

PAPER FOR CONFERENCE ON LITERARY GEOGRAPHIES

Landscape as Language:

Discussing Margaret Drabble's *A Writer's Britain. Landscape in Literature*, of 1979

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According to the Oxford Online Dictionary, the term *landscape* originates from the late sixteenth century, from the Middle Dutch word *lantscap* (“denoting a picture of scenery”), and it refers to “all the visible features of an area of land, often considered in terms of their aesthetic appeal”, having as synonyms words such as ‘scenery’, ‘topography’, ‘view’, ‘prospect’, ‘panorama’ and ‘perspective’.

What precisely constitutes ‘landscape’ has been the topic of heated debate among modern scholars. Whether the author in question believes it to be ‘an object that is seen’, ‘a way of seeing’, or ‘a performance’ seems to affect how the subject is analyzed. Representations of landscape usually occur in a wide variety of texts and can be written down in numerous modes or forms. Topographical poetry, regional fiction, nature writing, travel writing, or natural history writing are only some of the genres featuring landscape; one can find them described in the bucolic conventions of the pastoral or in the more grandiose discourses of the sublime. Dating back to classical times, chorography is one of the earliest formal manifestations of writing about landscape that is associated with definitions of regionality. It witnessed a resurgence in the early modern era, primarily in seminal works such as William Camden’s *Britannia* (1607).¹ Chorography investigates and articulates what makes a specific place or region

¹ In 1577, with the encouragement of Abraham Ortelius, Camden began his great work *Britannia*, a topographical and historical survey of all of Great Britain and Ireland. His stated intention was "to restore antiquity to Britaine, and Britaine to its antiquity." The first edition was published in 1586. The work, which was written in Latin, was very popular, going into seven editions by 1607, each considerably enlarged from its predecessor. The 1607 edition included for the first time a full set of English county maps, based on the surveys of Christopher Saxton and John Norden, and engraved by William Kip and

distinctive, which may have to do with geographical features and the historical traces of human action on those features.² The impact of human actions on the natural environment became one of the features of the landscape poetry and painting that reached the height of its popularity in the 18th century and the Romantic period. Never just ‘pure description’, representations of landscape frequently served powerful ideological functions, influencing concepts of nation and of class to a great extent. Potential threats to the landscape and nostalgia for a particular vision of landscape in the past began to be predominant in the 19th and 20th centuries, with an important emphasis on nature-centred environmental and ecocritical concerns. Landscape has thus become a broad and compelling subject, whether viewed chronologically, generically, discursively, topographically, or by other categories such as nation or gender.

Many different disciplines have shown an interest in the topic of landscape, and the respective overviews are typically oriented toward the particular background of the author and his or her field. Since the concepts of nature in general are foundational to the idea of landscape, intellectual and social historians offer essential contextual information, as Glacken’s 1967 *Nature and Culture in Western Thought* (a detailed and erudite history of human ideas of nature from the classical world to Enlightenment Europe) and Thomas’s 1984 *Man and the Natural World* (a comprehensive historical examination of how humanity has questioned and rationalized its ascendancy over nature). In its turn, Schama’s 1995 *Landscape and Memory* (an interdisciplinary examination of the persistence of various Western myths of landscape) celebrates how cultural memories infuse human experiences of nature. The representation of landscape in literature specifically is surveyed in Siddall’s 2009 *Landscape and Literature* (a work that proceeds chronologically from ancient times to the present and examines recurring themes, issues, and privileged topoi).

Scholars from the field of cultural geography have emphasized shifting theoretical perspectives on the topic, as Wylie’s 2007 *Landscape. Key Ideas in Geography* (which introduces theoretical approaches from the 1980s to the present and provides detailed summaries and critiques of the most important modern figures), while

William Hole (who also engraved the fine title page). The first English language edition, again expanded, translated by Philemon Holland (probably in collaboration with Camden), appeared in 1610. *Britannia* is a county-by-county description of Great Britain and Ireland. Rather than write a history, Camden wanted to describe in detail the Great Britain of the present, and to show how the traces of the past could be discerned in the existing landscape. By this method, he produced the first coherent picture of Roman Britain.

² A work of chorography is a study that relates landscape, geography, antiquarianism, and history.

Johnson's 2006 *Ideas of Landscape: An Introduction* brings the insights of the discipline of archaeology to the topic (it surveys theoretical debates about landscape, demonstrating the influence of Wordsworth and Romantic ideas of landscape on the undisputed 'father' of English landscape history, W. G. Hoskins³). Muir's 1999 *Approaches to Landscape* provides a balanced view of the historical and cultural ways of interpreting and studying landscape (it has chapters on the history of landscape, on landscape symbolism, and landscape politics and aesthetics). Howard's 2011 *An Introduction to Landscape* adds an important practical and political dimension by probing the goals of conservation and preservation (focuses on the convention's definition of landscape as "an area of land as perceived by people" and addresses practical problems of determining which landscapes should be protected, managed, and enhanced).

In the fields of philosophy and cultural studies, other modern authors such as Foucault, Heidegger, Bachelard, Lefebvre, Harvey, Williams and Mitchell, have famously dealt with the multifaceted concepts of landscape and space. In "Of Other Spaces" (*Des espaces autres*), also commonly known as "Heterotopia",⁴ Foucault starts by looking at the historical development of western space perception and he then focuses on those places which bear a 'strange' relation to other places by suspending, neutralizing or reversing the relationships through which we can point at, reflect or conceive them. These 'other places' are, according to Foucault, places that don't really exist, or *heterotopias*, which stand outside of known space. Martin Heidegger's "Art and Space" (1969) presents an understanding of the interconnection of space, art and language. Since human dwelling in space may be thought of as inhabiting the space of language, the last part of his article treats the interconnection of space and the art-works of language. Gaston Bachelard's "The Poetics of Space" (*La Poétique de l'Espace*, 1958) is a phenomenological interrogation into the meaning of spaces which preoccupy poetry, intimate spaces such as a house, a drawer, a night dresser and spaces of wide expansion such as vistas and woods. Bachelard attempts to trace the reception of the poetic image in the subjective consciousness; he introduces his concept of *topoanalysis*,

³ W.G. Hoskins was one of the most original and influential historians of the 20th century. He realized that landscapes are the richest record we have of the past, and with his masterpiece, *The Making of the English Landscape*, he changed forever how we experience the places in which we live and work.

⁴ "Heterotopia" was initially a lecture carried by Michel Foucault to a group of architects in 1967.

which he defines as the systematic psychological studying of the sites of our intimate lives.⁵

Raymond Williams's *The Country and the City* (1973) analyzes images of the country and the city in English literature since the 16th century, and how these images become central symbols for conceptualizing the social and economic changes associated with capitalist development in England. Williams debunks the notion of rural life as simple, natural, and unadulterated, leaving an image of the country as a Golden Age. This is, according to Williams, a myth functioning as a memory that dissimulates class conflict, enmity, and animosity present in the country since the 16th century. Williams shows how this imagery is embedded in the writings of English poets, novelists and essayists.⁶ Within the field of geography, Henri Lefebvre, a Marxist theorist, contends in "Production of Space", *La production de l'espace* (1974), that space is a social product or construction of values and experiences, thereby allowing for a reproduction of society. Society (the physical space) is reproduced through hegemony which in turn generates capitalism via class superiority. Ultimately, Lefebvre conceives space as a form of power.

David Harvey's *Geography of Difference* (1996) establishes foundational concepts for understanding how space, time, place and nature - the material frames of daily life - are constituted and represented through social practices. It describes how geographical differences are produced, and shows how they then become fundamental to the exploration of political, economic and ecological alternatives to contemporary life. W. J. T. Mitchell's *Landscape and Power*, of 1994, reshaped the direction of landscape studies by considering landscape not simply as an object to be seen or a text to be read, but as an instrument of cultural force, a central tool in the creation of national and social identities. This important work asks not just what landscape 'is' or 'means' but what it *does*, how it works as a cultural practice.

We now proceed to the focus of this paper, the author Margaret Drabble (1939-), a native of Sheffield, who studied at York and Cambridge; she is notorious for having combined literary scholarship (namely, studies on Wordsworth and Hardy) and editorship (most notably, *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* of 1985) with

⁵ Because he bases his analysis on lived experience of architecture, understanding the 'house' is for Bachelard a way to understand the soul.

⁶ For Williams, these writers have not just reproduced the rural-urban divide, but their works have also served to justify the existing social order. He thus rejects a simple, dualistic explanation of the city as evil.

her career as a biographer and a novelist (1964-2006) and, lately, short-story writer (2011).⁷ Drabble has also had a long-standing connection with drama, having produced a few plays. She is often described as being ‘the author one should read to get a clear view of what it’s like to live in England’. This is true not only because of her non-fiction books, *For Queen and Country* (1978) and *A Writer’s Britain* (1979), but also for the many novels that she writes in the realist tradition with astute social observation; her characters possess tangible English personalities and her events reflect the major societal changes that had taken place in Great Britain in the 60s, 70s and 80s. These ‘snapshots of women’s lives’, as she calls them, show the protagonists attempting to put a brave face on the disappointments of everyday life, or the schism between their public and private selves.

In an article for *The Guardian* of September 2009, Drabble explains that "I am one of many who *read the landscape through those who wrote about it* and the words of our great landscape writers – Walter Scott, Wordsworth, Hopkins, Hardy, Ted Hughes, Sylvia Plath – sound in my ears as I walk and wander" (my emphasis). And she significantly adds that "Walking in the footsteps of great writers, and *seeing landscapes and buildings through their eyes* is one of the most enjoyable and sustaining of pleasures" (my emphasis). As a confirmation of this, she then lists the ‘top ten places’ she likes best in Britain, and it is important here to quote directly from her own words:

- 1) Stonehenge has inspired innumerable writers, and although it is one of the best known prehistoric sites in the world it is impossible to pass it without a sense of awe. It has *a melancholy grandeur that passing traffic cannot diminish*. Hardy and Wordsworth were moved by it, and so am I.
- 2) The Potteries (Burslem) still have some of the picturesque pot banks Arnold Bennett made famous in his Five Towns novels. It’s a weird post-industrial landscape now, with *a haunting poetic dereliction*.
- 3) Goredale Scar near Malham in North Yorkshire is a classic beauty spot, and none the less beautiful for that. It is *both sublime and romantic*, and was celebrated by the poet Thomas Gray, and by me in my novel *The Waterfall*.
- 4) Tintern Abbey, in the Wye Valley, is the subject of one of Wordsworth’s greatest poems, in which he describes *the restorative power of nature*. It was also a favourite destination for the "picturesque traveller" doing the Welsh tour.

⁷ Her novels include *The Millstone* and *Jerusalem the Golden*; her most recent was *The Sea Lady*. Subjects of her biographies have included Wordsworth, Arnold Bennett and Angus Wilson. Her collection of short stories has the title of *A Day in the Life of a Smiling Woman*.

- 5) Tintagel in Cornwall is *a dramatic mythical Arthurian site*, and its castle and crags inspired both Tennyson and Hardy. It's both medieval and Victorian, like the Arthurian legend itself.
- 6) Aldeburgh, now the home of a literary festival, is perhaps better known for its painters and composers, but one of our finest landscape poets, George Crabbe, evoked *the harsh beauty of its seashore*, and his story inspired Benjamin Britten's Peter Grimes.
- 7) Godrevy Lighthouse. This St Ives landmark is the eponymous lighthouse of Virginia Woolf's greatest novel, and *an enduring symbol of artistic hope and endeavour*. St Ives is full of memories of Woolf, and of all the summer seaside holidays of all children, of all time.
- 8) The Quantock hills in Somerset are where Wordsworth and Coleridge walked when they were composing the Lyrical Ballads, and you can still see *the thorn tree and the little pond* of Wordsworth's poem, The Thorn. This is one of my favourite walks, and I recite their lines to myself as I go.
- 9) The Lake District is so closely bound to the lives of so many poets and writers that it is hard to choose a particular landscape from its many famous places, but of them all, perhaps Grasmere, *Dove Cottage and the daffodils* have the most powerful memories and associations.
- 10) I tend to prefer outdoor landscapes to writers' houses, but make an exception for the Brontë Parsonage at Haworth, a house in which life was experienced with extraordinary intensity. *This place and its churchyard and its surrounding moorland are numinous.*⁸ (my emphasis)

Although Drabble loves the West Country (she has a house in Somerset), her heart is still in Yorkshire, where she grew up. In a very recent interview to *The Yorkshire Post* in April 2014, she confesses "When I go back to Sheffield I feel very close to it – [...], there's something about the people, about the manners that I recognise." Drabble states that her favourite walk or view is along Filey Brigg and Scarborough that she used to love as a child. But she named her Yorkshire "hidden gem" as being Conisbrough Castle, the setting of Scott's *Ivanhoe* and where her own father was born. Rievaulx Abbey and the Temples, a religious site, is also singled out for "the wonderful views and the gloriously fresh air". In her opinion, what gives Yorkshire its unique identity is "the obstinacy, the understatement, [...]. The way that things are always underplayed, the integrity and also the self-confidence". As a literary

⁸ Please refer to theguardian.com, Wednesday 9 September 2009 13.11 BST, my emphasis.

influence, she finally mentions that “A lot of Yorkshire landscapes find their way into my work, and I think that my characters often look at things in a Yorkshire way.”⁹

In her ‘Foreword’ to *a Writer’s Britain*, Margaret Drabble poses one of the central questions of her work: ‘Why did the English develop the ability to enjoy scenery for its own sake to such a marked degree?’ (1979: 6-7). And she seems to suggest almost immediately a possible answer, one that is also revealing of her own method and situation: “Those who enjoy reading gain great pleasure from associating places with lines of poetry, with scenes from novels. *One pleasure reinforces the other*” (8, my emphasis). The pleasure of reading (good) literature, it can be inferred, is thus associated with that of (virtual) touring. It is for this reason that her book “combines journeys both in place and in time”; the visitor-reader is supposedly to be lead in these two dimensions by her hand, and her native imagination will thus inform her readers’ imagination everywhere. The chapters in Drabble’s book do not so much reflect a chronological order of ‘literary representations’ or ‘writers’ but rather the overall evolution in the awarenesses and fashions concerning the appreciation of nature. And she even formulates the hypothesis, already suggested by others, that “the ability to enjoy scenery for its own sake is as recent as the language we use to describe it.” (7)

Drabble begins her literary travelogue with Britain’s ‘sacred places’, moving from St. Cuthbert’s Lindisfarne to T. S. Eliot’s Little Gidding, which for her give the visitor “an intimation of the distant past”, “an apprehension of lingering barbarity or sanctity” (1979:17). Although in *The Making of the English Landscape*, W. G. Hoskins had declared that the Old English ‘had no eye for scenery’, she believes that “a positive liking for the bleak and desolate” can be traced in Anglo-Saxon literature, providing “a powerful strain in [their] national feeling for landscape” (21). She explains that the poet of *Beowulf* describes Grendel’s mere in such way that it would appeal to Tolkien readers centuries later:

These two live
In a little-known country, wolf-slopes, *windswept headlands*,
Perilous paths across the *boggy moors*, where a mountain stream
Plunges under *the mist-covered cliffs*,
Rushes through a fissure. It is not far from here,
If measured in miles, that the lake stands

⁹ Please refer to ‘My Yorkshire: Margaret Drabble’, interview to *The Yorkshire Post*, 16.04.2014.

Shadowed by trees stiff with hoar frost.

A wood, firmly-rooted, frowns over the water ...

(my emphasis)¹⁰

Then, Drabble moves on to the rather prevalent ‘pastoral vision’ of Britain, including the images of farms and shepherds, in which she stresses not just the rich abundance implicit in authors such as Shakespeare but also the grimmer difficulties described by working-class poets as John Clare. She states that “From the Renaissance on, England produced reams of pastoral verse, imitations of Virgil and Theocritus, [...] lingering on until Thomas Hardy” (1979: 52) and George Eliot. Descriptions of country life and country labour are present not only in courtier poets like Spenser or Carew, but also in ploughman poets like Duck, Clare or Burns. For example, she writes that “James Thomson’s vision is that of the man of land and leisure, of wide horizons and cultured responses [...]; his landscapes are civilized and fruitful” (56)

Say, shall we wind

Along the streams? Or walk the smiling mead?

Or court the forest glades? Or wander wild

Among the waving harvests? Or ascend,

While radiant Summer opens all its pride,

Thy hill, delightful Shene? Here let us sweep

The boundless landscape; now the raptured eye,

Exulting, swift to huge Augusta send,

Now to the sister-hills that skirt her plain,

[...]

(‘Summer’, *The Seasons*, 1743)

Drabble’s next topic is the eighteenth-century ‘art of landscape’, which was practiced by landscapists like Kent and Brown and more notably described by authors like Pope and Thomson. She states that “English literature is full of writing about gardens – descriptive, instructional, polemical and symbolic” (1979: 105). She believes that the ‘ordered’, formal artificial garden was only a passing fashion and that the ‘wild, natural garden’ became the preferred one because the British think that “too much interference with nature is somehow immoral” (113). Nevertheless, she mentions that some poets were interested in landscape gardening; this idea is present in Alexander Pope’s mocking description of a villa planned in geometric style:

The whole, a labour’d quarry above ground,

¹⁰ All the quotations from the original texts are taken from Drabble’s *A Writer’s Britain*.

Two cupids squirt before: a lake behind
 Improves the keenness of the northern wind.
 [...]

 Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
 And half the platform just reflects the other.
 The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,
 Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees;
 With here a fountain, never to be play'd;
 And there a summer-house, that knows no shade:
 [...]

 (excerpt of *Epistle to Burlington*)

This leads her on, in turn, to her next chapter on ‘the Romantics’, with their passion for the wild and the sublime, namely in the portrayal of the Lake District by Wordsworth and of the Border Country by Walter Scott, descending then to the Yorkshire Fells of the Brontës and the Wessex of Thomas Hardy. She emphatically states that “Wordsworth forged a new relationship between man and the natural world” (1979: 147) and that “For him, *the landscape is the message, and he himself is the landscape*” (148, my emphasis); besides, “His poetry had made each place he mentions a place of pilgrimage” (147), namely Grasmere and Rydal Mere in Cumbria (but also the Valley of the Wye in Wales). Here, I quote precisely from *Tintern Abbey*:

And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty world
 Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
 And what perceive; well pleased *to recognise*
In nature and the language of the sense

*The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.*

(my emphasis)

In the same way, Walter Scott's poems and novels "added a vast array of ruined abbeys, castles, lochs, mountains and views to the common literary store" (173), namely Loch Katrine, Melrose and Abbotsford. As for the Brontë sisters, she mentions that they "have always been rightly identified with their Yorkshire home" (175); Emily's landscapes, including the windswept Haworth moors, "are among the finest in the language" – and in *Wuthering Heights*, Brontë "constantly sees and describes people in terms of landscape" (176). The effect of Somersby and the Lincolnshire landscape on Tennyson was also profound and, *In Memoriam*, Drabble suggests that the poet "responded like an electrocardiograph to the heart's terrain" (189).

Drabble presents us then with a somewhat unexpected 'Industrial Scene' through the multiple perspectives of Dickens, Lawrence, Bennett and Orwell. The North of England and Wales were ravaged by industrial development; yet, one of the places that inspired many visitors with a sense of the mingled sublime and picturesque was Coalbrookdale in Shropshire: "forges, mills [...] the flames bursting from the furnaces with the burning of the coal" (1979: 197); Ebenezer Elliott, in his faith in progress and science, even wrote "Verses on the Opening of the Sheffield and Rotherham Railway". For Drabble, "Dickens is the great poet of pollution, reminding us of what London fog was like"; for her, a city "swarming with crime and commerce" but "full of the most extraordinary contrasts and eccentricities" (213). One of the texts she chooses is the rightfully famous but predictable description of the fictional Coketown in *Hard Times*:

It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood, it was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and to-morrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next.

Writers as Bennett and Lawrence are for her, respectively, products of the potteries of Staffordshire and the mining districts of Nottinghamshire, namely the “haphazard distribution of pitheads, pot banks, factories” (217); the latter, in particular, had an appreciation of the harsh industrial hillsides. In the 20th century, she states, “a new kind of urban poetry appears” with Spender and Auden; and Wells and Waugh “cannot resist their admiration for a Brave New World” (229); the dramatic landscapes of mine, mountain and quarry are also celebrated in fantasy form in Tolkien’s epics. Finally, the poet Philip Larkin’s Hull offers his readers a post-war sense of desolation in his urban and suburban scenes.

Drabble’s travelogue concludes with a significant chapter on what she calls the ‘Golden Age’ or the modern rural idyll, with references to the Gloucestershire of Laurie Lee and the Wales of the poet Dylan Thomas. She explains that “an upsurge of patriotism”, after the First World War, “made England and her rural virtues seem the more precious as they were threatened” (1979: 257); in particular, the stories of E. M. Forster and Kipling and the poetry of Housman evoke the English countryside – “a literature which later generations were to dismiss as imperialist or escapist” (258). Drabble refers that urban poets like Dylan Thomas and Sylvia Plath sought rural sceneries (Wales and Devon, respectively), which provided them with some of the most powerful natural imagery; but she also emphasizes that a country living ended badly for both, revealing latent contradictions and conflicts (as in Plath’s “Letter in November”).

[...]
This is my property.
Two times a day
I pace it, sniffing
The barbarous holly with its viridian
Scallops, pure iron,

And the wall of the odd corpses.
I love them.
I love them like history.
The apples are golden,
Imagine it ----

My seventy trees
Holding their gold-ruddy balls
In a thick gray death-soup,
Their million
Gold leaves metal and breathless.
[...]

Drabble finishes her travelogue rather abruptly, concluding her analysis with the rather general impression of “how powerfully [their] obsession with landscape [still] persists” (1979: 277). As a matter of fact, one of the contemporary reviews of her book, by John Russell, art critic for *The New York Times*, was rather negative:

It is honestly and patiently done, but the interstitial matter is *drab* and the comments of a barely mitigated *banality*. [...] there is too much potting of general knowledge, too much paraphrasing when we crave the voice of the original. [...] As for the book as a whole, *it has no focus*. There are lightning flashes of genius here and there and from one or another hand, but *we get no coherent sense of England, any more than we get a coherent sense of Miss Drabble*.¹¹

Nevertheless, Drabble’s is not a mere tourist ‘guide’ but a fond reader’s travelogue and a ‘literary history’ in itself, in which she demonstrates that landscape has always been such an integral part of Britain’s culture and way of life that it could not help but be ever present in its literature (and art) throughout the ages. Certain places, object of “almost mystic devotion” on the part of the British natives, are particularly associated with certain writers and many readers are, therefore, irresistibly drawn to Britain’s great literary shrines. But because the subject is so vast and because “there are many ways of *reading landscape*” (my emphasis), she is careful to specify that hers is “a personal selection” (1979: 8)

[...] we all see differently, and every writer’s work is a record both of himself and of the age in which he lives, as well as of the particular places he describes.” (7)

The connections implicit in Drabble’s statement are not just between ‘writer and a certain place’ but also between ‘reader and *this* place seen through the eyes of *that* writer’. It is a rather complex phenomenon, in effect; an overlapping of different mental processes and sensorial experiences. The traditional opposition between Nature and Art leads Drabble to wonder why painters and writers “labour to reproduce in paint or words what each of us can see with our own eyes” (1979: 7); but, at the same time, she interprets “the desire to turn landscape into art” as “a natural one” (7), precisely because ‘we all see differently’ and some of us (the artists) wish to perpetuate that particular vision or perception. This artistic reproduction has happened so often in Britain (‘every point of beauty has been described so much’) that Nathaniel Hawthorne commented as

¹¹ Please refer to Russell, “Including Come-on Quotations”, December 23 1979, my emphasis.

early on as 1855 that “you do not quite get at naked Nature anywhere” due to “the effect of centuries of civilization” (quoted in Drabble, 8).

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