

# *A common language of landscape representation: New Zealand and California painting in the nineteenth century*

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IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, landscape painters in California and New Zealand shared a common language of landscape representation, looking at untamed coasts and rugged mountains through a lens shaped by two centuries of European artistic tradition. Explored in this paper is the influence of the picturesque tradition in New Zealand and California art in the nineteenth century. Ideological functions of landscape painting are identified: that is, ways artists in both New Zealand and California appropriated the landscape to support certain cultural, political and social agendas. Their work represents not only the land but the myths inscribed upon it by bourgeois culture.

A COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP exists between a painting and its subject. Although painters react to stimuli from the real world, paintings are always subjective, affected by what the painter knows or believes. Prior beliefs guide painters to focus on certain objects or scenes and to record what they see in particular ways. As art critic John Berger (1972, p.8) notes:

We only see what we look at. To look is an act of choice. As a result of this act, what we see is brought within our reach—though not necessarily within arm's reach.

KEY WORDS  
*Landscape painting*  
*Landscape representation*  
*Picturesque*

The act of representation conveys certain values to the object represented, lays claim to or defines the object in specific ways. Objects or scenes represented over and over begin to embody a set of pre-established associations and meanings. These meanings vary according to social and cultural context.

Ann Bermingham (1986, p.5) has observed:

Constructing an art-historical account of the meaning and significance of landscape means addressing all the ways it has been seen, recorded, represented, explained, understood, appreciated, and valued.

Her statement refers specifically to the eighteenth century in England, when languages of landscape architecture became closely interwoven with languages of the visual arts. In the 'picturesque decade', the 1790s, their conflation reached a climax, with poetry, landscape gardens and guidebooks to the countryside all reflecting the same intense debate over landscape aesthetics. During the following century, spreading from England to the colonies, the picturesque sensibility offered artists a language of representation for appropriating landscape imagery in support of certain cultural, political and/or social agendas.<sup>1</sup>

Landscape paintings convey multi-layered meaning about the landscape they represent. The pre-established agendas that artists bring to their encounters with the landscape enter into the language of representation, becoming part of the cultural meaning encoded in a painting. Cultural meaning conveyed by a painting also depends on the predisposition of the viewer.

RESEARCH

All of these variables change over time, although the object represented may remain the same. For example, in New Zealand, Mount Taranaki, has been represented innumerable times by artists during the last 150 years.<sup>2</sup> Early representations, such as *Mt Egmont from the Southward*, 1840 (see Eldredge 1991), by Charles Heaphy, a topographical artist and propagandist for the New Zealand Company, helped establish the mountain as:

. . . one of the most enduring icons of New Zealand landscape imagery. [Heaphy produced] lucid and decorous watercolours . . . not so much disinterested records or objects for aesthetic pleasure as . . . weapons of cultural conquest, soft missiles in the imposition of a powerful colonizing vision. (Pitts 1992, p.88)

Heaphy's painting staked a tentative claim to the mountain in the nineteenth century, appropriating the image 'through languages of desire (in this context, conventions for depicting landscape) that were established specifically in and for the European mind and legible to the European eye' (ibid). Nearly 100 years later, in 1931, when Christopher Perkins painted *Taranaki* (see Eldredge 1991), it appeared quite differently. In Perkins' version, the mountain has been possessed, captured and fenced in by a dairy factory and water tank. His iconographic style appropriated Taranaki to a nationalist cause, rendering it as a postage-stamp icon, a symbol of national identity, and establishing a new image for New Zealand art, independent of European, imperialist precedents (ibid, p.90).

Similarly, California painters have used different modes of representation to serve various ideological purposes. The Valley of Yosemite has a mythic history in California comparable to that of Mount Taranaki. As painted by Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Hill and others in the nineteenth century, Yosemite served as a cultural monument in a nationalist campaign following the American Civil War.<sup>3</sup> Photographed by Ansel Adams in the mid-twentieth century it signified quite a different, domestic political agenda, serving the interests of the Sierra Club and other conservation organisations.

Both California and New Zealand forged cultural identities in the nineteenth century using images of 'nature' and the 'natural' landscape. Artists have continued to focus on landscape subjects in both places. A comparative study of landscape representation in California and New Zealand yields many interesting parallels as well as contrasts.

The focus of this paper is nineteenth century landscape paintings in California and New Zealand. My goal is to illuminate ways landscape artists in both California and New Zealand used the visual language of the picturesque as a means to represent not only the land but myths inscribed upon it by bourgeois culture. Roland Barthes (1957, 1985), in his studies of naturalised sign systems of bourgeois culture, identifies 'myth' as the way language, and also objects, convey meaning within bourgeois culture. A defining quality of myth, for Barthes (1957, p.129), is its ability to 'naturalize' concepts, to 'transform history into nature'. Landscape paintings approach the level of myth when meanings conveyed by the painted image are read as natural rather than cultural. Paintings of Taranaki or Yosemite present the landscape as a fact of nature, but they actually act as complex mythological signs, within the framework of a national culture, as well as within the context of a bourgeois culture that transcends national boundaries. In the nineteenth century, the picturesque offered a mythic discourse which could accommodate the exotic within the framework of European culture, mediate

diversity and serve the interests of an emerging bourgeois class in establishing far-flung outposts in new territories. Although two-dimensional, visual representations of the landscape are the primary concern here, conclusions from this analysis can be applied to landscape architecture, as another form of landscape representation that has been constructed within the discourse of the picturesque.

### *The picturesque sensibility*

Early travellers and landscape painters in California and New Zealand shared a common language of landscape representation. They viewed coastlines, mountains, valleys and plains through a lens shaped by more than a century of discourse on landscape aesthetics. This discourse affected the way that travellers looked at the landscape, painters represented it and collectors accumulated those representations. In his study of early English reactions to the New Zealand landscape, Shepard (1969, p.14) notes:

The traveller in New Zealand went from scene to scene, from one pleasing prospect to the next, between them crossing intervals of barren plains, dull, wet forests, dreary shores, dismal, sandy coasts, and interminable 'fir-covered' hills.

The rules and categories of landscape aesthetics had created a complex, hierarchical landscape value system, at the top of which were landscapes appreciated by travellers with highly refined, European taste. This aesthetic sensibility coincided in both New Zealand and California, with major transformations of the land by colonial settlement.<sup>4</sup>

The term picturesque, signifying a specific category of painting and landscape appreciation, was first devised in the eighteenth century by William Gilpin, who argued that certain qualities made some landscapes more suitable than others for representation in painting.<sup>5</sup> Gilpin derived these qualities, including roughness, irregularity and variousness, from his study of paintings, particularly by Claude and Gainsborough, and from observations of nature itself. He contended (1792, p.59) that 'a strong impression of nature will enable us to judge of the works of art. Nature is the archetype.'

Gilpin's equation of nature with painting was his lasting legacy to the picturesque. As the author of a series of picturesque guidebooks to the British countryside at the end of the eighteenth century, Gilpin can be credited with inventing picturesque tourism. Following his lead, several generations of English artists, amateur and professional, set forth armed with sketchbooks and paints, prepared to record and categorise picturesque scenery, to judge the merits of nature as painting and painting as nature.

The landscape celebrated by devotees of the picturesque in the late eighteenth century, which 'was supposed to embody [the picturesque] (as the Campagna embodied the beautiful or the Alps the sublime), was the native English landscape itself (Bermingham 1986, p.57). Paradoxically, this landscape gained value only as it was being replaced rapidly as a result of agrarian reform. The process of enclosure replaced the established communal landscape of open fields and woodlands with a new privatised landscape of improved farms and relocated settlements. The picturesque began as a category of refined taste, its proponents urged to seek a unique and exceptional beauty in the landscape, but as it gained

popularity, it came to represent, not so much the unusual, as the comfortable and the banal. Bermingham (ibid, p.85) notes that the picturesque:

. . . represented a landscape both familiar and accessible. It thus could be widely consumed, and with all the more enthusiasm in that the landscape it celebrated was beginning to vanish.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the term picturesque had lost much of its original focus. The fad for picturesque scenery reached such popularity as to become a subject of satire for nineteenth century writers such as Jane Austen. In *Northanger Abbey* (cited in ibid, p.84), Catherine was tutored in the picturesque by Henry Tilney, who:

. . . talked of foregrounds, distances, and second distances; side-screens and perspectives; lights and shades; and Catherine was so hopeful a scholar, that when they gained the top of Beechen Cliff, she voluntarily rejected the whole city of Bath, as unworthy to make part of a landscape.

Yet the widespread use of the term picturesque throughout the nineteenth century, in a wide variety of cultural practices, should not be seen as evidence of the meaninglessness of the concept. As Copley and Garside (1994, p.1) have noted:

[The] lack of precise definition is not an indication of its cultural or ideological insignificance . . . on the contrary, it can be argued that the cultural importance of the Picturesque stands in direct proportion to the theoretical imprecision of its vocabulary.

The picturesque sensibility, as it evolved during the nineteenth century, rendered remote places accessible and consumable. As an aesthetic, it became a popular means of understanding and relating to the landscape. It offered a vehicle for claiming, belonging in and appropriating landscapes, not only in England, but around the world. *Picturesque views of England and Wales* (Turner 1838), *Picturesque America* (Bryant 1872–1874) and the three-volume *Picturesque atlas of Australasia* (Garran 1886–1888) are only three examples of numerous popular publications that offered picturesque landscapes in mass-produced formats in the nineteenth century.

The picturesque, nevertheless, remained a bourgeois sensibility. Elizabeth Helsinger (1994, p.105) explores the relationship of the viewer to the landscapes pictured by Turner (1838), noting that ‘two identities—that of land-owners who occupy privileged positions for viewing England and that of middle-class tourists and internal immigrants—are potentially offered by these books of views’. The picturesque appealed to a mobile viewer, whether actual tourist or armchair traveller. Others, such as the rural labourer, remain as subjects of the picturesque, fixed in social position and location. As Helsinger (ibid) observes:

. . . to be the subject, and never the viewer, of these landscapes means to be fixed in place like the rural labourer, circumscribed within a social position and a locality, unable to grasp the larger entity, England, which local scenes can represent for more mobile picturesque viewers.

Views identified as picturesque in California and New Zealand in the nineteenth century retained tenuous connection to the picturesque theory debated so heatedly in England in the eighteenth century. The second-generation consumers of the picturesque must have understood the term in a broad sense to refer to land presented in a picture. Yet certain qualities persisted in these views and will be central to the present analysis. First, the picturesque sensibility remained primarily associated with scenes of 'nature' and/or countryside, sometimes glorified, sometimes pastoralised, always treated reverently. Industrial scenes were rarely depicted, unless celebrating, in the eighteenth century tradition, 'anachronistic or disappearing industries' (Bermingham 1986, p.81). The picturesque embodied a desire to 'improve' the landscape, but, in its nostalgia, was also a reaction to improvements. In this way it served to mediate and negotiate cultural changes to the land. Finally, picturesque views retained certain compositional conventions. A vignette often served as the central focus, usually an object or scene rendered in naturalistic detail. Undefined borders suggested an 'infinite extension of the imagination' (ibid). These characteristics unite paintings of California and New Zealand in the nineteenth century.

### *Picturesque California*

In 1872, 100 years after Gilpin's *Three essays*, William Cullen Bryant edited *Picturesque America*, a large collection of writings and engravings meant to grace the drawing rooms of cultured Americans interested in knowing more about their national heritage.<sup>6</sup> In the preface, Bryant (1872, pp.iii-iv) explains that the book offered a visual record of some of the remarkable scenery of the North American continent:

In the Old World every spot remarkable in these respects has been visited by the artist; studied and sketched again and again . . . [but] art sighs to carry her conquests into new realms. On our continent, and within the limits of our Republic, she finds them—primitive forests in which the huge trunks of a past generation of trees lie mouldering in the shade of their aged descendants; mountains and valleys, gorges and rivers, and tracts of sea-coast, which the foot of the artist has never trod; and glens murmuring with water-falls which his ear has never heard . . . Nor is the plan of the work confined to the natural beauties of our country. It includes, moreover, the various aspects impressed on it by civilization. It will give views of our cities and towns, characteristic scenes of human activity on our rivers and lakes, and will often associate, with the places delineated, whatever of American life and habits may possess the picturesque element.

Bryant assumed that artists would take their inspiration from 'nature', ie from the physical world, but would bring a certain sensibility to their choice of subject matter. Although picturesque had come to mean, in a general sense, a scene worthy of being made into a picture, some subjects were more suitable than others. In particular, as well as representing a picturesque journey of discovery, like Gilpin's picturesque tours of the British Isles, the book is a journey of conquest and nation building. Picturesque scenery was appropriated as an emblem of American national identity. Scenes of 'unspoiled' nature offered significant contrast to the worn political landscapes of Europe. Certain categories

of landscape 'improvement', especially family farms and ranches, carried associations of a democratic system of government and American life and habits.

In the Californian section of *Picturesque America*, scenic descriptions represent American social and economic values. For example, Garczynski (1872-1874, p.416) offers a description of the great central valley seen from the lower slopes of Mount Lassen:

Beyond the river, stretches the interminable prairie, where the fields of harvested wheat lie wrapped in slumber; and not a single ranch gives even a token of life. The light, stealing upon the broad shadows, first touches the tops of the prairie-wagons, and glorifies the brass ornaments of the patient mules. Then, making more and more progress, it shines upon the broken and fragmentary huts that Indians have left, and at last, in full glory of splendor, brings out the yellow of the cultivated fields and the coarse, brown of the sandy soil.

The golden light illuminating the sleeping ranches in this poetic description can be read as a divine blessing upon the project of agriculture, appropriating land from the American Indians.

A fitting visual companion piece to this poetic description of manifest destiny would be *Harvest time* (figure 1), painted by William Hahn at roughly the same moment in Californian history. With its subject of dry wheat farming in the Central Valley, Hahn's painting depicts a scene bathed in golden, transcendental light in which farm labour appears effortless, almost leisurely. Who are these fortunate labourers? In the detailed vignette in the foreground, horses strain at their traces, a dog catches a ground squirrel, a group of children, pieces of equipment and remnants of lunch rest 'naturally' on the freshly cut stubble. The mountains and interminable prairie extend beyond the edges of the canvas,



Figure 1: William Hahn, *Harvest time*, 1875. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, United States. Gift of Mrs R McKinnon and Mrs Harry L Brown

suggesting by imaginative extension a vast, sun-bathed land awaiting improvement. By contrast, photographs of the period, such as those by Carleton Watkins (see Schenker 1994), present a somewhat different perspective. Watkins' body of work, produced for a commission by the Kern County Land Company in the 1880s, conveys a more realistic sense of the effort required to make the land productive. Given his assignment was to represent the Central Valley as a land of investment opportunity, however, it also pays tribute to Kern County ranchers' heroic achievement.

By 1888, when John Muir edited the generously illustrated volume, *Picturesque California*, a school of landscape painters had established its headquarters in San Francisco. William Keith and Thomas Hill formed the nucleus of this group. Painters like William Hahn and Albert Bierstadt took up residence of various lengths there, making forays into the California countryside, mostly in the direction of the Sierra Nevada. Trained in Europe, they developed reputations by painting California mountain scenery, Yosemite in particular (Miller 1976, Harrison 1994). Keith and Hill spent time in Boston and helped make the scenery of the American West, again especially Yosemite, familiar to East Coast art patrons.

Reminiscing about the San Francisco art market in the 1860s, Keith (cited in Harrison 1994, p.s-19) noted, 'Everything and anything in the semblance of a picture sold then. An art wave swept over California—and everybody bought pictures. Those were the halcyon days for painters in this city.' More than portraying the magnitude of the wilderness, paintings of the magnificent Sierra Nevada represented the obstacles overcome in bringing civilisation and 'culture' to this remote outpost on the western edge of the United States. Art patrons were newly prosperous ranchers, businessmen and industrialists who had an interest in establishing San Francisco's bourgeois identity, shaking off the rough reputation of the Californian gold rush, capitalising on the opportunities of the post Civil War era.

Just as the English picturesque a century earlier was connected to the process of enclosure and loss of the vernacular English landscape, so nineteenth century paintings of California were connected to the opening of the West by railroad and the imminent loss of wilderness. Muir and Keith could still make an excursion together by mule through Yosemite in 1875, writing and sketching in a transcendental ecstasy. But by 1892 the newly-formed Sierra Club was opposing reductions to Yosemite National Park. A sense of impending loss looms over Keith's paintings in the 1870s and 1880s. By 1894 he had narrowed his focus, as he recorded (cited in *ibid*, p.s-18):

After a while, I got down to more simple things and found my enjoyment increased a hundredfold. A clump of trees with a sky behind as a background—the best painters have been satisfied with such simple things, and they are enough to satisfy future generations of painters.

Like rustic English landscape paintings, nineteenth century Californian paintings offered an illusionary account of the landscape, while simultaneously suggesting actual conditions. The inevitable small figure in a detailed vignette, riding on a horse or mule or camped by a stream, represents the intrusion of human civilisation into the wilderness, alluding to inevitable change ahead. For example,



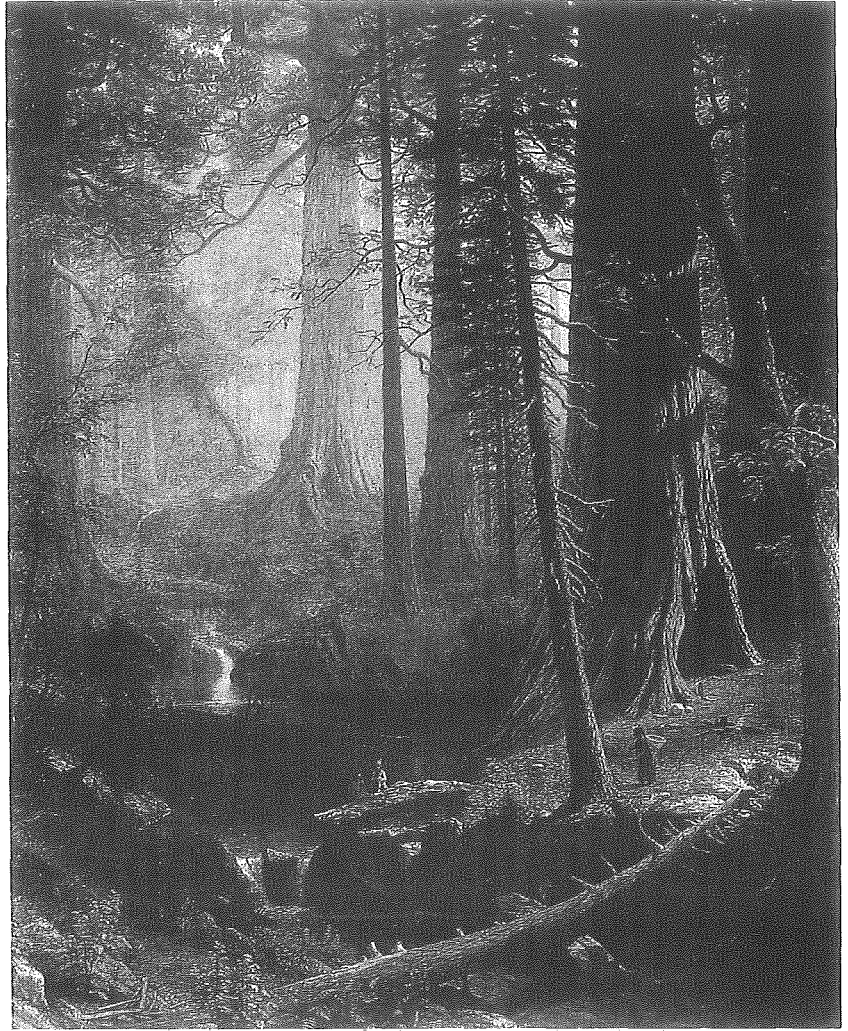
*Figure 2: Thomas Hill, Great Canyon of the Sierra, Yosemite, 1871. Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California, United States. E B Crocker Collection*

in Thomas Hill's *Great Canyon of the Sierra, Yosemite* (figure 2), two small figures and a hut appear as dwarfed by the towering peaks and surrounded by pristine wilderness. However, by 1871 Yosemite had already been surveyed by a team of the State Geological Survey, tourists were visiting in sizeable numbers and the Yosemite Commission was facilitating 'improvements' in the form of roads, bridges, trails and hotels. Another example, Bierstadt's *Giant redwood trees of California* (figure 3), depicts small figures of an Indian family as the central focus of a vignette. The group is dwarfed by giant trees, highlighted by a ray of sun, as characters in an Eden-like myth, representing peaceful coexistence with nature. But the California Indian population had already been nearly extinguished by European diseases, and their way of life destroyed by European farming practices (Preston 1981). In this context the mythical content of the painting is inescapable. It both justifies and belies California's social and cultural transformation. The magnificent trees, emblems of a new nationhood, tower over the subjugated Indians. These paintings embody and transmit social values by means of visual code.

### *Picturesque New Zealand*

As Bierstadt, Keith, Hill and others made their excursions through the Sierra Nevada, their counterparts in New Zealand, such as Nicholas Chevalier, Eugene von Guérard and John Gully, embarked on similar journeys of European discovery and conquest. Paintings from the nineteenth century in New Zealand employ similar conventions to represent the landscape, often including a detailed





*Figure 3: Albert Bierstadt, Giant redwood trees of California, 1874.  
The Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, United States*

vignette in the foreground, its tiny figures dwarfed by a magnificent mountain backdrop, edges suggesting infinite extension. Exaggerated grandeur of trees, cliffs, peaks and panoramas serves to aggrandise New Zealand as a magnificent landscape, a 'natural' wonder.<sup>7</sup> Although plants are sometimes recognisable as indigenous species, techniques for rendering foliage recall Gainsborough and Constable. Patches of light and shade convey a slightly sombre mood; rays of sunlight pick out tiny figures favoured by destiny.

Moreover, while the land is New Zealand, the eye is European. Chevalier and von Guérard, like their Californian counterparts, trained in European art schools. Both came to New Zealand on extended excursions from Australia, collected scenery, in the form of sketches, filing and classifying the landscape according to European classifications. Chevalier made two expeditions in the South Island in 1866, one through Otago and Southland and the other through Canterbury. Both were supported by a grant of £200 from the provincial governments of Otago and Canterbury respectively, suggesting an interest in promoting the colony through art.<sup>8</sup> In *Crossing the Teremakau* (figure 4), Chevalier depicts an expedition on horseback crossing a tributary stream of the Teremakau River. This crossing



Figure 4: Nicholas Chevalier, *Crossing the Teremakau*, 1876. *The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, Wellington, New Zealand

actually occurred on his journey from Christchurch to Hokitika in 1866, which he sketched at the time and developed into the painting two years later. His wife, Caroline, who accompanied him, describes the crossing in her journal as ‘most picturesque’ (cited in Roberts 1992, p.25). In the finished painting, the party on horseback in the foreground appears tiny in comparison to the massive trees. The horses pick their way among large boulders. As Caroline Chevalier’s journal attests, the crossing was quite dangerous. A ray of light, highlighting the figures on horseback, appears as a sign of divine intervention. The torrent was traversed safely.

After an expedition to New Zealand in 1876, von Guérard turned his sketches into two great paintings that became ‘the most widely exhibited New Zealand paintings of the nineteenth century’ (Blackley 1990, p.41). In *Lake Wakatipu with Mount Earnslaw, Middle Island, New Zealand* (figure 5), von Guérard portrays the lake surrounded by soaring peaks. A tiny Maori canoe at the centre of focus represents a state of Eden-like innocence similar to Bierstadt’s depiction of Californian Indians at roughly the same time. By the time of von Guérard’s visit, Milford, like Yosemite, had become accessible to tourists (King 1988). The Maori, like the landscape, were ‘consumable’ as a tourist attraction.<sup>9</sup>

As in California, New Zealand drew many artists—often on sketching expeditions, but others took up residence and developed a local following as well

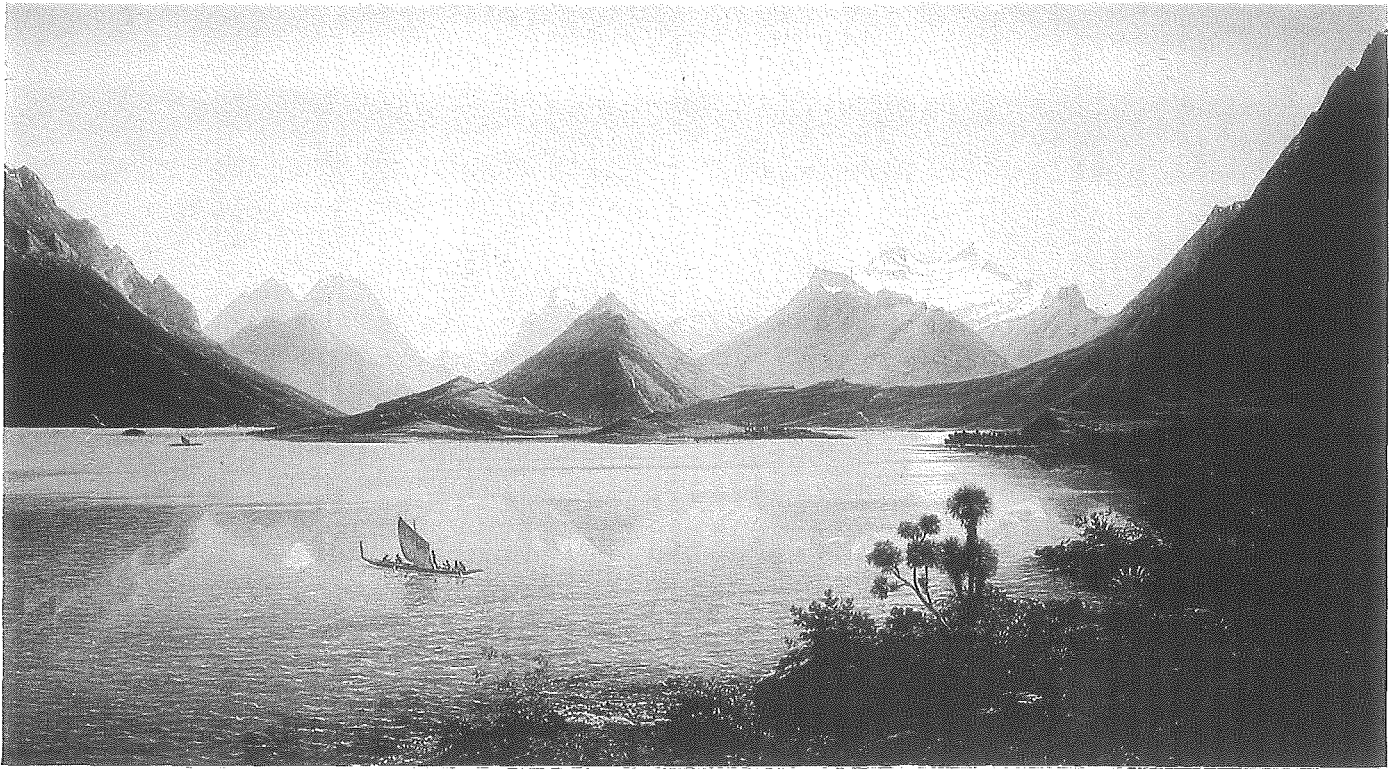


Figure 5: Eugene von Guérard, Lake Wakatipu with Mount Earnslaw, Middle Island, New Zealand, 1877-1879. Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand. Mackelvie Trust Collection

as exhibiting abroad. Artists like George O'Brien, Albin Martin and John Gully formed the nucleus of budding regional art centres in New Zealand, establishing reputations based on picturesque scenes of the New Zealand landscape and looking to European traditions for verification and inspiration. John Gully, for example, built a reputation as 'one of the most successful New Zealand artists of the nineteenth century', exhibiting New Zealand scenes in London, Vienna, Melbourne and Sydney, as well as throughout New Zealand (Blackley 1990, p.41). His watercolour painting, *In the Southern Alps* (figure 6) presents a dramatic view of a deep gorge, a lone horseman following a path along its precipitous edge. The edges of the painting are abruptly cut off, suggesting other awe-inspiring vistas beyond the frame. The conventions of the representation make the scene at once exotic and familiar. Because it could be the Sierra Nevada or the Andes, it says more about the refined taste of the painter/consumer of this vision than about the land itself. Indeed, Gully's success suggests there has been a viable market for such scenes from London to Sydney.

### *Conclusion*

Picturesque paintings in New Zealand and California in the nineteenth century represent the landscape as a hegemonic myth of bourgeois culture. They played a crucial role in the process of visualising cultural transformation, making exotic places familiar, accessible, consumable. Early consumers of the picturesque in these countries were investors in various colonising enterprises, persons of refined taste and European education with the means to travel and to purchase paintings. Publications such as *Picturesque California* and the *Picturesque atlas of Australasia*



*Figure 6: John Gully, In the Southern Alps, 1881. The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand*

extended access, strengthening claims to the land by offering visual possession to the purchasers of these views. The common language of the picturesque in this context was a language of bourgeois culture, transcending national boundaries. It offered a means of simultaneously establishing local identity and connecting to a larger vision, uniting its consumers in a shared understanding of the landscape and their relation to it.

This study of nineteenth century landscape representation raises questions that are relevant to landscape architecture. It is important to note that the common language of the picturesque, migrating around the world, influenced not only paintings, but transformations of the physical landscape itself. As Bermingham (1986) has observed, social transformation of a particular landscape is often accompanied by the rise of an aesthetic ideal, such as the picturesque, allowing for imaginative recovery of a landscape lost during transformation. This process of 'imaginative recovery' is usually ideological, ie allied to a particular social class, political agenda or world view. What have gardens or parks historically represented if not imaginative recovery of lost landscapes? Both the United States and New Zealand, for example, constructed national identity in the nineteenth century around picturesque images of the landscape and then, when that

and then, when that landscape was threatened by economic development, protected the myth in the form of national parks.

Barthes (1957) has proposed a way of categorising how individuals and groups relate and respond to the myths of bourgeois culture, identifying two polar opposites: myth-makers, who produce and consume the myths, and mythologists, who render myth transparent and therefore less effective. As well as asking how the picturesque has evolved in the twentieth century, therefore, we might well consider where landscape architects fall on the continuum between myth-maker and mythologist.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The idea that 'landscape' is a politically charged concept has been explored by a number of scholars. Seminal works include Williams (1973) and Barrell (1980). More recent studies have focused specifically on the tenets of the picturesque in various political contexts: see Bermingham (1986) and several excellent and provocative collections of essays, especially Mitchell (1994a) and Copley and Garside (1994).

<sup>2</sup> The name of the mountain has recently been changed from Mount Egmont, its colonial name, to Taranaki, the older, Maori name for it.

<sup>3</sup> For remarkable evidence of this agenda, see Olmsted (1953, originally published 1865).

<sup>4</sup> Mitchell (1994b, p.17) explores the relationship between imperialism and the popularity of landscape painting, noting that:

. . . certain semiotic features of landscape, and the historical narratives they generate, are tailor-made for the discourse of imperialism, which conceives itself precisely (and simultaneously) as an expansion of landscape understood as an inevitable, progressive development in history, an expansion of 'culture' and 'civilization' into a 'natural' space in a progress that is itself narrated as 'natural'.

<sup>5</sup> Gilpin was the first theorist of the picturesque. He began publishing accounts of picturesque tours to various parts of Britain as early as 1782, and published his *Three essays* on picturesque themes in 1792. For an excellent and succinct summary of the relationship among the theories advanced by Gilpin, Price, Alison and Knight, see Bermingham (1986, pp.63–73).

<sup>6</sup> *Picturesque America* first appeared as a series in *Appleton's Journal* and then as a subscription book, issued in parts, from 1872 to 1874. It was later issued in bound volumes: see Rainey (1994).

<sup>7</sup> While the sublimity of these paintings is obvious, I am not concerned here with the delineation of 'sublime' versus 'picturesque'. The picturesque, in the sense that I am arguing for in the nineteenth century, subsumes aesthetic categories that were more distinct in the previous century. Many of the views included in the picturesque atlases evinced a sublime sensibility; others depicted more gentle, less awesome landscapes. More thorough analysis of these distinctions must await future study.

<sup>8</sup> Chevalier sent 49 New Zealand drawings and water colours to the Paris International Exposition in 1867; works made on, or as a result of, the Canterbury journey continued to be shown in both England and New Zealand in the years to follow (Roberts 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Although Maori and Californian Indians developed different relations with Europeans, in many of these nineteenth century paintings they are depicted in a similar manner, as extensions of 'nature' and objects of representation rather than viewers or subjects. This topic requires further study.

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