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Aesthetic Politics and/or Political Aesthetics Today: On Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape: Appearances of the Political.¹

1.

The relation between the aesthetic dimension and the political dimension of human existence can be surely considered as a topic that has been of great interest in the entire history of Western thinking (and not only), and as a highly topical question especially in an age, like ours, that has been strongly characterized in the last decades by the emergence of new phenomena often subsumed under the concept of “aestheticization”. A concept, the latter, that some scholars have also suggested to understand as a sort of aesthetic *pendant* to the economic and sociopolitical phenomenon of globalization (see Mecacci 2017). Precisely the relation between aesthetics and politics – or, more precisely, between the aesthetic and the political – is the fundamental question that, in different ways and with a focus on diverging phenomena and examples, the essays collected in the recent book *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape: Appearances of the Political* aim to inquire into.

Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape is an interesting collection of essays, edited by Elisabetta Di Stefano (University of Palermo), Carsten Friberg (Copenhagen) and Max Rynänen (Aalto University), and published in 2022 by the Springer Press in the Book Series “UNIPA Springer Series”. The book is structured in a Preface and an In-

¹ Due to its nature of simple review article, the present contribution has not undergone a double-blind peer review process but has been accepted for publication after an evaluation by the journal’s committee and editorial team.

roduction written by the three editors, and then eight chapters authored by scholars from different countries and with different backgrounds, but clearly united by the fundamental topic that characterizes the collection and precisely gives it a sort of unity in diversity. This fundamental topic is summarized by the two keywords that form the book's subtitle: "appearances" (understood as a key concept of aesthetics) and "political". "[The] book as a whole", as we can read in one of the first chapters, "is intended to answer questions about the culture of politics" and, in particular, "the aesthetics of politics" (p. 17).

Beside being the editors of the entire volume, Di Stefano, Friberg and Rynnänen are also the authors of three of the eight essays included in *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape*, and I will precisely start my review article from an analysis of their respective contributions. Rynnänen's essay, entitled "Political Concepts as Aesthetic Concepts", starts from the presupposition that "[c]oncepts hide connotations and as such political concepts hide cultural and aesthetic implications"; the author's basic aim is thus to investigate "the aesthetic side of political concepts" (p. 17). Therefore, Rynnänen's clear focus is on concepts and his attempt is "to assimilate a new way of thinking with regards to some of our problems regarding political rhetoric, which" – according to him – "we often interpret too one-sidedly". For Rynnänen, indeed, "starting to see political concepts as aesthetic concepts and understanding politics as an aesthetic endeavor could take us further in current understanding of both areas": more precisely, the aim is "to take [...] the connection of aesthetics and politics [...] seriously, as we too often think of political speech as just a political speech, and not a serious holistic, cultural, even aesthetic discourse. This could provide a new understanding of political practice" (p. 18). On this basis, in his contribution Rynnänen focuses on several examples taken from both realms (aesthetics and politics), cites some biographical experiences and various writings on this topic (Berleant, Sartwell, Novitz, Sibley, Johannesen), and eventually arrives to the ambitious conclusion that "everyday aesthetics [is] at stake whenever politics is played out" and that "political concepts can sometimes be surprisingly aesthetically laden. To me", as Rynnänen points out,

it looks like aesthetics often land heavily in concepts we consider to be political, not mostly dominating them, but staying often connotative or just marginally included in them, but sometimes suddenly being on the front of their meaning for a moment. [...] [A]s politics, beside images, is a lot about (endless) talk (like art is), grabbing the political concepts, which are also to some extent aesthetic concepts, might be the best start on the way to purify politics from needless aesthetics, at least theoretically, so that we could see more and understand better (pp. 19, 22).

The discourse on the relation between aesthetics and politics is further developed by Di Stefano's contribution, entitled "Care as Key to Political Aesthetics", which fascinatingly investigates the concept of care from ancient Greek philosophy to the Italian Humanist tradition up to the philosophical perspectives disclosed by some leading aestheticians of our time, such as Ellen Dissanayake, Yuriko Saito and Richard Shusterman, "highlighting differences and common points" between them (p. 28). Di Stefano starts from Plato, in whose philosophy "[t]he notion of care is often connected to politics", and, in general, from "[t]he ancient idea of care as the art of educating oneself and others on human and political virtues [that] resounds over Italian Humanism" (p. 28). In this context, Di Stefano – an expert scholar of contemporary everyday aesthetics (see Di Stefano 2018) – masterfully focuses her attention on classical figures of the Humanist and aesthetic tradition such as Leon Battista Alberti, Baldesar Castiglione and Alexander Baumgarten, in order to emphasize the importance of the notions of care and self-care for a philosophy understood as an "art of living", but also on modern figures such as Crispin Sartwell and especially James Hillman, in order to outline an original concept of "political aesthetics". As Di Stefano explains, her aim is not "to talk about the aestheticization of politics, that is to say, politics availing itself of staging actions", but rather to inquire into the "idea of political aesthetics", arguing that a "theory of sensitiveness" (namely, an aesthetics that recovers the breadth and the potentialities of Baumgarten's original project and hence is not limited anymore to a philosophy of the high fine arts) "can be a basis for political aesthetics in which the idea of care has a key role" (p. 37). In this context, the aforementioned contributions offered in recent years by thinkers such as Shusterman, Saito and Dissanayake, despite their "different philosophical backgrounds (pragmatist aesthetics, everyday aesthetics, evolutionary aesthetics)", prove to be fruitful and useful to point out "some notions (the art of living; the concept of appropriateness; the notion of 'making special') that can be understood as care": a notion, the latter, that Di Stefano considers "as the key within political aesthetics if we understand it as questioning the self in relation to the city (*pólis*), and more generally to the world where we live, taking into account the relationship and situations we experience" (p. 38). The "theory of sensitiveness (*aisthesis*)", for Di Stefano, ultimately "provides a suitable basis for political aesthetics", because, from her philosophical perspective, *aisthesis* is tightly connected to the dimension of care (*epimèleia*) and, "[i]n this theoretical framework, the care of self and others acquires a political value, as it develops our ethical and civic virtues, leading us to responsible choices and making life worth living for ourselves and for the whole community" (p. 38).

A significant role, in this discourse on the aesthetic significance of aes-

thetics in relation to the dimension of care, is played by the question concerning sense-based knowledge, action and also bodily habits. This direction is further developed by Friberg's essay, entitled "The Body in Formation. Reflections on Body *Bildung*", which stimulatingly addresses the basic topic of the whole book – namely, the relation between the aesthetic sphere of appearances and the dimension of the political – from a very original point of view: that is, the importance of the formation (*Bildung*) of the body for the formation of the spirit or mind (*Geist*). Friberg had already offered significant contributions on questions such as the education of the senses at the intersection between aesthetics and affectivity (see Friberg 2021) and, from a certain point of view, one can probably consider his work on the notion of body *Bildung* as a further and indeed original development of that path of research. Friberg starts from the basic assumption that "[t]he embodiment of cultural ideals in any form is an appearance of the political [...]. The powers appear in cultural and social matters including the physical, i.e. bodily, presence of individuals, and the political is a distribution of powers regulating our communal living" (p. 41). On the basis of such a tight relation between appearance and embodiment, Friberg first addresses the question of the body in philosophy (with detailed references to various authors of the past and the present, from Plato and Cicero to Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Waldenfels, Fuchs, Schmitz and Böhme) and, in particular, the question of "the kind of awareness one has when it comes to the body" (p. 45) and the role played by this awareness in the process called formation (*Bildung*). *Bildung* is defined by Friberg as "a process of becoming cultivated through confrontation, alienation, and appropriation", in order to "acquire and become spirit", understood as "what is common and present among individuals in a community" (p. 46). Fascinatingly and convincingly relying on the classical insights disclosed by authors such as Herder, Fichte, Goethe, Hegel and Humboldt, Friberg defines "the model of formation" as a model that "is through moving into the world and engage with it" (p. 47), and then explicitly addresses the question of the role played by the body in this process, i.e. the question of "body *Bildung*". Friberg's observations apropos of this are noteworthy and deserve to be cited here: "Neglecting the bodily practices that are present in formation" – as has often happened in the Western tradition – "is a view that comes to see formation as a one-sided enterprise while losing an essential aspect of the full formation. [...] The purpose of formation is maturity", and the latter, if adequately understood, involves for Friberg "the full person, mind and body. [...] Formation is a matter of engaging the full individual into a process of becoming a human being through a life-engaging confrontation with the world", and "[i]n this process we need to become aware of the bodily formation at work" (p. 51). Finally, this lets emerge also the

political significance of Friberg's aesthetic investigation in the education of the senses and the formation of the body, when he observes in the last section of his essay (also following some influential insights by Bourdieu and Shusterman) that "[s]ocial norms and hierarchies become apparent in the bodily presence", so that "[c]onsidering the concrete body in formation" implies, among other things, "becoming aware of the political structures and ideologies that appear in physical training" (p. 54). From this point of view, Friberg ambitiously concludes that the question of "the body in formation [...] proves to address an ideal of the body of the concrete individual on which we form our understanding of humanity that in the end can be questioned" (p. 56).

2.

So far I have only focused my attention on the three essays included in *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape* that have been also authored by the three editors of this book. However, as I said, the book also includes five more contributions, which are undoubtedly no less important and no less stimulating than the previous ones, and on which I will briefly focus my attention in the second part of my review article. In fact, the Table of Contents of *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape* also includes essays by Katya Mandoki, Tonino Griffiero, Majid Heidary, Mateusz Salwa and, last but not least, Margus Vihalem. Due to the limited space of a book review, in this final part of my text I will limit myself to highlight some of the main questions addressed in the aforementioned five essays, which are all long and rich in details, and whose complexity cannot be reduced to the short presentation that one is able to offer in the context of a simple review article.

Mandoki's contribution, entitled "Aesthetic Politics and Political Aesthetics: A Crucial Distinction", is basically centered on the conceptual distinction between "political aesthetics" and "aesthetic politics". This distinction is understood by Mandoki as "an asymmetric correlation with various social implications", although the author critically notes that the two concepts have "often [been] treated indistinguishably" by various scholars (p. 1) – that which, for Mandoki, reinforces the need to articulate in a clearer and more precise way the different ways in which the relation between the aesthetic and the political respectively appears in political aesthetics and aesthetic politics. The former is defined by Mandoki as "the aesthetization of politics to optimize propaganda's impact", while the latter, for Mandoki, is characterized by "the use of politics to impose a regime of a particular aesthetic ideal", i.e. by the fact that "the political is the instrument for an aesthetic agenda" (p. 1). At the end of Mandoki's

essay, this distinction finds a sort of counterpoint in the differentiation (terminologically indebted with Walter Benjamin's seminal reflections on aesthetics and politics in the 1930s) between, on the one hand, "the aestheticization of politics [that] attempts to achieve a political agenda utilizing aesthetic means", and, on the other hand, "the politicization of aesthetics [that] is deployed to impose an aesthetic version of the State as a work of art by political means" (p. 13). The author's investigation of these relevant questions and articulation of such nuanced distinctions within this "double articulation between politics and aesthetics" (p. 13) is supported, throughout Mandoki's complex essay, not only by various references to different thinkers who have thoughtfully reflected on these questions (Gramsci, Arendt, Foucault, Ankersmit, Rancière, Sartwell, and others), but also by the careful analysis of five different case studies of "deliberate use of the aesthetic for political purposes": the first four cases "are targeted toward citizens top to bottom", whereas the fifth case chosen by Mandoki ("an international gender protest: women's performance 'A rapist in your path'") "is targeted to all, sideways and bottom up, but specifically pointing to the State as well as to male citizens" (p. 7).

Although different from each other from the point of view of their theoretical approaches and the specific phenomena and examples taken into examination, Griffero's and Heidary's contributions – respectively entitled "Staged Emotions. Is a Democratic Atmospherization a Contradictio in Adjecto?" and "Neutral Arts to Democratic Values. The Case of Iranian Naghashi-Khat (Calligram)" – are anyway united by a common focus on democracy. Griffero's original philosophical perspective can be defined as a "pathic-atmospherological aesthetics", strongly influenced by neophenomenology but also characterized by stimulating contact points (beside various differences, of course) with other leading trends of contemporary aesthetic debates, such as Shusterman's somaesthetics (see Griffero 2022). Griffero starts from the basic notion of "atmospheric feeling", defined as "an example of the passive synthesis largely intersubjective and holistic that precedes analysis and influences from the outset the emotional situation of the perceiver, resisting mostly any conscious attempt at projective adaptation or epistemic correction. As an influential presence", an atmosphere "is inextricably linked to felt-bodily processes happening in felt-bodily isles, and is characterized by a qualitative microgranular presence that is, by definition, inaccessible to a naturalistic-epistemic perspective". In short, an atmosphere is thus "more a spatial state of the world than a very private psychic state" (p. 59). On this basis, in his stimulating contribution Griffero critically reflects on the fact that, when we think of the role played by atmospheres in politics, we usually and somehow spontaneously tend to think of certain attempts to aestheticize politics that have been made by authoritarian or even totalitarian

regimes. However, for Griffero, it is undeniably important to also reflect on the role played by atmospheres in democratic regimes: this leads him to argue that “only by acquiring a better atmospheric ‘competence’ [...] one could really learn to appreciate democratic atmospheres, while making room for critical reflection” – that which is “all the more true in today’s globalised world, where one should be disenchanted about dangerously anonymous authorities” (p. 65). In conclusion, for Griffero,

though atmospherological insistence on emotional may bring about some risks and lead to suspect in a democratic situation, [it is] much less dangerous than the current guiding illusion that the emotional sphere might be universally, rationally controlled and manipulated [...]. [A]tmospheres should not be left to totalitarian regimes and demagogical strategies! [...] [A]n adult, even a committed democrat too, is not a person who at all costs removes the passivizing sphere and the felt-bodily influence of spatialised feelings, but rather, and more modestly, an individual who does not neurotically prescind from atmospheres but comes to terms with them in various ways, not least by trying to make a good and democratic use of them (p. 67).

Heidary’s essay further develops this line of research oriented towards the investigation of the configurations of the relation between the aesthetic and the political in democratic contexts, but approaches this topic from a different perspective than Griffero’s. In fact, Heidary’s attention is focused on the phenomenon of art and, more precisely, on the way in which certain specific forms of art can promote democratic values, whereas other forms of art are apparently connected to non-democratic tenets and, finally, still other forms of art seem to remain silent or neutral to any democratic values. For Heidary, the existing literature on aesthetics and politics, and more specifically on art and democracy, has been mostly focused on art’s potentialities in terms of a contribution to the consolidation, strengthening and development of democratic principles (pp. 71-75), but it is equally important to investigate and analyze the examples of neutral arts, especially in the context of non-democratic societies. As the author explains,

under ideal (democratic) conditions, artists enjoy the freedom of expression as well as the liberty in what to show in art and what to do with art. In such cases, art is an authentic act of meaning searching, and meaning making. Arts find new metaphors and explore new possible worlds. On the other hand, in non-democratic societies, artists are oppressed and their voices are limited to the safe ones. In these situations, art may adopt a reactive nature against the oppression or remain neutral to any social and political changes, [...] mainly due to the possible hazardous consequences (pp. 75, 79).

In this context, Heidary takes specifically into consideration a case study, represented by the Iranian art of Naghashi-Khat (Calligram), and carefully examines the latter's formal, abstract and decorative character, which "replaces the seemingly valid picture of the governments' ideology with the lived experience of people through national symbolism and poetic appearance", thus representing for Heidary a clear example of a kind of art that "escape[s] to abstraction, poetic, decorative and symbolic appearance to avoid any friction with harsh reality of society including censorship and repression" (p. 71). In conclusion, according to Heidary, it is important to recognize that it would be wrong "to assume that Naghashi-Khat is representative of the contemporary Iranian art", because this form of art "is the result of non-democratic conditions of the society under which many other art forms, media, and styles are oppressed". As the author explains, "[s]uch art, side from its aesthetic values, (un)intentionally misrepresents the current society and replaces the picture of the state with that of the people". So, "[i]n addition to misrepresenting the current society", for Heidary the art of Naghashi-Khat "never actively engages people in social and political activism and fails to influence the society in positive and constructive ways" (pp. 79-80). The author's final remarks are thus critical, inasmuch as Heidary claims that forms of neutral art like Naghashi-Khat can "never be the voice of those who were oppressed or ignored", and rather "confirm and justif[y] power relations and the dominance of longstanding conservative traditions": in Heidary's view, intersecting the aesthetic level and the political dimension, one must conclude that the art of Naghashi-Khat "enjoys attractive visual forms" and "occupies a good share of the art market", but the "[a]esthetic values of this art style and its development" are problematically "always in accordance with the doctrines of non-democratic states" (p. 80).

Finally, as somehow announced in the title itself of the book, the last two contributions included in *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape* mark a shift to contemporary questions concerning the aesthetics of landscape and natural beauty, although always with a focus on the relations between such aesthetic questions and political issues – for example, in this case, with a reference to serious environmental and ecological problems of our time. Salwa's essay, entitled "Landscape Aesthetics and Politics", starts from the idea that the landscape should be understood as "an aesthetic 'object' [that] has a conspicuous political significance": according to the author, inasmuch as landscapes are "sensory environments", they must also be considered as "political at their core, as any such environment is shaped by politics, and likewise for the sensory (aesthetic) experiences they offer" (p. 83). According to Salwa, "landscapes are as much aesthetic as they are political, and no priority

may be given to either of these two aspects” (p. 85): rather, what deserves to be closely investigated is precisely the intertwining between these two dimensions that is clearly visible in a phenomenon like that of landscapes. Not by chance, Salwa speaks of “the possibility of marrying landscape aesthetics with landscape politics by interpreting the concept of landscape in aesthetic as well as political terms” (p. 95). On the basis of the idea of the political significance of the particular aesthetic experience disclosed by landscapes, and on the basis of a vast and complex literature that includes both scholarly writings on landscapes and aesthetics (Carlson, Berleant, Hepburn, Böhme, and others) and official declarations and conventions by international organizations, Salwa arrives to examine the question concerning “the right to landscape”, claiming that,

[i]f we understand landscapes as lived human environments whose aesthetic qualities are indissolubly linked to people’s sensory experiences of whatever kind, these qualities are to be understood as common goods to which everyone is entitled. [...] If we think of landscape politics as a field where policies aimed at appeasing or mediating conflicts about landscapes may and should be worked out, then – for Salwa – one should start with conflicts between various aesthetic experiences (pp. 95-96).

In conclusion, according to Salwa, although “it would be naïve to believe that such conflicts may be eliminated”, it is nonetheless “reasonable to assume that the ideal which should be borne in mind while trying to resolve these conflicts should be everyone’s everyday right to the landscape, a right understood as the human right to have a positive aesthetic experience of one’s environment” (p. 96).

Also Vihalem’s essay – the final one in the collection *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape*, entitled “The Beauty of Nature at Risk of Extinction! Could Aesthetics Act as a Means for Saving Natural Beauty?” – deals with serious and sometimes dramatic environmental questions of the present age. In particular, the author attempts to outline a shift from an “environmentally indifferent aesthetics” to a new approach to aesthetics (and even a “new politics of aesthetics”) that may prove to be able to go beyond the limits of traditional anthropocentric approaches, only focused on the supposed “primacy of human values and needs”, and thus able to “take account of the catastrophic situation of the natural environment, severe threats posed by climate crisis, ever-increasing urbanization, mass extinction of species, and other related phenomena in a global perspective” (p. 101). In discussing the complex and delicate question as to whether it is possible “to imagine an aesthetic appreciation of nature independent of the set of aesthetic values established by the cultural tradition” – and thus free from an “(aesthetic) relationship to nature” that has been so far “irrevocably anthropomorphic” (p. 103) –, Vihalem especially

takes into examination the phenomenon of natural beauty and its aesthetic but at the same time also political potential: namely, its potentiality and its significance “in the fight against policies that have led to the large-scale destruction of environment” (p. 109). The question concerning the socio-political implications of aesthetic experiences in a phenomenon like that of natural beauty is undoubtedly a relevant question (today more than ever, I guess), which can be also addressed in a stimulating way from the perspective of an aesthetics influenced by critical theory of society, as testified, for example, by the role played by the rescue of natural beauty in Theodor W. Adorno’s influential aesthetic (see Matteucci 2012, pp. 97-172). For Vihalem, the “[a]esthetic appreciation of nature [...] can be developed and heightened, raised to the level of superior awareness of nature’s inherent dynamics”; aesthetic experiences, especially if capable to “combine rationality and empathy”, can lead to “consider natural phenomena and interaction of living beings universally beautiful, that is, aesthetically valuable without exception”, and this, in turn, can favor the development of new and more adequate forms of respect for nature “as it really is”, thus “pav[ing] the way to non-individualistic and non-utilitarian attitudes towards nature. Nature ceases to be an abstract notion and serves for a reference to all the natural phenomena and beings, as well as their beauty” (pp. 111-112). From this point of view, according to Vihalem, a change in our aesthetic attitude to nature may potentially lead to a change in our politics towards nature, hopefully guiding us to recognize “the vulnerability of natural beauty”, i.e. the fact that “th[e] overwhelming beauty” of nature is also “unbelievably vulnerable”, and hence to reduce “our negative impact on nature” before it is too late (p. 112).

3.

Summarizing, *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape* is a book that is capable to offer to various stimulating insights on conceptual questions and concrete phenomena that are at the center of both aesthetic and political debates in our time. The book’s importance lies precisely in its capacity to unite together different (but not disconnected from each other) perspectives on the relation between the aesthetic and the political, which is particularly important in an age, like ours, that is also characterized by the rise of new political polarizations, developments and struggles that surely require a renewed attention at a philosophical level. Beside this, it is also noteworthy that the contributions collected in *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape*, although often (and understandably, given the background of many authors) starting from references to classical thinkers of modern European aesthetics

(Baumgarten, Kant, Hegel, and many others), nevertheless do not limit themselves to an investigation of questions and topics that one might be tempted to typically associate to the tradition of Western aesthetics, but rather prove to be open and pay close attention to non-Western contexts, phenomena and problems. This probably appears in the clearest and most visible way in the case of the examination of art forms like Naghashi-Khat or in the case of some issues that are veritably “global” and “universal” nowadays (like environmental and ecological issues), but, in different ways, also in all the other contributions on the “appearances of the political” collected here.

The book does not present a systematic, coherent or supposedly all-encompassing theory of the relation between (aesthetic) appearances and the political, but this is quite usual in the case of multi-authored collections and so must not be understood in any way as a limit or a problem. In fact, as clearly explained by the three editors of this book, *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape* must be understood as “a step in [the] process” of development of a genuine “intersection of disciplines” and a genuine “interdisciplinary dialogue” between aesthetics and politics: or better, as “eight different steps” (corresponding to the eight chapters of the book) “to approach a common interest” (p. XII). From this point of view, it surely makes sense to understand “[t]he various contributions in this anthology [as] approaches to the theme rather than attempts at definitions” (p. V). So, in conclusion, it can be useful to return once again to the editors’ Preface and Introduction, and to their observations on the relation between the key concepts that form the title of their book:

We believe that it is important to find common ground for research while also recognizing our diversity. Both “appearances” and “political” are large fields that require a line of characteristics. [...] This book is about “appearances”. It aims at investigating the “appearances of the political” through analysis and characterizations that contribute to explain the dimension of contemporary cultural phenomena. [...] In this book, we do not refer to politics merely understood as explicit decision processes and strategies of governing, but we aim to highlight in what way political forms appear in different fields (pp. V, VII-VIII).

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Abstract.

The present contribution represents a review article focused on the book *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape: Appearances of the Political*, published in 2022 by Elisabetta Di Stefano, Carsten Friberg and Max Ryyänen. My review article first takes into examination the general structure of the book and its place in contemporary debates on the political potential of the aesthetic dimension and, conversely, the aesthetic relevance of political concepts and events. Then, I analyze into detail the main contents of the eight chapters that form the book, highlighting their commonalities but also their differences, and thus the way in which all together they contribute to create the unity in diversity that characterized the book. In this context, I also hint at some possible comparisons with the stimulating perspectives on certain phenomena that have been disclosed by other authors, like Richard Shusterman on the bodily dimension of felt atmospheres or Theodor W. Adorno on the question of natural beauty. Finally, I sketch some provisional conclusions about the relevance of inquiring into the question of aesthetic politics and/or political aesthetics today, like *Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape* meritoriously attempts to do in a fresh and original way.

KEYWORDS: Aesthetics. Ethics. Political philosophy. Landscape. Culture.