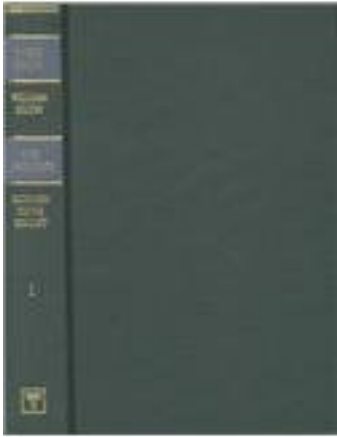


Aesthetics and the Picturesque, 1795-1840



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The Picturesque as an aesthetic category came into being in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Deriving from the French and Italian terms for 'painterly style', the word had been already used by Alexander Pope in describing Homer's prose. Later, in his *Essay on Prints* (1768), Gilpin defined the Picturesque as 'expressive of that peculiar beauty which is agreeable in a picture'. Gilpin did much to shift the emphasis of the term picturesque from pictures to the landscape with a series of guidebooks. These books helped start a British equivalent of the European grand tour with tourists rushing into the countryside, sketchbooks in hand, eager to experience and capture this picturesque beauty. The third edition of Gilpin's famous work included here has two additional essays explaining how the author set about translating these picturesque scenes into drawings and paintings. Richard Payne Knight and Uvedale Price took up the Picturesque cause, not like Gilpin in respect of travel, but because of a shared antipathy for the then prevalent landscape gardening style of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Knight's *The Landscape* outlines principles of taste, rules of

gardening and celebrates older formal gardens while attacking those of Brown and his followers. Knight's intellectual sparring partner Uvedale Price modelled his theories on Edmund Burke's account of the beautiful and the sublime. Price believed that landscape gardening should be set about in a painterly manner. Whether the principles of painting could be applied to landscape design turned into an ongoing debate between Price and the influential Humphry Repton, a man whom Knight allied to 'Capability' Brown. This latter figure was certainly the model for William Marshall, who here makes a spirited attack on both Knight and Price. Together these works represent the key theorists and arguments of the Picturesque movement, the ideas of which filtered into the novels of Jane Austen and other nineteenth-century writers and thinkers. It is a subject which has renewed interest thanks to writers such as Christopher Hussey, Walter Hipple and John Dixon Hunt. As an aesthetic category, the Picturesque is still highly relevant and the debates of these key 'founders' of the Picturesque can usefully be reappropriated and reinterpreted by new scholars seeking to apply social, cultural, economic and ideological relevance to environmental aesthetics.--new collection of the best, revised editions of key works on the Picturesque --includes debates on the picturesque in theory and practice by all the key protagonists --works include some fine illustrations and a new introduction by Gavin Budge

作者介绍:

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