyond experiments for housing the poor, but instead Albert put to trial the concept of conspicuous altruism, dependent upon commodity fetishism, as a component of royal, and thus, national identity, and enacted through interaction with public landscapes.

The Exhibition was unequivocally about *things*,<sup>22</sup> and to equate the display to commodity fetishism appears somewhat inaccurate at first, since the items featured at the Exhibition were not for sale *at* the event and so they were not exactly commodities. The Exhibition was not a massive bazaar or market, for the Royal Commission had distinguished their goals from direct trade early in the planning process, and instead sought to promote production, the philosophical reverse of the metonymic relationship between an object and its life cycle. Yet the things in the Exhibition attracted all the attention and awe of a fetishized commodity because of the ceremony and spectacle

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<sup>22</sup> Attention to Victorian concern with things is not new, and appears in interesting critical approaches. For example, Eva Badowska takes a Marxist approach to Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, when she asserts the novel's focus is on bourgeois interiority and the bourgeois predilection for *things*, as evidenced by Brontë's initial use of the name Choseville instead of Villette for the eponymous setting in her 1853 draft, quite soon after the 1852 conclusion to the Exhibition.

of the Exhibition, the rituals for observations, and, of course, because of the sheer number of the horde of things crowded into the Crystal Palace, each vying for the visitor's attention and gaze.

Richards writes,

The commodities of the crystal Palace are no longer the trivial things that Marx had once said they could be mistaken for; they are a sensual feast for the eye of the spectator, and they have taken on the ceremonial trappings of the dominant institutions and vested interests of mid-Victorian England (21).

Those reified dominant institutions primarily consisted of versions of nationalities, represented by their industrial contributions, packaged to become diplomatic representations of national culture that were then processed through British imperialist ideology to become accessible to English visitors of all classes, genders, and ages, and to define British identity through their alterity. A visitor of the Exhibition could feel like a world traveler; however, the world he experienced with the Crystal Palace was a grossly distorted one. Much has been written about the uneven distribution of space within the "World's Fair," with England dominating the space. Richards sums up others, as he says, "the exhibition layout essentially balkanized the rest of the world, projecting a kind of geopolitical map of a world half occupied by England, half occupied by a collection of principalities vying for the leftover space" (25), and his point is essential to understanding not only the experience visitors had upon observing the displays, but also the Royal Commission's mapping and intent in setting up space for the displays, and the attitude adopted by contemporary writers toward the event as a whole.

A fascinating example of the literary balkanization that represented the physical misrepresentation of nationality lies in a children's book about the Exhibition, published the year of the event. The full title of the book published by Thomas Dean and Son by an anonymous author was *The World's Fair; or, Children's Prize Gift Book of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Describing*

*the Beautiful Inventions and Manufactures Exhibited Therein; with Pretty Stories about the People Who Have Made and Sent Them; and How They Live When at Home*, which like many nineteenth-century titles strives to provide a complete description of its contents but also reveals authorial disposition toward the subject. The objective of the text was to extend beyond the type of descriptions available in guide books for the Exhibition and that dwelled on the objects themselves, although the book does elaborate on certain of the displayed items and praises many of them extensively. The true goal of the text was to generate images of the contributing nations, so that a child could associate the things that were to represent the nation with knowledge of the people and their culture; however, in doing so, the text abandons the purported goal of the Exhibition:

The Great Exhibition is intended to receive and exhibit the most beautiful and most ingenious things from every country in the world, in order that everybody may become better known to each other than they have been, and be joined together in love and trade, like one great family; so that we may have no more wicked, terrible battles, such as there used to be long ago, when nobody cared who else was miserable, so that they themselves were comfortable (3-4).

The final clauses of the statement speak to immiseration and class, topics which occur frequently as the author describes each contributing nation, and the invocation of empathy as a modern value – that enlightened moderns at least cared for those beyond themselves – actually becomes a refrain at the end of the text when the author describes the cottages designed by Albert for demonstration of English altruism and for the practical use of the poor. The text abandons its goal in joining countries together in love, as instead of promoting cultural understanding, it draws exaggerated images of otherness, primarily through descriptions of how other nations treat their poor.

*The World's Fair* certainly offers extreme, xenophobic examples of cultural difference, for example the Indian “Hindoo” woman who must join her deceased husband on a funeral pyre and be cremated with him, or the example of Chinese cuisine: “I do not think we should like to dine with a Chinese gentleman, or Mandarin, as he would treat us to strange dainties, as – a roast dog, a dish of stewed worms, a rat pie; or, perhaps a bird’s nest” (17). Little in these examples demonstrates the filial affection suggested by the illustration that begins the book and features a large, framed circle picturing observers surrounding the fountain within the Crystal Palace, with sixteen flags topping the circle (The dominant flag of the group is the British Civil Ensign, or Red Ensign, which represented Great Britain, including Ireland, since 1801, and was flown by merchant ships, not ships at war.), and with hands joined in a handshake at the bottom of the frame to represent British hospitality and the overall disposition toward friendliness and cooperation.<sup>23</sup> But more dangerous than these extreme examples is the pervasive reference to cultural differences in the treatment of the poor, the extravagance of the rich, and the lack of middle class. Although the text travels the world moving from Asia to southern Europe, to northern Europe and to the Americas, and then to France before finishing the tour with Great Britain, including “our own dear islands, England, Ireland, and Scotland” (75), the generated ideology of national identity for Britain is summarized simplest by beginning where the author ends, and then examining how his other descriptions differ from the idealized British.

Description of British culture occurs in the same terms used for other nationalities, but exaggerated to the superlative: “London...is the greatest commercial city in the world...,” (79) and “More coaches, omnibuses, wagons, vans and other conveyances, crowd the streets of London than

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<sup>23</sup> Beneath the framed circle of the Palace, a display of representative objects from the Exhibit completed the picture, including furniture, clothing, musical instruments, decorative items, and of course, machines. Together with the illustration of the crowds within the Palace, the image conveys the excitement of the public event and the Marxist mystery of things, which have been imbued with meaning beyond their physical existence or purpose.



any other city of the world” (80). Even the failings are superlative: “The mud cabin of the Irish peasant is the most miserable cottage you can imagine” (85). There is little question that Britain stands as the example for all those who were described before it, and that the author expects that British children reading the text and that foreign visitors to the Exhibition will learn from British example. The world imagined by the author is a morally dangerous one, where the greatest threat to one’s prosperity and happiness is personal laziness, or being born in a country where the rich exploit the poor, such as India, Turkey, Russia, and Italy. The emphasis on work ethic, or industry, befits a text intended to explicate an industrial exhibit, and the author emphasizes often that the peasantry of some nations are “exceedingly industrious” (7), “industrious, and cleanly” (33), or “extremely simple, but...industrious and ingenious” (32), as are the Indian, Dutch, and German peasantry, respectively, although in the case of the Indian peasantry, industry is not enough to escape the effect of the oppression of the “eastern grandee,” who can do whatever he pleases, or just “recline lazily on a pile of the softest cushions” (9). The distinctions between the rich and the poor present much of the text’s description of how the manufacturers live when at home, and very few of the examples include anyone who might be categorized as middle class. Germany had workmen, “in blue cotton blouses,” (4), and America had farmers, but other countries besides these and England lacked a class of citizens between the royalty or aristocracy and the beggars and peasants, according to *World’s Fair*.

The homes of the poor become the focus of attention toward the end of the text when the author explores Albert’s influence on the exhibit and his addition of model housing for the poor by describing the cottages<sup>24</sup> as “dry, warm, convenient, fire-proof, and healthy, and yet cheap” (105) and “situate [sic] at the corner of the barrack yard, near to the Crystal Palace, and will be shown freely to all persons visiting the World’s Fair” (105), as opposed to the exhibits in the Crystal Palace, which

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<sup>24</sup> The buildings, which each housed four families and provided each family with multiple rooms, were relocated with the Crystal Palace at the Exhibition’s end to Kennington, where they eventually fulfilled their purpose and were inhabited.

cost to be viewed. These contrast sharply with the miserable “mud cabin” of the Irish and the Italian “*Lazzaroni*” (28), who were often reduced to sleeping under porticos or in the piazza. Thus, Albert’s philanthropy drew notice and appreciation, creating a royal image of altruism, setting an example for others of means to extend charity as they could, and adding to the Exhibition he spearheaded by mediating an image of commodity consumption, even a veiled image which was distanced through its lack of mercantilism, by injecting a higher moral purpose to the entire event.

Progress or modernism attaches itself to British national identity, too, through the Exhibition and its attendant documentation, as *The World’s Fair* author carefully distinguishes between the nations that produce machinery worth mention, and those that do not, and the narrative act of pairing success with advanced machinery with social progress creates a metonymic relationship in which the machines represent the labor of the workers who operate them. For example, the author proclaims Indian machinery “very clumsy indeed” and “the funniest-looking things” (9), and the streets in Turkey and many other countries are “so narrow, and the pavements in many other parts so bad” that they will not admit carriages and the citizens are forced to traverse the city on foot. This contrasts with the English, who “are celebrated for their superior manufactures, which fame they are enabled to enjoy by means of the most ingenious machinery, rail roads, and canals, by which they can easily and rapidly send their goods, and travel from one part of the country to another” (77). The capacity for strong manufacturing represents modernity and progress, as does the adaptation to urban growth so that cities remain easily passable.

Traditional gender roles abound in most of the cultural accounts, and when they differ from British expectations, they are censured, such as the author describes Swedish women, who “do everything that men are employed to do in other countries” (42), or Canadian women, who “can read and write, but the men can hardly do either” (62). Yet, even as the text promotes traditional gender roles, it neglects as significant the principal counter-example of British marital roles, the Queen and

the Prince. The opening ceremony that followed military procession involved the following account of royal announcements:

After this, Prince Albert joined those gentlemen who have directed the affairs of the Great Exhibition, and going near to the Queen, read to her an account of the Exhibition from the commencement; to which Her Majesty answered, when the Prince had finished, that she was much pleased with the description of the proceedings, and that she hoped the World's Fair would do good to all mankind, by encouraging the arts of peace and industry, strengthening the bonds of love between all the nations of the earth, and promoting a friendly rivalry among our fellow creatures, in the useful exercise of those faculties which have been given by God for the Good and happiness of all mankind (100).

The line of authority here is clear, and Albert appears to be presenting this project to the Queen much as a child presents his mother an art project he has labored over at school, as a gift of his own creation, offered with hope for her approval. The key phrase in this re-telling is that Albert “joined those gentlemen who have directed the affairs of the Great Exhibition,” as his figuratively moving from his royal identity to join the middle-class men, some architects or gardeners, whose work resulted in the Fair demonstrates not only his humility, but a new kind of class transition, where adopting the role of someone in a class below is acceptable for a particular purpose and for a limited time.

Richards writes that the Exhibition “combined work, leisure, nature, and culture and dispensed them in a single confined space” (30), which allows the Exhibition to inaugurate urban space for all these activities. The Exhibition itself – the event, the place, the Palace, the things, the visitors – represented the concept of national representation within a single confined space, which

could later grow into a public parks system. Key to establishing a common urban space that could represent the nation was finding a way to embrace all classes in national identity through including them physically in that space. Richards asserts that the Exhibition, and specifically the Crystal Palace accomplished just that because “the working class no longer looked like the indigenous ally of the class that had rocked Europe in 1848. It was now just another segment of the market; it had become a customer” (37) because although the working class could not nearly afford most of the items exhibited, they could still know and desire the same objects.

Finally, as Richards enumerates six “major foundations of a semiotics of commodity spectacle,” he uses his semiotics of commodity spectacle to explicate other Victorian marketing successes such as the image of Victoria (particularly her Jubilee), billboards and posters, and medical advertising. However, the system of signs also regulated the development of the public parks system in the second half of the nineteenth century as Britain considered how to respond to changes in landscape uses and aesthetics. The six foundations include

the establishment of an autonomous iconography for the manufactured object; the use of commemoration to place objects in history; the invention of a democratic ideology for consumerism; the transformation of the commodity into language; the figuration of a consuming society; and the invention of the myth of the abundant society (58-9).

While each of these foundations develops new meanings when taken out of Richards’s context and applied to the shaping of public land into national parks, the new context does not distort Richards’s intent, but extends his argument about consumerist practice into a new realm and the new realm acknowledges the existence of the working and middle classes.

## Chapter 4

### Institutionalizing the Idealized Landscape

#### **Class Anxiety: Where Do the Poor Belong in the National Landscape?**

The plight of the poor attracted attention throughout the nineteenth century, and multiple approaches sought to alleviate their suffering, the most notable legislation of which was the 1832 Reform Act, which enfranchised some previously unrepresented segments of the English public and attempted to redress “rotten boroughs,” or districts with Parliamentary representation whose population had declined enough that they no longer merited a Member of Parliament. Francis Michael Longstreth Thompson writes,

Nowhere was the tension between old and new more obvious as in the political structure, which was widely believed to have become dangerously out of touch with social realities. Power and influence were concentrated in the hands of a privileged few, mainly the landed classes aided and abetted by allies and hangers-on from the wealthier reaches of commerce and professions, operating through a system whose agglomeration of curious franchises, pocket and rotten boroughs, was so bizarre as to defy rational justification (13-4).

Although Thompson emphasizes the authority of the leisure class, his acknowledgement that the middle class could access their authority, and thus share their political voice, segregates participants in nationalist belonging and those excluded from nationalist identity. The tension over who counts materializes as literal counting through enfranchisement and maintains ties to land through determination of legitimate districts or boroughs. The phrase “rotten boroughs” itself represents transference of moral responsibility from the leisure class to the landscape, as if geographic division of land into a distinctly recognized parcel can create a piece of land that acts irresponsibly,

unethically, immorally, or as if it can spoil or molder, instead of stating directly that political bureaucracy has permitted undue influence to sustain the legislative authority of tradition and wealth. While the 1832 Reform Act could not ameliorate all the evils of class distinctions, it did signal a shift in the ideology of national belonging to extend national identity to more (but not all) citizens through legitimized connection to land.

At mid-century the pressures of industrialization and its increased immiseration erupted so that the wealthy and middle classes began formal considerations of methods to control modernization – its enclosures and mechanized encroachment upon the land – through establishment of a variety of societies to discuss how to redress social problems. These societies, such as the Royal Society for the Arts, which developed and promoted the 1851 Exhibition, often were populated by overlapping groups of philanthropists. Such was the case for the Commons Preservation Society, which Graham Murphy claims was the “most effective” (19) of the societies devoted to the open space movement, a phrase that encompassed the work of several organizations including the Commons Preservation Society, all of which desired to ensure that the shrinking commons were preserved for use by the general public and not subsumed into the estates of the wealthy. George John Shaw-Lefevre, later Lord Eversley, led the Commons Preservation Society, and his influence for the cause drew strength from his roles as a Member of Parliament, the Secretary to the Board of Trade and First Commissioner of Works, but most long-reaching influence occurred from his publication, *English Commons and Forests* published in 1894. Robert Hunter joined Shaw-Lefevre in the Commons Preservation Society as solicitor and guide, and the same Robert Hunter was one third of the founding triumvirate of the National Trust at the end of the century. Hunter’s contributions to both the Society and the Trust demonstrate the relationship between mid-century and *fin de siècle* ideas toward land stewardship and demonstrate the intersection between the membership rosters of the many philanthropic societies, which in turn suggests that the concern for land use was a major one

that attracted multifarious approaches. Yet, these various approaches to addressing the poor and land use tended more toward non-fiction, as opposed to the popularity of fictional treatments of landscape a century earlier. Undoubtedly, landscape aesthetics remained integral to fiction and poetry, but the activists who contributed to the establishment of a national parks system (and therefore a landscape collection that purported to represent Great Britain) primarily chose non-fiction avenues for making their arguments.

Perceptions of the commons themselves varied often, too, from William Cobbett's objection to the term "wastes," (as Murphy quotes, "'Wastes indeed!'") to complaints that commons provided opportunity for gypsies and wastrels to loiter and cause trouble. The term gypsy or "gipsie" occurs often in objections to leaving the commons available to villagers or city dwellers as they had been for centuries, and the word's connotations convey racist and isolationist tendencies, but Matthew Arnold also idealized the gypsy in 1853 in "The Scholar-Gypsy." Abby Bardi describes nineteenth-century approaches to the figure of the gypsy, or the result of the "process of 'literization,'" (33) which developed a Westernized series of symbols for nomadic individuals and resulted in "their discursive placement ever further outside of the national teleologies or cumulative time of history" (33). Bardi offers diverse examples of the gypsy figure in nineteenth-century literature, beginning with Jane Austen's *Emma*, and the band of gypsies that accost Emma's friend Harriet Smith as she walks along a familiar path, necessitating her rescue by Frank Churchill, an event which Bardi classifies as sexually threatening and an example of unfair stereotyping. Bardi notes the contradiction between literary depictions of gypsies as noble savages or childlike free spirits and legislative attempts to regulate their nomadism such as the 1824 Vagrancy Act which justified its social control in the name of public health. In fact, it is the combination of the sexual threat as a public health hazard that best describes the over-sexualized gypsy figure, which is also an eastern European figure, or a "Romani"

who is projected as “a sexually-charged Other whose very presence challenged increasingly repressive codifications of social conventions” (Bardi 41).

Coding the gypsy menace as sexual and foreign develops the commons as dangerous to the community in ways that transcend vagrancy, so that the gypsy threat becomes a threat of Romani invasion, or at least a cultural invasion, yet Matthew Arnold’s scholar-gypsy defies the stereotype. Arnold’s retelling of the seventeenth-century tale of an Oxford student who rejects the search for employment through preferment and social expectations for profession and joins a band of gypsies. The poem begins with a pastoral introduction, which again ties gypsies to the land, and in fact, the transition to the inner frame’s tale of the Oxford scholar’s abandonment of his studies to pursue the gypsy life occurs as the narrator fixes upon a book left in the field, which acts as a totem representing the scholar’s former academic life and his present life of bucolic wandering. Glanvil’s book, the tome found in the meadow that contains the scholar-gypsy’s tale, extends British nationality into choosing a Bohemian lifestyle, in part because Arnold’s description of the narrative mythologizes it when he deems it “oft-read,” but also because Arnold characterizes him in nationalist terms: he is white, male, part of a class that can attend Oxford and upon graduation seek preferment and, thus, participation in the middle class, and he is smart, as Arnold describes his “quick, inventive brain.”

Despite his “pregnant parts,” the scholar succumbs to the gypsies’ “arts to rule as they desired / The workings of men’s brains,” and he explains to his former Oxford classmates that one of his goals in joining them is to learn that art. While the gypsies’ persuasion lacks sexual overtones, it remains dangerous in its inexorableness and conveys a threat of dominant Romani culture. That the Oxford scholar wants to learn the art demonstrates that acquiescence to gypsy lifestyle does not gain him complete access to what must be a genetically gypsy skill in persuasion, almost an ability to mesmerize or hypnotize a subject. The Romani gypsy remains a menace as long as he and his troupe maintain a presence in the English countryside, and the 1824 legislation sought to redress this



problem. Lance Wilder argues that Arnold's attachment to gypsy characters<sup>25</sup> betrays a contemporary anxiety about gypsies that touches "wide ranging issues such as Christian evangelism, public health, race, national identity, morality, capitalism, poverty laws, industrialism, and enclosure" (389). Wilder's list collapses easily into a question of inclusivity and exclusivity of national identity if his argument can be re-addressed toward who is counted as British. The gypsies are perilous because they ought to be excluded from national identity but they possess the uncanny ability to capture the British imagination figuratively, or as the Oxford scholar demonstrates, occasionally literally. Wilder's public health and morality issues convert into hyper-sexualized threat, which demonstrates cultural anxiety over women's growing inclusion into British national identity as the dominant patriarchal ideology stretched to include other genders but then faced a multitude of differences ranging from the hyper-sexualized male represent by the gypsy "Other," or the British Macaroni to the image of Victoria quickly evolving into middle-class matron but also ruler of both national space and domestic space, not ceding command to Albert.

Thus, the Commons Preservation Society (CPS) tangled with nationalist concerns that extended beyond class distinctions and salvaging the resources of the commons for the poor, who used the commons for grazing and fuel, from the clutches of capitalist landowners seeking to fatten their purses, although that masqueraded as their primary worry. The juxtaposition of individual rights and public rights appears in many mid-century texts, and John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* is one of the most notable examples for its straightforward approach to balancing the rights of the individual and society. His liberal argument that individual rights extend only so far as they do not affect others' rights also captures women in its more inclusive national identity. Mill calls male domination of women as "almost despotic power" (155), and calls for women to enjoy equal rights under law with men. Mill's *Liberty* was first published in 1859, around the same time several members of

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<sup>25</sup> Arnold's list of works that include gypsies includes not only "The Scholar-Gipsy," but also "To a Gipsy Child by the Sea-Shore," "Resignation," and "Thyrsis."

Parliament began to question the destruction of London's Epping Forrest. In 1865, Parliament established a "Select Committee 'to inquire into the best means of preserving for public use the Forests, Commons and Open Spaces in and around the metropolis'" (Murphy 20). Mill joined Shaw-Lefevre in his anti-enclosure efforts even though Mill had previously been a proponent for enclosure, and by 1865 Mill had transferred his support to anti-enclosure activists as he recognized how his own core philosophies aligned with the laboring class who were displaced by enclosure. Murphy quotes from Mill's letters, which show that he supported the CPS:

The desire to engross the whole surface of the earth in the mere production of the greatest quantity of food and the materials of manufacture, I consider to be founded on a mischievously narrow conception of the requirements of human nature. I therefore highly applaud the formation of the Commons Preservation Society, and am prepared to co-operate in the promotion of its objects in any manner which lies in my power (22).

By 1866 Shaw-Lefevre had navigated a bill through Parliament that strengthened the public's rights to the commons within a radius of fifteen miles of Charing Cross and heightened the apprehension of landowners who had been postponing plans for enclosure or whose plans had been delayed while they collected funds for the costs of enclosure.

While the 1866 Act was limited to a small area around London, landowners outside London feared the open space movement would gain momentum and spread beyond London to other industrial cities and even into the suburbs and countryside, for example enclosure of Chiltern Forest Berkhamsted Common twenty-six miles from London, which Murphy cites as representative of leisure class desperation when Lady Marion Alford struggled to find legal standing for enclosing land that was not quite her own. Because Berkhamstead lay outside the purview of the 1866 Act,

conflicts over its enclosure resonated with both parties, advocates for preserving the commons and the wealthy who were quickly advancing their plans for claiming the land, and the result was erupting physical violence as fences were constructed and demolished under the cover of night.

The confluence of multiple organizations and their literary and political memberships demonstrates a ubiquitous yearning to improve the conditions of those living in poverty, to find a comfortable coexistence between the profitability of a capitalist industrial economy and nostalgia for feudal pastoral innocence that likely never existed except in national consciousness, and to negotiate a modernizing world where the relationship between the individual and society was shifting faster than those literary and political forces could record and address. Although the strongest political impact resulted from the 1832 Reform Act and those reform acts that followed, several distinct approaches to remediating poverty evolved after the 1832 initiative, including Edwin Chadwick's 1842 *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population and on the Means of Its Improvement* and Frederick Engels's 1845<sup>26</sup> *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Shaw-Lefevre's Commons Preservation Society sought to halt the leisure class's cooption of land that traditionally provided resources to the working poor, and Miranda Hill's Kyrle Society sought the elevating influence of the arts and crafts movement to enrich the moral lives of the poor and in that way improve their physical existence. The National Trust was born from both the CPS and Kyrle's approaches to poverty and what Grace Kehler describes as a gothic non-fictional approach to cultivating public sympathy for the plight of the poor, citing Engels and Chadwick both as examples. All of these impulses, though, return to a need to define national identity that was disrupted when the image English citizenry could no longer claim close association with a distinct image of English land

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<sup>26</sup> Although Engels's *Condition of the Working Class* was published in German in 1845, the first "authorized" English edition was not published until 1887, and even then, it was published in New York, not England. Still, the text was acknowledged by British readers.

because the landscape splintered and threatened to fracture into even more disparate reflections of British identity.

Kehler writes that the gothic of the nineteenth-century novel was one that demonstrated middle class “anxiety about the malleability of the self” (439), as the grotesque descriptions of maudlin working class living conditions allowed the middle-class reader of gothic novels to enter that world voyeuristically while remaining safely ensconced in clean comfort. In this way, the gothic novel and the gothic non-fiction of Engels and Chadwick act as Burkean sublime by transporting the reader (like the Burkean viewer) to sublime heights whose danger both thrills and confirms the reader’s security. Kehler’s “anxiety about the malleability of the self” conveys a sort of “there but for the grace of God, go I” attitude, where genuine sympathy for the poor is tainted by relief to have escaped their plight. The middle-class reader’s attraction to these texts springs from a desire to confirm his place above and outside them, which is not to indict all Victorian reformers, for plenty worked tirelessly for poor relief, including especially Octavia and Miranda Hill who figure prominently in development of reform, reform societies, and directing novel methods of considering society’s relationship with the land.

The disassociation that makes the gothic voyage into the underworld of poverty possible can be extended, and Kehler does extend it, to the point of deeming the alterity of the poor so far advanced that they become racially and nationally the “other.” Kehler writes,

In an attempt to fend off such anxiety, the privileged classes frequently reacted defensively, questioning their affinity with the poor and resorting to oversimplistic binaries: the indigent as objects of disease and disgust – even as racial others – and the middle-class body as an entity that needed to defend itself against external pollutants (447-8).

Kehler's assertion of racial difference implies national difference, as British national identity reserved no space for racial diversity. Engels deftly associates middle-class understanding of the conditions of the poor with their understanding of other nations: "I believe that before the Bishop of London called attention to this most poverty-stricken parish, people at the West End knew as little of it as of the savages of Australia or the South Sea Isles" (62). Here Engels may appear to compare London's poor to the "savages" of the Pacific, but he actually notes the ignorance of the middle class in the mores of both the London poor and the Pacific savages, and while Engels criticizes middle class ignorance of both suffering groups, he does not suggest any shared characteristics or imply that the ignorant middle class are like those in the "poverty-stricken parish," just that they should recognize their presence and their plight.

Kehler notes two tropes for documentary gothic: the use of the emotional and the use of the visceral; but both of these methods emphasize the sensate, which creates a tone of the physical instead the rational and therefore implicates the poor themselves as less rational and more animalistic. The focus on the sensate need not implicate its object, yet the effect of the compounded examples of emotional and visceral misery do just that. An example of Engels's emotional and visceral appeal is the tale of two boys arrested for stealing and consuming "a half-cooked calf's foot" (63) since the cut of meat, eatable, but not prime, is rendered even lower by being half-cooked. The description of what the boys are reduced to steal conjures a physical response from the reader, and the further description of the police investigation was crafted for a particular emotional response. The police find that the boys are two of nine children living with their mother, a widow whose deceased husband had been a soldier and a policeman himself, but her widowed state has left them all without financial support. They had already sold off the furniture for food, when their conditions are revealed and the magistrate orders them provisions from the poor-box. Although the description of their crowded quarters, over-populated with children and littered with dirty rags that served both as

clothes and bedding, could be the living space of almost any of London's poor, the narrative of the circumstances that reduced them to poverty purges moral implications of responsibility. The tale demonstrates Kehler's "malleability of self" since the widow has done nothing wrong but lose her husband, a man figured by Engels as twice a public servant but always productive and presumably fiscally responsible. Octavia Hill would later address the conflict between saving the desirable poor and the undesirable poor, but before Hill took up the cause, Engels contributed more to developing a modern sense of land's connection to legitimate citizenship.

Engels's tale of the policeman's widow argues for her inclusion in British nationality despite a municipal architecture designed to occlude the presence of the poor. Engels describes the streets of London and other English cities as tangled and sinuous, littered with refuse and waste, and crowded with the quarters of the poor haphazardly strewn along the route: "The cottages are old, dirty, and of the smallest sort, the streets uneven, fallen into ruts and in part without drains or pavement; masses of refuse, offal and sickening filth lie among standing pools in all directions" (93). He writes that "poverty often dwells in hidden alleys close to the palaces of the rich; but, in general, a separate territory has been assigned to it, where, removed from the sight of the happier classes, it may struggle as it can" (60). Kehler refers to multiple contemporary sources that describe the streets as a "crazy labyrinth," "criss-cross, pell-mell" and "planless, knotted chaos of houses" (442), but many of the descriptions targeted on building an image of unsavory chaos are but a few degrees removed from the idealized picturesque landscape. The curving streets that become mazes for the uninitiated become part of the gothic description, but should not part of this experience convey a sense of the picturesque? The picturesque aesthetic revealed in curving, sinuous lines that created depth and interest and extended the sense of ownership. The picturesque aesthetic privileged the patina of the worn and the signs of use and decay. The picturesque aesthetic elevated peasants' cottages situated in vales and suggesting inhabitation through attendant grazing livestock or a wisp of smoke reaching

upward from a chimney. Yet the descriptions from Engels, Chadwick and others of the twisted alleys of London and Manchester certainly convey nothing of the rusticity of Capability Brown's or Humphrey Repton's picturesque.

Urban poverty and its gothic documentation resist classification as picturesque because of the perspective of the viewer or reader. For the picturesque aesthetic to work, the viewer must stand above or beyond the prospect, but with gothic documentation of nineteenth-century urban conditions, the reader's perspective is one of immersion within the scene, which then truncates the prospect instead of elongating it. The reader joins the narrator in the actual streets, tangled in neighborhoods he would usually avoid altogether, and the effect instead of picturesque freedom is claustrophobia. Although the gothic preserved the sublime distance of the viewer/reader because the act of reading maintained the viewer's safety, the impact, as Kehler describes, is emotional and visceral as the viewer sympathizes and empathizes with the victims of urban oppression.

While Engels and Chadwick publicized the conditions of urban poverty, and the 1851 Exhibition demonstrated through Albert's model cottages the potential for elevating the poor from their pitiable existence, John Ruskin's and William Morris's aesthetics movements considered the impact beauty could have on moral responsibility. Morris's arts and crafts movement asserted that beauty improved humanity, but also suggested that the work involved in artisanal craftsmanship lifted up the souls of the poor and downtrodden through productive contribution to their own existence and to society. The socialist agenda behind Morris's arts and crafts movement condemned a division of labor that generated a Marxist alienated labor, or a separation of man from product, a result of assembly-line construction methods that fostered a modern angst as the laborer no longer produced a finished product but only one small part of the product, and although Morris objected to such industrial division of labor, his objections did not extend to a gendered division of labor, which suggests admission of laboring classes into British national identity, but not the admission of women.

Anthea Callen explains how Morris's promotion of domestic arts could have breached the divide between men's and women's work, but did not because Morris's movement further entrenched women's station as secondary in a patriarchal society. A movement hinged on so many of the products traditionally fashioned by the hands of women – lacework, embroidery, china painting, jewelry making, and book illustrating, for example – should have opened the floodgates for laboring class and middle class women to enter the sphere of legitimate British citizenship; however, Callen argues that Morris emphasized women's contributions that could not directly compete with men's wage earning. Callen writes

Although the Arts and Crafts Movement was in many ways socially and artistically radical, it in fact reproduced and perpetuated – and thus reinforced – the dominant Victorian patriarchal ideology. These traditional male-female roles are especially apparent in the fields of design, production, craft skills, income, and management. The sexual division of labor is one of the key factors in the oppression and exploitation of women in a capitalist society (1).

While Callen limits her accusation of oppression to the Arts and Crafts Movement, Morris's faction directly influenced shifts in landscape ideology and parallels those shifts. Callen classifies Morris's neglecting to "integrate men and women at ...[a] central, influential level of the Arts and Crafts Movement" and his making "no attempt to institutionalize alternative patterns of male-female labor divisions" as failures in the movement that "reinforced the sense of 'otherness' experienced by craftswomen" (6). Callen distinguishes between the movement's treatment of laboring-class women and middle-class women, as working-class women represented an "'earthy sensuality'" (6) that men in the movement admired but consistently considered unmarriageable. Class distinctions were bestowed primarily by the husband to the wife, which Callen supports when she cites Algernon



Charles Swinburne's assertion that "'marrying her is insane'" (6) recognizing a visceral resistance to class mingling beyond admiration and altruism.

The Arts and Crafts Movement parallels landscape's influence on shifting national identity to include middle class women in that both Morris's movement and perspectives on landscape evolve to include only some women in only some roles. For example, laboring-class women remained relegated to "otherness," especially as demonstrated in texts such as the *Exhibition Gift Book*, which shows the poor as exotic and almost sub-human, and even middle-class women gained admission to Morris's movement as long as they navigated the edges of production and left wage-earning production to men. Likewise, landscape's representation of national identity carefully admitted middle-class women, but only in altruistic roles and only when men somehow shepherded the operation. In general, women still rarely owned real estate and did not inherit it, and Octavia Hill's efforts in providing low-cost, clean housing to the poor were unusual in the fact that she represents a woman owning land, but her efforts also demonstrate how women's relationship to the landscape remained relegated to motherly impulses, such as guardianship of the poor and weak, and remained relegated to the edges of society and real estate that no capitalist patriarch would care to purchase or own.

Morris had been strongly affected by John Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* and in particular "The Nature of Gothic," which advocated for the roughness of gothic designs shaped by individual hands over the smoothness of factory produced goods. Ruskin lists the characteristics of the gothic as savageness, changefulness, naturalism, grotesqueness, rigidity, and redundance, and he argues that the architectural process holds as much importance as the result, since allowing individual workers to express themselves renders the edifice more "Christian" than a building constructed by a laborer who has lost his freedom to industrial conformity. And for Ruskin, gothic represented much more than architectural design but also national moral identity. His descriptions of the variations in northern

and southern European landscape reveal a desire to distinguish England from its neighbors through its aesthetic taste. Ruskin dismisses English preference for orderliness, giving examples of a fondness for symmetry in the number of windows and other structures on English homes and the fondness for Corinthian and Ionic columns, and he instead suggests that good architecture should follow the lead of good literature, which allows a plot to perambulate and develop organically.

John Ruskin's role in the parallel development of national identity and landscape reform in the second half of the nineteenth century was more direct than the influence of *The Stones of Venice* and his philosophy on the gothic, although his reputation did loom large as an influential writer and thinker. Ruskin directly guided the budding philanthropist Octavia Hill as she began her pursuits to improving the living conditions of London's poor, and he actively promoted her efforts. Hill's relationship with Ruskin began when she sought his advice on her efforts as a painting copyist, and in fact, he counseled her that "If you devote yourself to human expression, I know how it will be. There will be an end of art for you. You will say "*hang* drawing!! I must go to help people,"" (Whelan 3), although he himself acted as mentor in directing and supporting her shift into philanthropic work. In 1864, Hill dove into reform first hand as she sought to purchase tenements, renovate them, and establish a respectable boarding house with the aim of improving the lives of the needy. With Ruskin ready as a financial backer, she began the search for a building to renovate, but quickly found resistance once the current owners learned of her plans to fill the buildings with poor families, even though poor families already inhabited them. There seems to have been a distinction in the idea of selling the buildings for renovation that suggested improved tenants, and the sellers wanted to see improvements in the clientele in addition to improving the buildings themselves.

Still, in 1864 Hill finally found a place to begin her work as a landlord, and with financing from Ruskin, who required a five per cent return on his investment, she purchased and renovated a

structure to develop into living spaces for the poor who agreed to her expectations for moral conduct. In 1866 she published an essay “Cottage Property in London” in the *Fortnightly Review*, which explained her goals and shared her successes with the hope that others would follow suit. In it, Hill blames absent landlords for the conditions of leasable property in London, but she also holds accountable the poor themselves, as she required punctuality in the submission of rent and adherence to strict rules for behavior. In addition to criticizing the landlord who lived, “some little distance from his property, and for the most part confirm[s] his dealings with it to a somewhat fruitless endeavor to collect the rents on a Sunday morning” (47), Hill objects to landlords’ emphasis on profits alone, which led them to overcrowding that was not only unlivable, but predisposed toward violence and immorality. She ascribes many of the “deadly quarrels” between residents to being “compelled to live very near one another, to use many things in common,” with “no one either compulsorily to separate them, or to say some soothing word of reconciliation before the quarrel grows too serious” (47). In one stroke, Hill both blames the middle and upper classes for their greed and infantilizes the laboring class through their need for oversight.

By 1875 Hill was well established in her housing reforms and turned her attention toward the open space movement, retaining her foundational beliefs in environment’s uplifting moral influence. A piece of land including Swiss Cottage Fields caught her reformer’s eye as a contractor began contemplate developing it and destroying the fields and meadows frequented by nearby walkers and exercisers. Hill campaigned to raise funds to purchase the land and preserve its natural beauty, but she fell short in her fundraising and lost the cause; however, in her efforts to find ways to save the fields, she began her work with Robert Hunter of the Commons Preservation Society, who would become her colleague in establishing the National Trust. Hill joined Hunter in the CPS cause as it fought against a new Parliamentary move to resume wholesale enclosure.

Hill's new alliance with Hunter coincided with the loss of her former ally, Ruskin, who declined to fund the Swiss Cottage Fields project, and wrote to Hill that "London is as utterly doomed as Gomorrah" (Mallett 42). In collaboration her new colleagues Hunter and Shaw-Lefevre, Hill published an anti-enclosure article in *MacMillan's Magazine* in 1876 and her appeal for the salvation of the commons from the grasp of argues for the moral implications of open spaces. The article's title, "Our Common Land," initiates the argument's rhetorical stance as a call for national unity, yet her opening image creates two camps of working-class tourists. Hill describes the conflict in choosing a vacation destination for the newly established "Bank holidays," which occurred in spring and fall, clearly enacted for the middle class and laboring class as the wealthiest citizens did not work and would not need a holiday. Hill's description divides the middle class and the laboring class by suggesting that those who have a choice would not spend their holiday upon the commons because of the throngs of laboring class patrons who flood the shared land for picnics and other leisure activities. Despite the reluctance of the middle class, the lower classes flocked to the commons, travelling by train, or by "van, cart, chaise, or gig," or by any conveyance available to escape London and urban centers for the bucolic release of "Epping, or Richmond, or Greenwich, or Hampstead" (536). Though Hill admits that the crowded tourist destinations do not appeal to the upper classes, she maintains their necessity to the lower classes and suggests that the classes see the spaces differently. For Hill, the middle class sees the vacation-day commons as crowded, dirty, and chaotic, but she argues that the lower classes see the commons as spacious because of their more crowded and chaotic daily lives in London slums. Hill writes,

Cooped up for many weeks in close rooms in narrow streets, compelled on their holiday to travel for miles in a crowded stream, first between houses, and then between dusty high hedges, suddenly they expand into free uncrowded space under spreading trees or on to the wide Common from which blue distance is visible; the

eye long unrefreshed by the sight of growing grass or star like flowers is rejoiced by them again (536).

After establishing the commons' value to the lower classes, Hill veers her argument toward national fealty, as she contends preserving common spaces to be critical to patriotic spirit.

Hill addresses enclosure's legality, and cedes that many landowners possessed the right to enclose adjoining commons for their own profit, but she also chides them for privileging profit over moral obligation to nearby villagers and over the moral obligation to contribute to a nationally unified patriotic devotion. Hill suggests that the commons create in all people a feeling that they have a "share in the soil of their native England" (539), or a sense of solidarity, and she even extends the preference for commons over land ownership for all classes: "I think the sense of owning some spaces of it in common may be healthier for them than even the possession of some bits by individuals, and certainly it now seems more feasible" (539). Hill often paid attention to the health of the lower classes, and her assertion that it may be healthier for those classes to have access to commons instead of owning small parcels of land themselves may be grounded in her work as a landlord, in which she always maintained authority over the renters' activities, acting as moral judge over who deserved residence and who should be evicted. Her defenses of the lower classes continually infantilized them and denied them the rationality of the middle and leisure classes, and thus, her assertion that common spaces would be healthier than ownership is tainted with the idea that the lower classes were unsuited for ownership, or perhaps unable to steward properties, even small ones, they might own.

Her argument for common ownership instead of individual ownership also reduces the threat to the middle and leisure classes. Instead of the lower classes gaining the rights to land ownership and placing themselves on a more equal plane with the wealthier classes, Hill maintains their position

below the upper classes by depriving them of true ownership, but maintaining their access to nature's moralizing influence. Hill shores the security of middle and leisure class readers by increasing the distinction between them and the lower classes, focusing on the lower classes' alterity, when she writes, "To us the Common or forest look indeed crowded with people, but to them the feeling is one of sufficient space, free air, green grass, and colour, with a life without which they might think the place dull" (536). She tangles the "us" and "them" divisions within her call for patriotic defense of public land when she quotes Scottish geologist and writer Hugh Miller and summarizes his intimate association with the land, saying, "the right to roam over the land is connected with the love of it, and hence with patriotism" (539). Hill's vision for England is one where "peasant and aristocrat" alike love the nation for its "wild and open" spaces, which inspire greater affection than "thoroughly cultivated" spaces that are owned or fall under the "proprietorship" of a wealthy few (539).

At around the same time Octavia was writing "Our Common Land," her sister Miranda Hill was writing and speaking on her own approach to addressing the oppression of poverty, and her activism led her to establish the Kyrle Society. Miranda Hill founded Kyrle in 1875, and named the society after John Kyrle, who lived from 1637 to 1724, and was memorialized through the epithet "Man of Ross" in both Alexander Pope's and Samuel Coleridge's poetry. John Kyrle's philanthropy extended primarily to the ill and disenfranchised (orphans, school children, the elderly), but his recognition also stemmed from the park he established near the village of Ross-on-Wye that was the beneficiary of his largesse, and in addition to walks and views, the park included a fountain Kyrle constructed for its beauty and to provide clean water to the surrounding residents. The Kyrle Society claimed no direct connection to its namesake, but adopted John Kyrle's commitment to assistance for the poor, including beautifying their world through an approach dependent upon John Ruskin's aesthetic theory of moral elevation. Miranda Hill's efforts attracted criticism for their idealism, which appeared unrealistically simple. Miranda's, and Kyrle's, call for beauty's civilizing influence

begged mocking that transformed her altruistic philosophy into risible naiveté, as critics reduced her theory for improvement to saving “starving souls by means of pictures, parties and pianos” (Murphy 64).

Both Hill sisters shared a belief that aesthetic experiences could elevate the spirit of the poor and result in more productive behavior, but Miranda implemented her belief through Kyrle using more traditional fine arts media: music, painting, and women’s handiwork. In contrast, Octavia pursued her goal through connection to the land, through the Common Preservation Society and in establishing the National Trust. Through CPS she had already allied with Robert Hunter, and her second collaborator became Hardwicke Rawnsley. Octavia and Rawnsley met in 1874 upon the recommendation of John Ruskin, who was one of Rawnsley’s professors at Oxford. Rawnsley joined local movements to preserve the countryside from progress, specifically campaigning to protect the landscape from the construction of railways that would have desecrated the natural beauty of the Lake District, and this work joined him with other established writers and thinkers besides Ruskin, including Robert Browning, Beatrix Potter, and Alfred Tennyson, who was a longstanding family friend.

Rawnsley contributed to the open space movement by supporting organizations and actual demonstrations that favored the preservation of commons and other public spaces from development and enclosure. Although he often worked alongside Octavia Hill, his motivation for ensuring the poor’s access to public lands sprang not from an aesthetic ideal, but from his own time spent as a clergyman in small villages and in the outskirts of Bristol, where he witnessed the extreme ravages of poverty. And while Hill’s writings were primarily prose, Rawnsley expressed his affection for the landscape through poetry, for example his 1886 Italian sonnet “August in the Keswick Vale” in *Littell’s Living Age* that praises bucolic scenery during August’s lingering summer weather. The

poem describes the Lake District mountain Skiddaw looking down upon the scene of August harvest: hay-carts, green meadows, and blooming heather. The last two lines of the sestet connect the scene to spiritual nostalgia: “And while such glimpse of Eden August brings,/ We love her better than the tuneful May.” The description of Rawnsley’s autumn is not at all reminiscent of any descriptions of the Biblical Eden; clearly Rawnsley intends the allusion to be metaphorical and not aligned to any physical likeness, but if that is the case, we might then consider his metaphor more closely. The poem focuses on the end of a pleasant, warm agricultural season, and perhaps the allusion to Eden suggests the end of paradise’s agreeable climate with winter imminent, but considering Rawnsley’s association with the open space movements of the time, he could intend the identification of Skiddaw’s lake country as Eden to suggest not only its beauty, but its vulnerability as man can be ejected from it for his sins, although in Keswick’s case the exile would be self-imposed as man’s own demand for progress destroys his Eden.

Another of Rawnsley’s poems, “Alice Ayres,” demonstrated accord with Hill, as both celebrated the selfless heroism of the working class nursemaid who saved three of her charges from a house fire that claimed her own life. Ayres returned repeatedly to rescue the children from their beds and carry them through the fire and smoke to drop them from a window to a crowd below, waiting too late to make her own escape and falling fatally from the window. For Hill and Rawnsley, Ayres heroism in 1885 demonstrated the overlooked morality of the working class, and others responded similarly, in voices adamant enough to become labeled “secular canonization” of Ayres. In fact, Rawnsley’s diction also elevates Ayres’s class, as he writes, “One by one –/Nobly done” to describe the heroine’s method for delivering the children out the window. For Rawnsley (and for Hill) noble actions redeem the accidental sin of low birth. Thus, Rawnsley’s lament for Ayres demonstrates his common belief with Hill that the poor were capable of demonstrating exceptional moral behavior,



given the right circumstances, and that when the poor did demonstrate laudable behavior, they deserved recognition for it.

Although a multitude of societies, organizations, and committees whose goal was to assist the poor existed before the National Trust, the trio of Hill, Rawnsley, and Hunter fomented the ideas of several of these groups into their goal of protecting open spaces for the enjoyment and edification of all of England, including the working classes. The Commons Preservation Society, with its aim of preserving the commons, and the Kyrle Society, with its goal of improving the morality of the poor through their access to aesthetic expression represent the two most potent influences on the Trust, as the Trust combined the goals of these two societies, and yet, despite its goal of acting on the behalf of the poor, the Trust quickly raised suspicion of assisting the landed leisure class more than any other demographic.

### **The Foundation of the National Trust**

Robert Hunter joined the efforts of the CPS soon after Lefevre recognized his submission to the Sir Henry Peek's CPS essay contest. The contest promised cash awards for four winners, but extended the offer to an additional two essayists after reading the forty-six submissions. Hunter's essay was one of the two additional awards. The six essays were published in 1867 with a preface by Lefevre and the subtitle "Containing a legal and Historical Examination of Manorial Rights and Customs, with a View to the Preservation of Commons Near Great Towns" and with a focus on either the legal aspects of enclosure or the historical and aesthetic aspects of enclosure. Lefevre's preface details the events that precipitated Peek's contest, mainly the consideration of enclosure of Wimbledon Commons and discussion of the legalities of ensuring public access to it and maintenance and security of its grounds. Lefevre ends the preface with a quote from Oliver

Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village," the same quote which he uses in *English Commons and Forests*:

Our fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,  
And e'en the bare-worn Common is denied. (17)

Lefevre's insistence on repeating the quotation suggests his desire to generate a consistent literary image for the CPS's campaign and tie it to a solid literary past, but it also suggests the CPS's campaign was part of a longstanding battle. "The Deserted Village" was published in 1770, almost one hundred years before Peek's contest and long before "the commons had been intersected by railways, which greatly destroyed their beauty and value" (Lefevre ix), which means Lefevre wished to connect his argument against enclosure to a potent literary past but add to it contemporary concerns over industrial modernization.

Hunter's essay itself draws upon literary history, too, with its title page epigraph, "Common benefits are to be communicate with all" from Francis Bacon's "Of Goodness of Nature" in his *Essays*. Hunter's "Essay on the Preservation of Commons in the Neighbourhood of the Metropolis and Large Towns" took the first of Peek's two contest options, describing the legal requirements for providing common public access to land. He begins as near to the beginning as he can, with "barbarian conquerors of Europe" (310) and the 1085 feudal system following the Norman invasion of England that established a monarch, a manor lord, and "two kinds of tenants, freeholders and copyholders" (317). The freeholders enjoyed more obligations from their lord, while the copyholders maintained rights of common, and of course tenancy, but little else. The purpose in the lengthy legal and historical review reveals a quarter way through the essay when Hunter writes, "The whole scheme of rural society has changed in spirit yet more than in form. Care must be taken that the change affects fairly those who bear the same relative positions as lord and tenant of old" (322). With a painstaking attention to legal detail, Hunter tracks the evolution of Parliamentary acts to

enclose and resist enclosure, but his primary argument is that although England has outgrown feudal relationships, legislation has not kept pace with the changed associations between the positions (or in Alpers's terms anecdotes) of lord and tenant.

Hunter cites a Parliamentary Act from William IV's reign which regulates enclosure to ensure the "health, comfort, and convenience" (345) of densely inhabited cities, villages, and parishes, which leads to his call to redefine the purposes of commons – traditionally for turbarry, pischary, estovers, and grazing – to include "allotments for exercise and recreation" (346), as the needs of tenants have changed over the centuries. In his most direct argument, Hunter states,

The great question which is now to be answered is, have the public any claim upon the owners of the soil of waste lands and open spaces? Or, in another form, has the lord such absolute property in his waste lands that he is irresponsible to the general public, the nation at large, for the use he makes of them? In either form this question may be decided in favor of the public....It has been stated as a doctrine of English law, that the public have no right to use commons, forests, and open spaces for purposes of recreation. But the doctrine is apparently maintained rather on the absence of any definite legislation or judicial decision than on sound authority....There are numberless cases reported between a lord and his commoners, or persons who pretended to be commoners, but these cases always concerned some right which could be valued in money, such as the feeding of beasts or the cutting of turf (357).

Here, Hunter asserts first that the need of the public, and indeed the nation, supersedes the desires of the wealthy lords. While his doubly phrased question implies a straw-man counter argument (The wording leaves no answer other than the one Hunter seeks.), his lengthy legal and historical introduction to this moment undergirds the argument toward what is English. Because Hunter has

laid such a sturdy foundation of English law, his rhetorical step toward favoring public rights over individual rights seems more logically British.

Hunter's second argument in the passage is that recreation has been occluded historically because until this point, society could not support the right to recreational space. Hunter later writes, "As the nation increased in numbers and general prosperity, and the class of socage-tenants and burghers gained more influence, the feudal system became considerably modified" (365). Thus, because England has evolved to be such a wealthy, industrial nation, its people deserved legal rights to use commons for recreation, in addition to the previous list of commons uses. Previously, recreational uses of the commons could not have been valued as rights of turbary or estover; however, Hunter implies that prosperous England can now support its public's rights to recreation. The cultural change is also a result of the consolidation of small farms into large farms. Hunter explains that as small farmers sold their land and moved to cities in search of increased income, the owners of large farms bought the smaller ones and created even larger aggregate properties. Yet, even as the landowners accumulated larger parcels of property, Hunter argues that they ought not to assume that they can purchase the right of the public to access the commons, even as the former copy holders and freeholders moved to urban centers. Instead, Hunter believes that "The lord has not bought up his commoners' rights" (362), and that "it is the duty of the Legislature, whose business it is to *make* the unconscientious do what the conscientious do willingly, to enforce (if necessary) such considerations by legal sanctions" (363) Thus, Hunter styles England as a nation where all are imbued with some rights to using the country's land, and these rights are based in England's feudal legacy.

While Hunter's approach to the essay contest and the general question of public access to community property addresses legality, he also concurred with Octavia Hill on nature's moralizing influence. He briefly alludes to the purpose of commoners' recreation:

In the vicinity of large towns, where dense masses of people are congregated, and pure air and beautiful sights are a luxury seldom obtained by the majority, he [the lord or landowner] is, without question, doing incalculable harm – incalculable in its moral as well as its physical effects – if he shuts up any of the few open spaces that remain, and drives the smoke-dried citizen to take longer and more expensive journeys before he can rest himself on the green sward of untutored nature” (636).

Here Hunter acknowledges Hill’s commitment to nature’s improving influence, even if this seems to be an afterthought, with his real energy spent on the legalities of the matter; however, his last phrase, “green sward of untutored nature,” suggests something different from the commons and from the idea of public parks altogether.

Hunter’s “untutored” nature appears to return to an appearance of nature untouched by human intervention. Despite over a century of aesthetic momentum toward developing a nationalist identity through crafting a unique landscape aesthetic in picturesque taste, Hunter suggests that the commons reserved for public enjoyment should not be fashioned into anything new, but preserved in their present state. A few years later in 1901, Hunter’s colleague in the Trust, Hardwicke Rawnsley, published a collection of sonnets that included “Bristol of To-Day,” a lament for “prayerful gardens” which have succumbed to railroads’ and steamships’ interruptions. The final sestet conveys nationalist insecurities that transcend bucolic disruption by industrial progress:

The white sails mix, and move from street to street;  
The quays are coloured with the dust of ware;  
Whole nations at the landing-places meet;  
And foreign cargoes perfume all the air:  
Only at night men hear the loud clocks’ beat!  
Only at night men feel that God is there! (1)

In these lines, increased commerce has redefined English, or at least Bristol's, borders, as the port displays unfamiliar colors and even the air smells different. The hint at xenophobia is reminiscent of the gypsy threat, which was also Romani and cultural and sexual. Night's relief through cloaking the appearance of the foreign is compromised, as removing the visual reminder of transgression allows for spiritual communion – the feeling of God's presence – yet the threat remains, as the clock continues its progress, suggesting an end to night's temporary salvation and the inexorable march of progress with implied industry, commercialism, and intrusion.

As Hill, Hunter, and Rawnsley worked together through their various societies – Kyrle; the Commons Preservation Society; the National Footpaths Society; the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society, and others – they began to focus their varied approaches on the same goal. Hill thought the preservation of open spaces was a moral and aesthetic imperative. Hunter saw the legal rights of commoners to share some part of national heritage through access to public lands. And Rawnsley believed both in nature's moralizing influence and in the necessity of solidifying national identity in a way that maintained independence from the continental "other" introduced through increased commercial interaction. Their several approaches coalesced in a paper that Hunter submitted to the National Association of Social Science in 1884, which delineated the purpose of his proposed corporation for purchasing commons, gardens, manors, and other lands to preserve them for public use. Hunter's nine points in "A Suggestion for the Better Preservation of Open Spaces," included a call for the proposed organization to acquire and hold "properties to which common rights are attached" (12), including also manors, wastes, moors, open spaces, square gardens and churchyards, to maintain and manage these properties, to negotiate with owners of the properties to ensure public access to them, and to manage all acquired properties "with view to a profit" (13).

Hunter shared the paper with Hill and other CPS supporters, and Hill responded famously by suggesting a name for the proposed corporation:

A short expressive name is difficult to find for the new Company. What do you think of ‘The Commons and Garden Trust’ I do not know that I am right in thinking that it would be called a Trust. But if it would, I think it might be better than ‘Company’ – you will do better, I believe to bring forward its benevolent than its commercial character (Murphy 102).

Of course, Hill’s revision to “trust” over “company” better aligns with Rawnsley’s commercial concerns, but the term also encapsulates the attitude the three founders wished to see part of national culture. Hunter’s essay in the CPS contest emphasizes the obligation that manor owners have to ensure the livelihood of commoners, and he castigates those who find legal loopholes to ignore their moral duties, even though those responsibilities and expectations have evolved. Hunter and Hill expect that the newly formed entity will be more trustworthy and the leisure class has been, and they seek to institutionalize generosity and sharing as a national character quality through the new trust.

Although Hunter “penciled at the top of this letter” the name of “National Trust,” the formation of the Trust was delayed another decade because Lefevre and other CPS members suspected that the new entity might compete with the CPS for donations. Not until several attempts to purchase attractive manors and plots of land failed, did Hunter, Hill, and Rawnsley finally form the National Trust for Historic Sites and Natural Scenery. In November of 1894 the organization was officially founded and recognized in *The Times*, and the publication of its foundation struck a chord for national rivalry. The *Annual Report of the Trustees of Public Reservations*, made by the Massachusetts trustees to their organization on their efforts to sustain public gardens and other land, addressed the progress of Hill *et al* on establishing an association that could purchase property for public access.

The interaction between the American press and the newborn Trust betrays American nationalist jealousy which in turn suggests true accomplishment in the Trust’s existence. The 1893 report of the Massachusetts Trustees of Public Reservations refers to a 9 September article in *The*

*Spectator*, which the trustees claim describes “the powers and purposes of the ‘Massachusetts Trustees of Public Reservations,’ followed by several letters indicating a desire in that country of an organization endowed with powers similar to those with which the General Court of Massachusetts clothed your honorable Board in 1891” (14). The trustees’ report quotes extensively from the *Spectator* article as proof that the English movement to establish a national trust emulates Massachusetts’ own efforts; however, no evidence in *The Spectator* or elsewhere suggests this is the case. The National Trust’s origins lie in the ideals of the Commons Preservation Society and the Kyrle Society and none of the three founders reference Massachusetts or any American organization. Instead, the trustees’ attention to the *Spectator* article betrays American insecurity in comparison to English progressiveness and demonstrates British leadership in a global preservation movement. The trustees’ report ends by invoking the English example:

...if Massachusetts possesses no such richly historical treasures as will gradually pass into the keeping of the English Board, she does possess great wealth of beautiful, though now threatened, natural scenery and an interesting, though rapidly disappearing archaeological and historical sites, such as Indian camps and graves, border forts, and colonial or literary landmarks (*Annual Report* 16).

The trustees acknowledge British superior historic landscape heritage, but the *Spectator* article actually lingers more extensively on acquiring scenes of beauty that are not necessarily historically important, more aligned with the CPS’s and Kyrle’s missions of preserving the commons for public access.

Hardwicke Rawnsley in 1897 would cede credit for the idea for the National Trust to America, but his motives for the attribution are questionable and conflicted, even within his own explanation. In the February 1897 issue of *Cornhill Magazine*, Rawnsley wrote,

The central idea of the National Trust was borrowed from America, and the debt is acknowledged by an appointment upon the Council of Professor Sargent to represent



“The Trustees of Public Preservation [*sic*] in Massachusetts,” a body of men who have obtained State help to do the very same kind of work for a land where history is only now being born, which the National Trust seeks to do for a country crammed with historic tradition, and only waiting for a sense of its worth, to arise from the dead and realize its great inheritance (246).

Rawnsley was quite interested in soliciting donations from American philanthropists, but attributing the idea for the Trust to Massachusetts ignores the fact that the Trust was *national* in name and in purpose. As Rawnsley states that the Trust sought to accomplish for Britain’s rich history what the Trustees of Public Reservation did for the much younger state of Massachusetts, he focuses more on the difference in age and historical legacy, but the difference between a regional and a national organization is critical to the mission of the Trust. Rawnsley begins “The National Trust” by lamenting the loss of British fealty and comparing England to Germany and France where there is more “patriotic spirit” (245). He considers the Trust crucial in reinvigorating British national spirit so that Englishmen feel it is as good to “have a country to live for as a fatherland to die for” (245-6).

The trustees’ report describes *The Spectator*’s argument comparing the acquisition of property for public viewing to the National Gallery’s collection of landscape paintings. “Natural Pictures” asserts that funds spent to accumulate paintings of landscapes could also be spent to purchase the landscapes themselves: “Why spend £10,000 on a ‘Turner,’ when for less than that sum you can have a more exquisite little Welsh valley for your own, – real mill, real narrow high-arched bridge, real waterfall, and real ruin in the background” (331)? The example hardly suggests historical prominence, but it does reflect a lingering attachment to the picturesque aesthetic. The sublimity of the waterfall, the rustic beauty of a working mill, suggestive of laboring peasant occupation, and attention to the patina in the ruins, all align with the picturesque landscape aesthetic, more so than Turner’s paintings would. The allegiance to the picturesque implies an enduring

allegiance to its representation of British nationalism through aesthetic achievement, even as Turner increased British eminence in visual art.

Both the Massachusetts trustees and the *Spectator* also address the question of ongoing funding, not only for purchasing land, but also for maintaining it, by leasing or re-selling portions of the purchased land. *The Spectator* declares that few of the planned purchases would include farmland, so as not to remove it from private ownership and capitalist profits, but also because the “woods, waters, [and] wastes” (332) that are not agricultural also provide the pleasantest views and the ones best purchased for public access. Even though the CPS followed Cobbett’s example in objecting to dubbing the commons as “wastes,” those campaigning for a national trust manipulated the word for their rhetorical advantage by using it to connote that a trust would purchase only lands no one else wanted, and land that would not be costly. The *Spectator* article focuses on landscapes that collectively represent a *fin de siècle* British nationalism, or “the national character possessed by the Welsh mountains, the Lakes, and the Highlands, or the best pieces of Irish scenery” (332).

Again in 1899, an American periodical attributed the idea for the British National Trust to the Massachusetts Trustees, when the 9 September issue of *The Outlook*, an article announced the upcoming American lecture tour of Charles Robert (C.R.) Ashbee and Hardwicke Rawnsley. *The Outlook* claimed that their lectures would “rouse interest in the work of ‘The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty’” (98), and while this description matches the one provided by the Royal Historical Society, the claims that the “idea of it [the Trust] came from America” and that “The root idea was borrowed from the Society entitled ‘Trustees of Public Reservations’ in Massachusetts” (98) distorts the early relationship the Trust had with England’s former colony, the United States.

Melanie Hall explains that Ashbee and Rawnsley’s American lecture tour aimed at increasing support for the National Trust by widening its circle of interest to former British colonies, particular those who continued to speak English and felt grounded in English literary history. By appealing to

an American audience for support of the Trust, Ashbee and Rawnsley wished to increase British tourism of Trust sites and solicit donations to support the Trust. Hall concentrates on architectural acquisitions that solidified British literary ascendancy, such as pre-Trust preservation efforts of the homes of Shakespeare and Scottish clergyman and reformer John Knox (349). While Hall notes the lag between Hunter's call to establish a trust for purchasing important parcels of English land in 1884 and the foundation of the Trust in 1895, her claim that "Britain lagged behind other countries in preservation initiatives, as activists were aware, and the organization needed support from wherever it could be found" (352) neglects the accomplishments of Kyrle, CPS, and individuals such as Hill, accomplishments that paved the way for the Trust. While several organizations and individuals worked to preserve British landmarks, their efforts were not concentrated or focused, and they lacked legal incorporation to ensure continuity of public access. For example, one common concern for CPS and the Trust was the decay of noble manors when a leisure class landowner lost his economic stability and was no longer able to maintain the home and its lands. Ashbee addressed this concern on the American lecture circuit when he described the idea of an "American millionaire buying them up," ("To Preserve Historic Places"), although his tour sought American funding. American dollars were welcome to the Trust cause; however, Ashbee and other Trust members did not want American ownership of the lands purchased, even if that ownership would provide preservation.

Truly, what was preserved by the Trust extended beyond the actual properties into ideological perceptions. Chelsea Judy faults the Trust for neglecting preservation of England's coastlines until 1938, when it established the Coastal Preservation Committee. Judy notes that

Considering the reasons for the establishment of the National Trust in 1895 and the influence of the Trust's founders on the framework within which the organization would operate, it would seem that the preservation of coastline would fall naturally within the Trust's founding principles. However, quite conversely, coastal

preservation was not the result of an inherent British appreciation for the coastline's natural beauty (85).

The "inherent British appreciation" Judy references was, instead of coastal, persistently pastoral and picturesque. The coastline "was considered a dangerous environment" (85), and the danger connoted sublimity untempered by beauty so that it could be distilled into the picturesque aesthetic. Judy identifies preserving the Lake Country as the Trust's "primary objective" (85), and the Lake Country certainly benefitted from the Trust's efforts, probably because of its rich literary heritage, but the area also attracted the Trust's resources because it exemplified a "palpable sense of nationalism" (82) through its picturesque views and its landscape's reification of pastoral descriptions.

The Trust's focus on historical monuments and picturesque landscapes demonstrates its intent to develop a large-scale tableau of British national character. Of the buildings collected early in the Trust's history, Hall writes,

when taken as a group rather than as individual specimens, the initial collection of buildings clearly reveals an interest in traditional forms of social organization and governance, as well as English literature, language and religious traditions. Together, the collection represents the church in England, the guild system, the country's legal legacy, together with the old order of the squirearchy and pre-industrial revolution trade (348).

Because Hall's lens concentrates on architectural acquisitions, she does not mention the role of landscape and the pastoral in these lists, but taken *in toto*, an image of British nationalism emerges that is founded on pastoral principles, shaped by theories of the sublime and beautiful into an English picturesque aesthetic, and then spread throughout the Anglo-phone world to maintain its allegiance to British national heritage. Essentially, the Trust guided England as it lost some of its direct imperial control so that it increased its cultural imperialist influence, and to package its cultural values to disseminate within and beyond its borders, England needed a concise image that was easily

recognizable as British, which the Lake Country and the commons became. Hall points out that nationalist insecurities in America strengthened the British cause, as a “vast wave of immigration to America threatened the established political and architectural character of the historic city of Boston” (352), or in other words, as American national identity wavered under the weight of the influx of immigrants, those who aligned their heritage along the lines the Boston Brahmins looked back across the Atlantic for their national ideological constructs and happily attached themselves to the image of British identity conjured by the Trust.

Just as Hall overstates the case when she says that Britain lagged behind in preservation efforts, American critics overstate their own influence on the formation of the Trust. The CPS and Kyrle remained active between 1884 and 1895, and preservation efforts persevered under the aegis of both, even if those efforts approached the concerns from different perspectives. A key distinction in the British movement remained its approach to class. Hall writes,

...one of the primary aims was to help cement a union of English-speaking people that rested on sentiment, rather than on material interest, on common social, political and religious traditions, on historical memories and on English literature. Such ideas about Englishness and Empire had held a strong attraction for English middle-class Liberal intellectuals for several decades” (345-6).

The American hangers-on, as demonstrated through the Massachusetts Trustees, were the “well-to-do people of the State” (14), while Hill, the central figure in the Trust’s organization, represented “middle-class Liberal intellectuals.” Association with the British Trust became a marker of high class distinction for Americans, while original members British Trust remained committed to democratic ideals of preserving English land for access by the general public. Ashbee’s resistance to American millionaires buying defaulted English manors lies mostly in isolationist resentment of foreign invasion, but it also hints at deflection of *nouveau riche* incursion and perhaps even conflict with the idea of perpetuating the leisure class at all. Instead, the Trust sought to maintain the illusion

of a feudal and pastoral existence whose perfection never existed in the form in which the Trust presented it.

The National Trust reified British national identity as it is expressed through landscape. The negotiation between Hunter and Hill over the name demonstrates their desire to imbue the organization with enough ideological weight to accomplish their goals through rhetorical persuasion, but also by christening the society with the ideals they themselves believed to guide the organization. They desired that the Trust would engender confidence in its motives and remain above petty greed or appetite profit, but should also maintain solvency through sound management of its resources, selling and leasing property when in its best interest.

Ideally, the Trust would have been national in its provision for the general public, as the writings of its founders suggested democratic access to land. Without a doubt the Trust suffered criticism, some just, that it salvaged leisure class landowners from bankruptcy when their dissolute lifestyles had ruined them. Purchasing manors from impoverished lords who had overspent their budgets damaged the Trust's reputation. Two months after Rawnsley's "The National Trust" appeared in *Cornhill*, C.J. Cornish published an article there titled "The Cost of Country Houses," which exhorted manor owners to divest themselves of their expensive holdings whenever possible. Cornish details the minimum expenses for upkeep and asks the readers to "judge whether the money so spent is a gain or loss to the country-side, and whether this is the time to discourage the owners from doing so, or advise them to *dénicher* themselves from the houses they have inherited" (474). While Cornish's argument is not contiguous with Rawnsley's in a literal sense of their appearing in even the same issue of *Cornhill*, their proximity suggests an overall disposition against leisure class ownership of large tracts of land and stately manors. Cornish's call for the wealthy to pare down their holdings directly contradicts the trend toward conspicuous consumption of a century earlier, when the development of great estates into picturesque masterpieces carried an overtone of patriotic obligation, as if developing the landscape in an English fashion conveyed allegiance to the nation.

Cornish's exhortation, paired with the Trust's mission of preservation for the nation demonstrates the shift in the nineteenth century to include the middle class and, in limited ways the working class, in the image of British national identity.

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