

AESTHETIC LANDSCAPE

The landscape of nature or culture, given in aesthetic experience and subject to evaluation from the point of view of aesthetic categories.

The aesthetic landscape is given in multisensory experience, but Western tradition perceives it primarily as a visual phenomenon revealed in visual experience (view). The aesthetic landscape examines the aesthetics of the landscape.

From the standpoint of the history of culture, the perception of the landscape is considered to be a modern achievement of the Renaissance period. In the history of aesthetics, it is recognised that separating the landscape as a phenomenon became along with the Renaissance discovery of the aesthetic quality of nature and its beauty. It is assumed that Petrarca was the first to praise the charms of landscapes, although the actual contribution to their discovery belongs to Renaissance artists, which is related to the search for an ideal perspective, as well as the development of landscape painting, subordinating the perception of the landscape to the principles of painting composition, capturing the view in actual or imagined frames and perceiving through paintings.

Aesthetics recognised the importance of the landscape as a phenomenon at the turn of the 18th and 19th century, along with the development of natural aesthetics and recognition of the superiority of natural beauty over the beauty of art. English aestheticians, from Shaftesbury to empirics such as Addison, Pope, Hutcheson and others, as well as Burke, who analysed the notion of sublimity, introducing it to the aesthetic discourse as the second (besides beauty) aesthetic category characteristic of natural phenomena, made a major contribution to this field. Gilpin also contributed to the development of landscape aesthetics and at the same time to the aesthetic concept of landscape by distinguishing *the picturesque* as the third aesthetic category assigned to the landscape.

In the concept of Kant, the same features that characterise beauty are associated with the landscape: selflessness, nonconceptualism, distancing, contemplative reflection. The idea of selfless viewing, proposed by Shaftesbury, allows one to admire the views without penetrating their essence and focus only on the aesthetic qualities. The role of the dominant sense in our contact with nature is given to the eye, which leads to people being moved to a safe distance, a distance from which they can admire the views, but do not have to participate in the element of nature other than visually. Distance and selfless contemplation mean that landscape experience is not about the directness of experience, but about the activity of our imagination which, as such, places what is directly given into its own framework. When looking at the views, they take on the qualities of the landscape.

Gilpin and Price associated the landscape with the notion of time and *the picturesque* category, pointing to the formal features of what manifests itself and expresses itself in the passage of time, and pointing to the transformation of beauty into picturesqueness. Adorno, in turn, linked the landscape with history and memory.

Only in the reflections of Simmel (1913) and Ritter (1966) did the aesthetic landscape undergo a fundamental conceptualisation. Simmel put forward the thesis that nature itself is

not yet a landscape and that the landscape does not exist by itself. Rivers, lakes, mountains, forests and vast plains are not a landscape as such. In order for a landscape to appear, it takes the presence of the viewer, and his aesthetic experience of a specific view. It is the moment of separating a view, placing it "in the frame of a momentary or constant field of vision" and giving it a meaning. Looking at "trees, streams, crowds, crops, the play of light and clouds", we do not yet look at the landscapes, but rather distinguish the details – the "material" that makes up the individual views. According to Simmel, landscape is a spiritual creation, it belongs to the viewer, who gives form to a separate fragment of the external world, complements it with a sense and meaning. In this sense, the landscape is a construction of an individual who perceives the external world and casts upon it an aesthetic look. This means that nature *becomes* the landscape when it becomes present in the eyes of an observer who experiences it and feels it in an aesthetic way. Thus, the landscape experience is by its nature visual, belonging to the subject and not to nature as such, in the sense that it expresses itself directly in visual perception. The pictorial way of seeing projected onto the outside world allows us to see not space but images in it. This kind of frame becomes a form of stopping, freezing that which is living, fluid, subject to eternal changes.

Recognition that a condition of the aesthetic landscape is a distanced attitude of the viewer, determines the role and attitude of the viewer, which means that those who actively participate in the physical dimension of the landscape by co-creating it are excluded from perceiving, experiencing and feeling it: one cannot see the beauty of nature, which one uses and one cannot feel its sensual qualities when trying to control it. The aesthetic landscape does not reveal itself where nature has any utility value.

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