

The Purposeful Sightseer: Courbet and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Tourism

Petra ten-Doesschate Chu

The exhibition *Courbet and the Modern Landscape*, organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2006, was the result of an interest on the part of its curators, Mary Morton and Charlotte Eyerman, in “rethinking Courbet’s landscape painting.”¹ Conceptually, the exhibition and its catalogue marked a return to an essentially formalist approach to art history. Such a return was the more refreshing as it concerned Gustave Courbet, an artist whose oeuvre, for more than three decades, had been the preferred object of alternative approaches to art history, be they sociohistorical/Marxist, feminist, psychoanalytical, or semiotic. The practitioners of these approaches focused primarily on Courbet’s figure paintings and underplayed his landscapes. In so doing, they neglected one of the most striking aspects of Courbet’s work—the artist’s daring and revolutionary *facture*.

Courbet and the Modern Landscape was stimulating because it invited the visitor to look at Courbet, once again, as an artist whose work concerned what the French call *faire*, i.e., the physical application of paint to the canvas. The exhibition helped us see his paintings as they were seen in the first half of the twentieth century, when critics from Claude Roger-Marx in the 1920s to Clement Greenberg in the late 1940s were seduced by Courbet’s innovative painting technique. The latter, in particular, saw it as the beginning of Modernism in painting, anticipating the Impressionists and Cézanne.² In her catalogue essay, Eyerman went further and argued that Courbet’s landscapes contained the germs of the action paintings of Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, and even some works of the contemporary German artist Gerhard Richter.³

For all the richness and sensuality of their surfaces, however, one cannot ignore that Courbet’s landscape paintings are objective and concrete representations of specific sites, in France as well as abroad. Many of them, as we shall see, represent common nineteenth-century tourist attractions. To modern viewers unfamiliar with these locales, the formal qualities of the paintings may well be more interesting than their subjects. However, this was hardly the case for Courbet and the public for which his paintings were intended. Who, one might ask, were those admirers and buyers of the artist’s landscape paintings? As far as we know, they were well-to-do middle-class viewers—industrialists and rentiers, both in Paris and the provinces, who enjoyed sightseeing and travel. On Sundays, they would hike to a nearby ruin or natural wonder. In the summer months, they might take a coach to the shore, embark on a river cruise on the Seine, the Rhine, or the Meuse, or take the train to visit the Franche-Comté or Auvergne.

Courbet, traditionally, has been characterized as the landscape painter par excellence of the Franche-Comté region, from which he hailed. His early biographers, Jules Castagnary and Georges Riat, were convinced that his youth in Ornans had left an indelible impression on the artist and had decisively marked his art, and particularly his landscapes. Riat wrote that, when the young Courbet left Ornans for Paris, he carried the impressions of his native landscape, already “drawn and colored in his heart” (“dessinés et colorés dans son coeur”).⁴ Castagnary agreed, commenting that “wherever he went, he



Chu The Purposeful Sightseer: Courbet and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Tourism

Papers from the Symposium *Looking at the Landscapes: Courbet and Modernism*

Held at the J. Paul Getty Museum on March 18, 2006

© 2007 J. Paul Getty Trust

carried the image [of the Franche-Comté] with him ... Courbet did not understand that a painter would go abroad to find his motifs. To a young man who came to show him a view of the Orient, he said, ‘Don’t you have your own country, is that why you find yourself obliged to borrow someone else’s to paint?’⁵

This conventional image of Courbet as a painter rooted in his native soil is still popular today, and it has caused us to downplay, if not ignore, the fact that the artist was an inveterate traveler and sightseer and that many of his landscapes were painted outside the Franche-Comté or even outside France. Furthermore, it has caused us to lose sight of the fact that many of the landscapes that Courbet painted in the Franche-Comté depict the region’s well-known nineteenth-century tourist sites—sites that had become attractions both to local sightseers and to visitors from other regions of France or even from abroad.⁶

Courbet’s youth coincided with the appearance of the *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l’ancienne France* (Picturesque and Romantic Travels in Old France), a huge serial publishing project that was initiated in 1820, one year after the artist’s birth, by Baron Isidore Taylor, with the help of the writer Charles Nodier.⁷ Taylor sought to produce albums with engaging texts and prints that described and depicted picturesque cultural and natural sites in the various regions of France. Published in installments, the *Voyages pittoresques* were exceedingly popular from the 1820s through the 1840s. Their subscribers, it seems, were mostly armchair travelers, who delighted in their virtual visits to sites that, at the time, were still difficult to access. Though the publication continued until 1878, the albums, ironically, lost some of their appeal as armchair travel gradually turned into real tourism, thanks to improvements in coach, train, and steamboat transportation.

Many of the regions that were the subjects of the initial *Voyages pittoresques* albums became popular among these early tourists. The very first album, devoted to Normandy, popularized the river cruise up the Seine, which took travelers from Paris to Le Havre, via the old city of Rouen. Subsequent albums devoted to the Franche-Comté (1825) and Auvergne (2 vols., 1829–33) led to increased tourist traffic to those distant and previously little-visited regions of France.

Courbet himself took his earliest pleasure trip to Normandy in 1841. Many of the drawings he made during that voyage show precisely the kind of scenery that abounds in the *Voyages pittoresques*—medieval buildings and monuments, picturesque streets, and dramatic landscape scenery. His drawing of the Fontaine de la Croix de Pierre in Rouen may serve as an example (fig. 1). The careful rendering of architectural and sculptural detail and the attempt at creating interesting chiaroscuro effects, especially inside the arches, correspond to the characteristic features of the lithographic plates found in the *Voyages pittoresques* of the 1840s, such as the illustration of the choir screen at the church in Folgoët, in the Brittany albums of 1845–46 (fig. 2). In 1842, Courbet traveled via Strasbourg and Baden-Baden to Switzerland, which had been a tourist destination since the eighteenth century. On this trip he drew not only many of the picturesque streets and buildings in Strasbourg, but also some of the great natural wonders of Switzerland beloved by nineteenth-century tourists, such as the Staubbach Falls in the Lauterbrunnen Valley (fig. 3). The Swiss sites had figured in British and French illustrated travel books that preceded Taylor and Nodier’s publication, such as Gabriel Lory’s *Pittoresque de l’Oberland Bernois*, published in Paris in 1822, and the anonymous *Picturesque Tour through the Oberland in the Canton of Berne, in Switzerland* (London, 1823), which was directly based on Lory’s publication (fig. 4).





Figure 1

Gustave Courbet (French, 1819–1877), *Fontaine de la Croix de Pierre in Rouen*, 1841. Drawing in sketchbook. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques, RF 29334. Photo: Thierry Le Mage, Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, New York.



Figure 2

The Choir Screen in the Church at Folgoët. Lithograph. Illustration from *Les Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*, Isidore-Justin-Séverin Taylor and Charles Nodier, vols. 4–5, *Bretagne* (1845–46).



Chu The Purposeful Sightseer: Courbet and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Tourism

Papers from the Symposium *Looking at the Landscapes: Courbet and Modernism*

Held at the J. Paul Getty Museum on March 18, 2006

© 2007 J. Paul Getty Trust

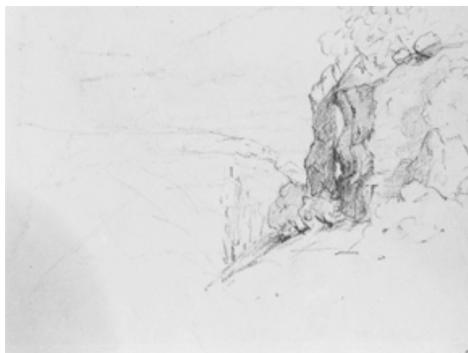


Figure 3

Courbet, Gustave. *The Staubbach Falls*. Musée du Louvre, RF9105.
Photo: Madeleine Coursaget, RMN / Art Resource, New York.



Figure 4

The Staubbach Falls. Colored engraving. Reproduction from
*Picturesque Tour through the Oberland in the Canton of Berne, in
Switzerland* (London, 1823), pl. 10. Photo: Digital version made
available by David S. Miall at [http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/
Traveltexts/Oberland_p.htm](http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Traveltexts/Oberland_p.htm).



Figure 5

Gustave Courbet, *The Bridge of Ambrussum*, 1857. Oil on canvas,
47.5 x 63 cm (18 3/4 x 24 7/8 in.). Montpellier, Musée Fabre, 892.4.1.
Photo: Frederic Jaulmes, © Musée Fabre, Montpellier Agglomération.



Courbet's fascination with tourism lasted his entire life. The artist traveled throughout France as well as to Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland. Though he no longer carried a sketchbook with him after the 1840s (at least as far as we know), he did paint pictures of well-loved tourist sites, knowing that they would appeal to middle-class viewers and buyers. As he went to visit the Montpellier collector Alfred Bruyas in 1857, for example, he painted the ruins of the Pont d'Ambroix, or the Bridge of Ambrussum (fig. 5), a popular nineteenth-century tourist attraction. Located near Lunel, between Montpellier and Nîmes, this ancient Roman bridge across the Vidourle River had once formed part of the famous Via Domitia, the first highway built in Gallia (Gaul), which dated from the beginning of the second century A.D. Originally the bridge had eleven arches, nine of which were destroyed in a series of floods of the Vidourle; in Courbet's time, only two were left.⁸ Courbet's *The Meeting* ("Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet") of 1854 (Musée Fabre) may well represent him on his way to, or returning from, Lunel, carrying on his back the type of portable equipment that had been developed for the purpose of sketching landscapes and cultural sites in situ.



Figure 6
Gustave Courbet, *Bayard Rock, Dinant (Belgium)*, 1858. Oil on canvas, 55 x 45.8 cm (21 3/4 x 18 in.). Cambridge, England, Fitzwilliam Museum, 2386. Reproduction by permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

In Belgium, in 1858, Courbet painted the famous Bayard Rock (Roche Bayard) in Dinant (fig. 6). En route from Brussels to Frankfurt, where he spent the winter of 1858–59, he must have stopped in Dinant, a town popular among tourists. It had both a railroad station and a dock for river steamboats, which ran cruises on the Meuse River along dramatic rock formations such as the Freyr Rock, which Courbet painted as well, though probably on a different occasion.⁹ The Bayard Rock was a particularly well-known attraction of Dinant: not only was it spectacular, but it also had both legendary and historical associations.

Here the famous Bayard horse was said to have taken a giant leap across the Meuse, carrying the four sons of Aymon to safety from the pursuit of Charlemagne. The horse pushed off with such force that the rock split in two. The reality was considerably more prosaic: the rock had been divided by an explosion set off by Louis XIV's army in order to create an exit route for the troops after they had taken the city of Dinant in 1675.¹⁰



As the identities of the first owners of *Bayard Rock* and *The Meuse River at Freyr* are unknown, it is impossible to determine whether, indeed, they bought these paintings because they had visited the sites and were eager to possess the works as souvenirs of their trips. By contrast, it is almost certain that many of the paintings of well-known Swiss sites that Courbet executed in the 1870s were made for the tourist market. His numerous views of the Château de Chillon, some doubtlessly authentic (fig. 7), others possibly painted by or with the help of assistants, echo the countless prints, book illustrations (fig. 8), and postcards that were produced throughout the nineteenth century for those who came to see the site of Lord Byron's famous novel, *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1819).¹¹ Courbet also painted other tourist attractions



Figure 7
Gustave Courbet, *Château de Chillon*, 1874. Oil on canvas,
86 x 100 cm (33 7/8 x 39 3/8 in.). Ornans, Musée Gustave Courbet.
Photo: Erich Lessing, Art Resource, New York.



Figure 8
The Château de Chillon. Steel engraving. Illustration from vol. 2 of
William Beatty, *Switzerland Illustrated in a Series of Views Taken
Expressly for This Work by W. H. Bartlett, Esq.* (London, 1836).



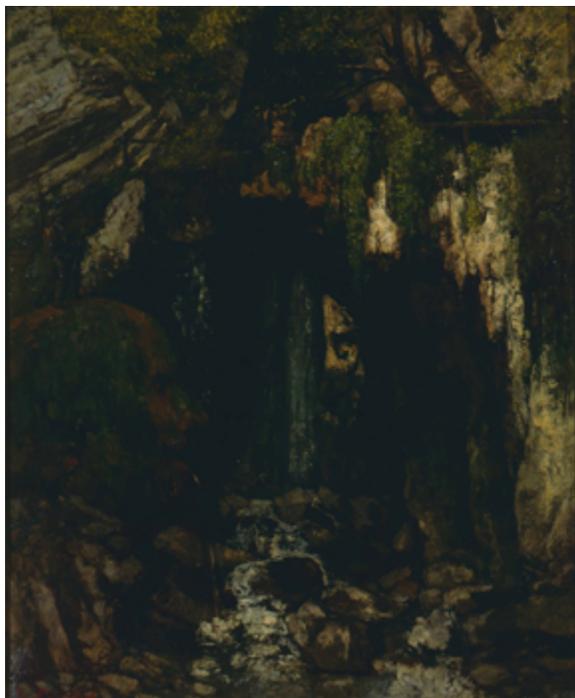


Figure 9

Gustave Courbet, *Grotto of the Giants (Grotte des Géants)* near Saillon, Switzerland, 1873. Oil on canvas, 87 x 93 cm (34 1/4 x 36 3/4 in.). Amiens, Musée de Picardie.

in Switzerland, such as Lake Geneva, Mont Blanc, and the Grotte des Géants (Grotto of the Giants), near Saillon (fig. 9), which, though neglected by travelers today, was much visited in Courbet's time by tourists intrigued by the anthropomorphic shape of the rock. The herbalist F.-O. Wolf, who met Courbet in Saillon in 1873, described the rock as follows:

The Salence flows here through a deep gorge, which certainly merits a visit, especially now that its access is facilitated by a new road with suspended walkways and bridges. While this gorge, formed by the incessant labor of the water, cannot rival those of Trient and Durnand, it does nevertheless present some quite interesting particularities, if only the grotesque head of a giant, a unique spectacle in its genre.¹²

Courbet's painting corresponds in detail to Wolf's description, showing not only the grotesque head, washed by numerous rivulets of water, but also the new walkways and bridges that offered access to the rock. In this painting, exceptionally, Courbet has even added some tourists, including a lady with a parasol and a hiker who, standing proudly on the giant's head, reminds us vaguely of Courbet's own self-image as a tourist in the Montpellier region.

While it seems obvious that Courbet's Swiss paintings were geared to the tourist market, many of his Franche-Comté landscapes also may have been intended for a public of sightseers interested in the region, which, like Normandy, had been among the first to be featured in the *Voyages pittoresques* (1825). Take,





Figure 10

Gustave Courbet, *The Source of the Loue River*, 1863. Oil on canvas, 84 x 106.5 cm (33 1/8 x 42 in.). Zurich, Kunsthhaus. Photo: © 2007 Kunsthhaus Zurich. All rights reserved.

for example, *The Source of the Loue River* (fig. 10), one of Courbet's many paintings of cave entrances and "sources"—a term that in the Franche-Comté refers not only to the origin of a stream or river, but also to the place where a river that has gone underground reemerges. Standing in front of this painting, twenty-first-century viewers are easily drawn to the work's surface aspects—the black, smoothly painted center and the lighter periphery, sculpted in broad touches of white, black, brown, and gray with the palette knife. It is tempting, today, to think of a painting like this in terms of twentieth-century non-objective painting, as Eyerman has shown.¹³ But in so doing, it is all too easy to forget that the source of the Loue was a major tourist attraction in Courbet's time (and still is in our own), as were other cave openings, such as the source of the Lison River and the Sarrazine Grotto, both of which were painted by Courbet. In a drawing in one of his sketchbooks, dating from the early 1840s (fig. 11), we see a group of hikers, both male and female, resting on the rocks inside a cave—a clear indication of the popularity of these geological wonders in the artist's own time.



Figure 11

Gustave Courbet, *Group of Tourists Seated at the Entrance to a Cave*, early 1840s. Drawing in sketchbook. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques, RF 9105, fol. 24 verso. Photo: RMN / Art Resource, New York.



Indeed, the caves and sources of the Franche-Comté were the foremost tourist attractions of the region and had been a magnet for travelers since the eighteenth century. One of the most famous among them was the Osselle (or Esselles) Cave. Known as early as the thirteenth century and regularly visited since the sixteenth, this cave had become especially famous after its exploration by Georges Cuvier in the early 1820s, and after the discovery by William Buckland, in 1826, of the complete skeleton of a cave bear, which was exhibited in the British Museum.¹⁴ Sometime before or in 1825, Baron Taylor visited the cave to make a series of drawings that would be lithographed for the Franche-Comté volume of the *Voyages pittoresques* (fig. 12).¹⁵



Figure 12

Isidore-Justin-Séverin Taylor (French, 1789–1879). *Osselle Cave (Grottes d'Esselles)*, 1829. Pencil drawing with brown ink wash on beige paper. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Lithographed for *Les Voyages pittoresques*, vol. 3, *Franche-Comté* (1825).

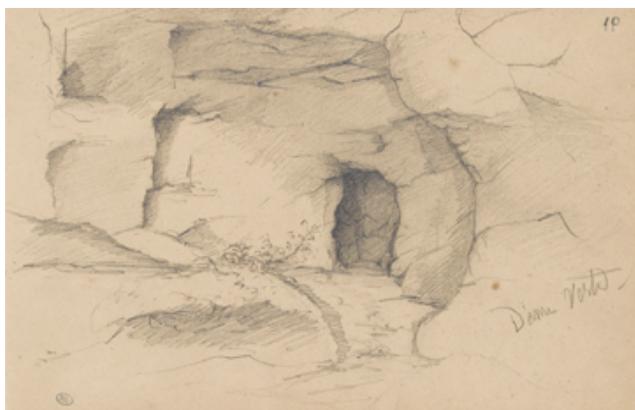


Figure 13

Gustave Courbet, *Dame Verte*. Drawing in sketchbook. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques, RF29234, 17. Photo: Thierry Le Mage, RMN / Art Resource, New York.



Chu The Purposeful Sightseer: Courbet and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Tourism

Papers from the Symposium *Looking at the Landscapes: Courbet and Modernism*

Held at the J. Paul Getty Museum on March 18, 2006

© 2007 J. Paul Getty Trust

Nineteenth-century visitors were attracted to the caves and sources in the Franche-Comté not merely as geological wonders but also for the legends that had attached themselves to these locations, as with the Bayard Rock. One such legend concerned the Dame Verte, or Green Lady, a beautiful fairy who wandered around the mountains and the fields in the summer but retired to the caves in the winter.¹⁶ An early drawing of a cave by Courbet has the words “Dame Verte” written on the side (fig. 13). Another tale was that of the Source Bleue, the place where the Cusancin brook emerges from the rocks, which was painted by Courbet in 1872 (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum). This source, according to legend, owed its blue color to the tears of Berthe, the unfaithful wife of Crusader Amaury de Joux. Locked up in prison for her affair, she could see through a small window the gallows from which her lover was hanged.¹⁷

Though geological sites were the major tourist attractions of the Franche-Comté, they were not the only ones. The region had a rich history that went back to Gallo-Roman times, and it boasted a number of important historic buildings and sites. Here, in the first century BC, the Gallic tribe of the Sequani had joined the Arverni, under Vercingetorix, in their revolt against the Romans. There was a huge debate, in the middle of the nineteenth century, as to whether the ancient town of Alesia, where Julius Cesar had defeated Vercingetorix, had become the village of Alaise, in the Franche-Comté, or Alise-la-Reine, a village in the Côte d’Or region. Much has been written, in this context, about Courbet’s *Oak at Flagey* (fig. 14), a painting of a giant oak tree that local imagination must have associated with the ancient druids,



Figure 14

Gustave Courbet, *The Oak at Flagey, or The Oak of Vercingetorix*, 1864. Oil on canvas, 89 x 110 cm (35 1/8 x 43 3/8 in.). Tokyo, Murauchi Art Museum.

the priest class of the Gauls.¹⁸ The painting’s subtitle—*Oak of Vercingetorix, Caesar’s Camp near Alesia, Franche-Comté*—moreover suggests that the tree had a place in the famous debate about the modern-day location of Alesia.¹⁹ Ancient trees were favorite tourist destinations in the nineteenth century, when they were admired both as biological marvels and for their historic associations. Courbet himself, in the early





Figure 15

Gustave Courbet, *Hikers Resting under Trees*, early 1840s. Drawing in sketchbook. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques, RF 9105. Photo: Thierry Le Mage, RMN / Art Resource, New York.

sketchbook mentioned above, had drawn just such an old tree (fig. 15), a destination of Sunday hikers who contemplated the venerable old oak as their kids climbed its branches. It is tempting to see, in the figures on the left, two young artists who are sketching the tree.



Figure 16

Gustave Courbet, *Fort de Joux* (detail), 1864. Oil on canvas, 73 x 60 cm (28 3/4 x 23 5/8 in.). Current whereabouts unknown. Photo: Author.

The *Fort de Joux* (fig. 16) represents another type of cultural tourist attraction. The fort, which dominates the Doubs Valley, dates back to the Middle Ages but became particularly notorious in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when it served as a state prison. The comte de Mirabeau had been locked up

here in 1775; in the early nineteenth century, Napoleon had sent François-Dominique Toussaint-Louverture, the leader of the Haitian independence movement, to the Fort de Joux, where he died from tuberculosis contracted in his cold and airless cell.²⁰

The examples discussed above seem to demonstrate that the subjects of Courbet's landscapes were important to the artist and to his public. Many of the sites he chose to paint were well-known tourist attractions that were described in guidebooks, as well as depicted in prints and photographs and, by the end of the century, even on postcards. Does that mean that Courbet was merely a belated imitator of the Romantic tradition of the *Voyages pittoresques*? I would argue that he developed a new kind of tourist-site picture that was deliberately different from the picturesque imagery that he had admired in his youth. The prints in the *Voyages pittoresques*, and the paintings and watercolors related to them, had been geared to armchair travelers, who loved amazing detail and amusing staffage. Courbet's own work, I venture, was destined for a public that had actually traveled to the places he painted and had experienced the sites themselves, with all five senses. In other words, Courbet intended to produce paintings that evoked that physical encounter.



Figure 17
Barend Cornelis Koekkoek (Dutch, 1803–1862), *La Roche à Bayard*, 1835. River landscape of the Maas with La Roche à Bayard (close to Dinant). Pencil, pen and brown ink, brush and watercolor on paper, 24.2 x 32.9 cm (9 1/2 x 13 in.). Teylers Museum, Haarlem, AA 51.

Let's look once more at *Bayard Rock* (see fig. 6). In an earlier publication, I have compared this picture with a drawing by the Dutch Romantic artist Barend Cornelis Koekkoek (fig. 17).²¹ At that time, I pointed to the difference between Courbet's scientific approach to the subject and Koekkoek's allegorical vision. Today, I want to concentrate on the representational differences between the two works. In the drawing, the huge size of the rock is emphasized by the tiny figures at its bottom, reminding us that there is often something of the sublime in the picturesque. In the drawing of the rock itself, there is an excessive emphasis on the irregular contour and on the strong contrast between light and shade that is created by the clearly articulated facets of the rock. Those features, combined with the low viewpoint and the



medium of the work, make Koekkoek's image a textbook example of the picturesque tradition. Courbet's painting represents the antithesis to this tradition. His contours roughly block out the rock, which seems almost streamlined in comparison to Koekkoek's drawing. Gone is the faceted surface of the rock, with its strong contrasts between light and dark. Instead, it appears as a dark monolith silhouetted against the sky. Rather than presenting an intensified, visual experience of the rock by overemphasizing irregularity of contour and variation of texture and of light and shade, Courbet seems to have wanted to suggest something about its tactility by simulating its roughness with the bumpy paint surface, heavily laid on with both brush and palette knife. His view of the rock would have appealed to the travelers who had visited the place in person—who had walked through the narrow path between the cliffs, perhaps touching its sides with their hands. It is interesting to note how much more closely Courbet's painting resembles turn-of-the-century postcards, such as the one reproduced below (fig. 18), than it does Koekkoek's drawing, in spite of the fact that there is a greater time lag between them. The postcard not only shows a very similar viewpoint but—through its photographic process (perhaps albumen)—also offers a strong sense of kinetic tactility.

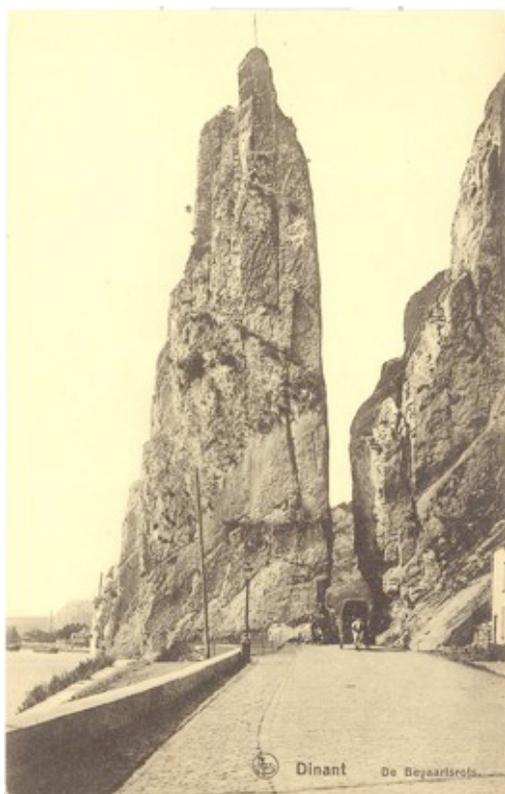


Figure 18

Bayard Rock, Dinant. Postcard, late nineteenth century[?].

Source: Author.

Courbet's paintings, then, represent a new way of looking at landscape that is quite different from the Romantic picturesque tradition of his youth. Instead of engaging with the landscape in a purely visual manner, Courbet tries to convey in his painting something of the total sensual reality of the landscape. This includes, most importantly, engaging the viewer's tactile sense; on occasion, his paintings may even



Chu The Purposeful Sightseer: Courbet and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Tourism

Papers from the Symposium *Looking at the Landscapes: Courbet and Modernism*

Held at the J. Paul Getty Museum on March 18, 2006

© 2007 J. Paul Getty Trust

invoke a sense of smell or sound. Courbet's seascapes, such as the one reproduced below (fig. 19), may serve as an example of the latter. Unlike his Franche-Comté landscapes, they are thinly brushed and convey a sense of lightness and freshness, which not only suggests the feeling of a soft sea breeze but, to the particularly sensitive observer, perhaps even hints of the smell of the sea. By the same token, his wave paintings (e.g., fig. 20), with their close-up viewpoints and agitated brushwork, suggest the roar of the surf.



Figure 19
Gustave Courbet, *L'immensité*, 1869. Oil on canvas, 60 x 82.2 cm (23 5/8 x 32 3/8 in.). London, Victoria and Albert Museum. Photo: Art Resource, New York.



Figure 20
Gustave Courbet, *The Wave*, ca. 1871. Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm (18 1/8 x 21 3/4 in.). Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland, NG 2233.

The mature Courbet's anti-picturesque attitude was well-known in his time. In an 1860 essay, Jules Champfleury wrote that Courbet was "the artist who tackles the thing itself, and removes every element of a false picturesque."²² Indeed, by the 1850s Courbet had turned away completely from the picturesque leanings of his youth, disliking all its trappings of carefully selected sites (ruins and rustic cottages) and viewpoints. Talking to the painter Chérubino Pata at the end of his life, Courbet recalled an episode that took place in Normandy, probably in the 1860s. Walking along the sea in the evening with the poet Charles Baudelaire, Courbet was taken by the latter to an opening between two rocks through which there was a dramatic view of the sea. Courbet commented to Pata, "Was he ever bourgeois! What are viewpoints? Do viewpoints exist?"²³

Courbet's landscape paintings were unique in the nineteenth century, and their distinctiveness was related to the way in which Courbet engaged with the picturesque tradition. While other landscape painters of his time, most notably the artists of the Barbizon school, turned their back on picturesque subject matter—preferring instead the simple country and woodland scenes that could be found in the environs of Paris—Courbet continued to be interested in many of the subjects that had been popularized by the *Voyages pittoresques* and similar Romantic travel publications. By treating them in a new way, however, downplaying their visual aspects and emphasizing their tactility, he gave the viewer a more comprehensive sensual appreciation of the subject's physical qualities. This aspect of Courbet's landscapes, as I have suggested in this article, may have appealed in particular to the well-to-do middle class tourists who visited the sites depicted in his works.

¹ Mary Morton and Charlotte Eyerman, eds., *Courbet and the Modern Landscape*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), p. 21.

² For Greenberg's view of Courbet, see Charlotte Eyerman, "Courbet's Legacy in the Twentieth Century," *Courbet and the Modern Landscape* (see note 1), pp. 21–22.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 23–34.

⁴ Georges Riat, *Gustave Courbet, peintre* (Paris, 1906), p. 22.

⁵ "Où qu'il allât, il en emportait l'image avec lui ... Courbet ne comprenait pas qu'un peintre allât chercher des motifs à l'étranger. Un jour qu'un jeune homme lui apportait à juger une vue d'Orient: 'Vous n'avez donc pas de pays,' dit il, 'que vous soyez obligé d'emprunter le pays des autres pour le peindre?'" (Unless otherwise indicated, translations by author.) Cited in Pierre Courthion, *Courbet raconté par lui-même et par ses amis*, 2 vols. (Geneva, 1948–50), vol. 1, pp. 170–71.

⁶ Due to its relative proximity to Switzerland and Germany, one would expect tourists from those countries to visit the Franche-Comté, and they did. But apparently, the region was popular among British travelers as well. Xavier Marmier writes about "ces fades Anglais qui [y] courent en chaise de poste, un lorgnon d'une main, un carnet de l'autre" (those insipid Englishmen, who travel [there] by post coach, a lorgnette in one hand and a notebook in the other). See *Souvenirs de voyages et traditions populaires* (Paris, 1841), p. 67.

⁷ Following, in alphabetical order, are the volumes of the *Voyages pittoresques: Ancienne Normandie*, 3 vols.: 1820, 1825, 1878; *Auvergne*, 2 vols.: 1829–33; *Bourgogne*, 2 vols. (one text, one plates): 1863; *Bretagne*, 2 vols.: 1845–46; *Champagne*: 4 vols. (one text, three plates): 1857; *Dauphiné*, 2 vols. (one text, one plates): 1854; *Franche-Comté*, 1 vol.: 1825; *Languedoc*, 4 vols.: 1833–37; *Picardie*, 3 vols.: 1835–45.



⁸ One of these was washed away by another flood in 1930, so that today only a single arch is left.

⁹ The painting, *La Meuse à Freyr* (*The Meuse River at Freyr*, ca. 1856) is in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lille, France.

¹⁰ See “Wandelingen door België,” *De Aarde en haar Volken* 22 (1886), cited in Project Gutenberg, EText 17082 (<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/17082>), p. 315.

¹¹ Sorting out which views of Chillon Castle are authentic is a difficult task. Robert Fernier, in his catalogue raisonné of Courbet’s paintings, *La Vie et l’oeuvre de Gustave Courbet*, 2 vols. (Geneva and Lausanne, 1977–78), lists twenty-one views, but the attribution of several of these is currently in doubt.

¹² “La Salence coule ici dans une profonde gorge qui mérite certainement une visite, surtout maintenant que l’abord en est facilité par un nouveau chemin avec galeries et ponts. Cette gorge creusée par le travail incessant des eaux ne peut, il est vrai, rivaliser avec celles du Trient et du Durnand, mais elle présente cependant bien des particularités intéressantes, ne fût-ce que la grotesque tête de géant qui forme un spectacle unique en son genre.” F.-O. Wolf, “Les Environs de Saillon et ses carrières de marbre,” *Bulletin des travaux de la Société muritienne du Valais* (1879). Cited in Lisbeth Koutchoumoff, “Tableau de Courbet: Mystère levé à Saillon,” *Le Temps* (Lausanne), July 19, 2002. I thank Dario Gamboni for drawing my attention to this newspaper article.

¹³ Eyerman 2006 (see note 2). Klaus Herding and Dominique de Font-Réaulx make similar points in their papers in this volume.

¹⁴ See <http://grottes.osselle.free.fr> (accessed December 30, 2006).

¹⁵ Two of these drawings, including the one reproduced in figure 12, are in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. (On-line reproductions, with captions, at <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b77431889.notice> and <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b77431889.notice>.) Both drawings bear inscriptions that date them in 1829. However, the inscriptions appear to have been added later, perhaps by someone unfamiliar with the date of Taylor’s visit. The inscriptions also ascribe the two drawings to different authors—one to Taylor, the other to Charlet. There appears to be little doubt, however, that both drawings were executed by the same artist, most likely Taylor.

¹⁶ See Marmier 1841 (see note 6), pp. 76–78.

¹⁷ This story, in one form or another, is found in almost every tour guide of the region.

¹⁸ See, among others, Linda Nochlin, “Le chêne de Flagey de Courbet: Un motif de paysage et sa signification,” *Quarante-huit/Quatorze (Conférences du Musée d’Orsay)* 1 (1989): pp. 15–25, and Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, “It Took Millions of Years to Compose That Picture,” in *Courbet Reconsidered*, exh. cat., ed. Sarah Faunce and Linda Nochlin (New York, The Brooklyn Museum, 1988), pp. 58 and 230, notes 18 and 23.

¹⁹ On this debate, see J. Bruley, *L’Identification de la ‘vraie’ Alésia* (Paris, n.d.).

²⁰ On Toussaint-Louverture, see the Web site <http://thelouvertureproject.org>, which has full information and several online sources.

²¹ Chu 1988 (see note 18), pp. 61–63.

²² “L’artiste qui s’attaque à la chose en elle-même, écarte tout élément d’un faux pittoresque.” Champfleury, *Grandes figures d’hier et d’aujourd’hui* (Paris, 1861), cited in Geneviève and Jean Lacambre, eds., *Champfleury, Le Réalisme* (Paris, 1973), p. 186.

²³ “Était-il assez bourgeois, hein! Qu’est-ce que c’est que des points de vue? Est-ce qu’il existe des points de vue?” Courthion 1948–50 (see note 5), vol. 1, pp. 159–60.

