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\*Corresponding author: David E. Cooper,  
Philosophy Emeritus, Durham University,  
Durham, UK  
E-mail: [davide.cooper@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davide.cooper@yahoo.co.uk)

Reviewing editor:  
Peter Stanley Fosl, Transylvania  
University, USA

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## PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Archaeology, landscape and aesthetics

David E. Cooper<sup>1\*</sup>

**Abstract:** This paper examines the role, if any, of aesthetic reflections in the discipline of landscape archaeology. It begins by rejecting the charge that archaeologists should set aside their own aesthetic sensibility when studying landscapes. The bulk of the paper, however, is concerned with arguing that attention to the aesthetic sensibilities of the peoples who made the landscapes studied is essential to the kind of understanding and reconstruction of ways of life that landscape archaeology aims to provide. Two important themes that are developed during the course of this argument are: (1) a distinction (ignored by some archaeologists who are critical of appeals to aesthetic enjoyment) between aesthetic appreciation and a dilettante “aestheticism” and (2) the aesthetic satisfactions that must be taken in work, such as farming, if this is to flourish.

**Subjects:** Aesthetics; Archaeology; Landscape

**Keywords:** aesthetics; beauty; landscape; landscape archaeology; farming; work; interdisciplinary humanities

### 1. Landscape archaeology, the aesthetic and the practical

Landscape archaeology is a recently emerged and very lively branch of archaeology. Its origins go back at least two centuries, to amateur interests in local history and to the writings of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Hazlitt on the English countryside and its inhabitants. Various developments in archaeology—technical, epistemological and ideological—have helped to convert these earlier approaches into a more professional field of enquiry. Sophisticated aerial and satellite photography has made visual access possible to ancient settlements and agricultural sites whose very existence might previously have been a matter only of conjecture. Within archaeological theory, there has emerged the notion of a “ritual landscape”, registering the thought that relentless attention to “sites”, such as

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David E. Cooper is Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at Durham University, UK. He is the author of many books, including ones on aesthetic and environmental topics. The present paper derives from a talk given at an interdisciplinary workshop organized by the Durham University Centre for the Ethics of Cultural Heritage on “The Return of Aesthetics to Archaeology”. The paper is continuous with other work done by the author on the role of aesthetic appreciation in everyday life and on philosophical issues concerning the practice of archaeology.

### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Many people are interested in how the landscapes they know came about. It is a main aim of landscape archaeology to explain how landscapes are formed and developed by reference to the ways of life—economic, religious and cultural—of the people who shaped the landscapes. This paper addresses the role of aesthetic appreciation in landscape archaeology, not only that of the archaeologists themselves but, more importantly, of the farmers, foresters and others who helped to make the landscapes. The paper criticizes a tendency of some archaeologists to marginalize aesthetic considerations. This tendency, it is argued, is due to a dilettante, “art for art’s sake” conception of the aesthetic. Once this is rejected, it should be accepted that aesthetic concerns are integral to the aims and working practices of farmers and other shapers of landscapes.

Stonehenge, may be myopic since these have their significance only in the context of the much wider environments in which human beings conducted their lives. Finally, landscape archaeology appeals to those who applaud a certain “demotic” tendency in contemporary archaeology, its shift of focus on to the lives of “ordinary” people, such as farmers and foragers, in past centuries. This is because the evidence for how they once lived is often more likely to be found in the land than in remnants of buildings and artefacts at sites.

Perhaps, because the name is so recent, the meaning of “landscape archaeology” is contested. Indeed, one author concludes that it refers to “many landscape archaeologies, often with little to connect them but the term ‘landscape’ itself” (Wilkinson, 2006, p. 335). Certainly, there are large differences over the scope of the name. The historian of the countryside, Oliver Rackham, confines landscape archaeology to “the study of [physical] features visible on the surface ... crop-marks, woodbanks and hedgebanks, ridge-and-furrow” and so on (Rackham, 2003, p. 13). But as we have already noted, some archaeologists would not confine attention to what is “visible on the surface”, but extend it to what can be viewed beneath the surface through satellite imagery. More radically, there are archaeologists who do not restrict the discipline to studying the physical and material. The remit of landscape archaeology, it has been proposed, should extend to “symbolic cultural landscapes”—ones that might be untouched by human hands—and not “confined to landscapes that are physically or visibly modified by humans” (Auldchild Schanche, quoted in Arntzen & Brady, 2008, p. 47).

Rather than become embroiled in debates about the scope of the term, I shall in this paper follow T.J. Wilkinson’s rough and broad definition of landscape archaeology as the “examin[ation] of how the land has been shaped and organized for economic, social, symbolic or cultural processes” and of “the role of landscape in the construction of myth and history, as well as the shaping of human behaviours” (Wilkinson, 2006, p. 334). This characterization makes salient the dual emphases of landscape archaeology on the landscape as something that both reflects and informs ways of life—as something that is both shaped by and a shaper of culture.

The question addressed in this paper is whether *aesthetic* considerations can significantly contribute to the enterprise of landscape archaeology as just defined. There are several archaeologists who would give a brisk and negative answer to this question. One writer, for example, explicitly dissociates an “archaeological” approach from an “aesthetic” one in the study of English farmhouses, cottages and country life. The former properly relates things to “the culture” in which they evolved and to their “purposes”, whereas an aesthetic approach attends to such incidental matters as “harmony of structure” or a “pleasing variety of finish and ornament” (Maurice Barley, quoted in Johnson, 2007, p. 142). These words are quoted and endorsed in a book that is critical of a “Romantic” aesthetic tradition in writings on the English landscape, from Wordsworth to W.G. Hoskins, author of the celebrated 1955 work, *The Making of the English Landscape*. Although they laudably encouraged enthusiasm for the study of landscapes, the criticism goes that these writings also conjured an image of landscape studies as the pursuit of amateur connoisseurs and, more seriously, a conception of the people who worked on the land as picturesque “spectacles”. They, in effect, deflected historical attention away from the social, political and essentially “practical” character of these people’s workaday existence (Johnson, 2007, especially Chaps. 2–3).

The idea that attention to the aesthetic aspects of artefacts and places is disjoined from a more “scientific” attention to their functional or practical dimensions is familiar in other branches of archaeology. One group of authors, for example, in their discussion of archaeology and art, oppose an aesthetic focus on how and why objects are found “attractive” to more centrally archaeological emphases on their “functional” and “semiotic” values (Corby, Layton, & Tanner, 2006, p. 361f).

Whether within landscape archaeology or another branch of archaeology, however, the opposition imagined between aesthetic and practical or functional aspects is the result of a confusion. Aesthetics is being confused with what might be called “aestheticism” where, by the latter term, I mean the idea that aesthetic appreciation is directed solely towards the appearances or forms of objects, in abstraction from any concern for what the objects are or should be, and what they may be for. But there is no

good reason to accept this strangely stunted understanding of aesthetic experience. While it is true that an aesthetic aspect, such as beauty or grace, may always be distinguished from function or utility, it does not follow that aesthetic appreciation is always or necessarily independent of recognition of practical function. Plato went so far, in *Hippias Major*, as to suggest that the beauty of an object, a basket for example, may consist in its functional excellence. This may be exaggerated, but it is perfectly possible and appropriate for recognition of something's beauty to be affected by recognition of its use. Typically, after all, we appreciate something as the thing it is—basket, cottage, garden, coffee-maker or whatever—and this will, in the case of such human products, require understanding of its function.

I say “typically”, but some philosophers would go further and insist that aesthetic appreciation *always* involves some understanding of what is being appreciated. Would my aesthetic enjoyment of the flower I am now looking at survive the discovery that it is a plastic replica? These philosophers would, in effect, be rejecting Immanuel Kant's distinction, in his *Critique of Judgement* (Section 16), between “free” and “dependent” beauty. The latter attaches to something in virtue of what it is or should be, the former only to a thing's form or appearance, irrespective of what it actually is. If it matters to me that the flower is real and not a clever replica, then it is “dependent” beauty that I ascribe to it. Since Kant invidiously described judgements of dependent beauty as “impure” ones, his distinction helped to inspire the aestheticist thought that only appreciation of forms and appearances is “really” or “purely” aesthetic. The legacy is unfortunate since it is clear, even if Kant's distinction has some purchase, that in everyday life things generally earn our aesthetic appreciation in virtue of what they are—including, in many cases, what they are for. Given this, there is no good reason why archaeologists should feel compelled to set aside as irrelevant their own aesthetic sensibility when reflecting on what human beings have made, for their use, including landscapes.

John Benson pithily exposes the confusion between aesthetic appreciation and aestheticism when he writes “an interest in the practical is not the same as a practical interest”, and goes on to explain how an archaeologist's aesthetic appreciation of a place can and should influence his or her work. To take his own example: it may be the beauty of an area of old heathland that inspires interest in, and even serves to render problematic, “the way of life” that helped to “produce” this landscape (Benson, 2008, p. 150, 152). For Benson, however, aesthetic and archaeological interests are only “contingently related”—as in the case of his own example, where aesthetic appreciation has acted as a spur to historical enquiry. I want to suggest, however, that matters of aesthetic appreciation may be more intimately related to the type of understanding sought by landscape archaeologists.

## 2. Work and aesthetic satisfactions

To identify this more intimate relationship between aesthetic and archaeological concerns, the terms of our discussion need to be changed. So far, I have been discussing the connection, or lack of it, between landscape archaeology and *our* aesthetic interests. But the connection we need to turn to is that between landscape archaeology and the aesthetic interests of the peoples whose ways of life are being studied by archaeologists. Our question now addresses the ways in which the aesthetic sensibilities of these peoples both reflected and informed the ways of life that archaeologists hope to reconstruct and understand.

This question, too, will receive a sceptical or hostile response from several archaeologists. For Colin Renfrew, it is at least an open question whether Neanderthal people, despite the beauty and symmetry we find in their hand axes, had aesthetic attitudes: “it is interesting to wonder whether [they] were themselves susceptible to such aesthetic feelings” (Renfrew, 2009, p. 76). The historian Fernand Braudel is less hesitant: the beauty of Altemira cave art, he tells us, “does not correspond to aesthetic preoccupations”, for the paintings are inspired by the aims of magic, not “a quest for beauty” (Braudel, 2002, p. 43). In Alfred Gell's influential book *Art and Agency*, it is explicitly denied that the makers of art objects in many traditional cultures could have conceived of them in aesthetic terms. These objects are instruments of “agency”, understood by their makers in the same terms as any other objects, such as weapons, that are produced to extend human agency in the world (Gell, 1998, p. 21).

All of these remarks, however, strike me as guilty of the same confusion between aesthetics and aestheticism that we encountered earlier. There is no need to picture Neanderthal men contemplating the formal beauty and symmetry of their axes in abstraction from the weapons' purpose in order to credit them with an aesthetic sense. Nor is there the least reason, once the confusion is identified, to suppose that the role played by cave paintings or Papuan-decorated objects in social practice is incompatible with aesthetic appreciation of them by their makers. For, to repeat my earlier point, this is an appreciation that is both consistent with and often invited by recognition of something's practical function. This could be denied only by someone in the grip of a quaint image of aesthetic appreciation as what is exclusively exercised by "aesthetes", effete disciples of an "Art for Art's Sake" philosophy. When this image is dispelled, there should be no obstacle for recognizing how aesthetic appreciation is exercised, day in and day out, when involved in such eminently practical activities as setting a table, dressing or mowing a lawn.

Returning to landscape archaeology, I propose that it is not just possible, but compelling to attribute to people who shaped the landscapes studied by archaeologists an aesthetic sense that was exercised in and through their work and everyday engagement with the land. The expression "everyday engagement" is intended to call to mind two welcome developments in professional aesthetics over the last few decades. One is the attention now paid by philosophers to the "aesthetics of the everyday"—to aesthetic aspects of, say, food and gardening. The other is the emphasis, when describing and explaining aesthetic appreciation of environments, on the ways in which people physically engage with these environments through, say, climbing, canoeing or, as we'll now discuss, working in them.<sup>1</sup>

Karl Marx wrote that, before the "alienation" of human beings from their work and the products of this work, "man fashion[ed] things according to the laws of beauty", and not simply in order to meet his "needs" (Marx, 1979, p. 140). I interpret this to mean at least the following: in pre-modern or pre-industrial rural societies, productive work yielded certain "aesthetic satisfactions", as I'll call them, that helped to sustain and to guide practices of work. In fact, there is good empirical, interview-based evidence that, even today, in places where farming of a relatively simple and traditional kind continues, the decisions that farmers take—on, say, where to erect a fence—are not always explicable in cost-benefit terms. It is evidence, as one author puts it, that at least some agriculture remains "a form of culture [that] requires aesthetic sensibilities" on the part of those engaged in it (Bonsdorff, 2008, p. 161).

Here are some of the aesthetic satisfactions that, it seems to me, have surely been operative in creating many of the landscapes examined by archaeologists who hope to reconstruct the life of the people who shaped them. Several of these satisfactions have been beautifully described by the novelist and poet of Provençal farming communities in the first half of the twentieth century, Jean Giono. I shall draw liberally on some of his works.

To begin with, there is the uncomplicated pleasure that responsible farmers, others who work on the land, and indeed people at large, take in cleanliness and orderliness—of their tools, their places of work, the fields on which their animals graze and much else. "What I want to do", says one of Giono's farmers, "is to put everything in its place" (Giono, 2009, p. 170). Those who confuse aesthetics with aestheticism are liable to overlook aesthetic qualities such as cleanliness, but as Roger Scruton persuasively argues, such "minimal beauties", undramatic as they may be, are "far more important to our daily lives ... than the great works which (if we are lucky) occupy our leisure hours" (Scruton, 2009, p. 12).

Next, fairly obviously, is the aesthetic satisfaction people may find in the products of their skilled and creative work. The sight of the neat hedgerow gives pleasure to the person who grew and pruned it, just as the feel and form of the dry stone wall are gratifying to the people who made it. The products of the work may be living beings—crops, plants and livestock. "My hands itch to create *fine* animals", says a farmer in a Giono novel, "a *beautiful* stallion ... [it] warms us" (Giono, 1999, p. 341).

Then there is the enjoyment and aesthetic satisfaction people may take in the activity of work itself—in, say, the rhythm and grace of bodily movements or the harmony of eye and hand when work is going well. “That is how he mows”, Giono’s narrator says of one farmworker, “come and see. It was really something beautiful. Randoulet’s muscles were all constantly in full play, the necessary gestures were exact and perfectly timed. It was a joy to watch” (Giono, 1999, p. 413).

A person’s aesthetic satisfaction in their work may be enhanced and take on a new tone when the work is done in cooperation, communion and perhaps intimacy with other people. Not only did the other farmworkers enjoy watching the man mowing, they then joined in the mowing. “They took a step when Randoulet took a step. There was a single mower” (Giono, 1999). Randoulet, one imagines, was now able to enjoy a sense of harmony with his fellows as well as the pleasure in his own rhythmic grace and skill.

Communion with other people is not the only kind of harmony that may be a source of aesthetic satisfaction. Some work brings with it a sense of harmony or convergence with the natural world. This seems to have been at least part of what Marx meant when he wrote of fashioning things “according to the laws of beauty”, for he goes on to describe such work as respecting “the inherent standard” of natural things and creatures. Marx’s worker does not ride roughshod over the nature of things, but works in a way that is appropriate to—in harmony with—what they are. A later writer refers to work as a way, ideally, to achieve “intimacy” with the land, and identifies the “ugliness” of many modern practices, such as the “machine-flailing” of hedges by the roadside, with their being a manifestation of a “disdain of nature” (Deakin, 2008, p. 363). The case against the degradation of natural environments is an aesthetic as much as a moral one—or, better, these two aspects are indissolubly fused.

The list of aesthetic satisfactions I have briefly described is not intended to be an exhaustive one. It is sufficient, however, to indicate how aesthetic sensibility is present and operative in the work—skilled and caring work, at least—that has helped to form the landscapes that archaeologists study.

Or is it? There are a couple of predictable objections to what I’m proposing that need to be addressed. The first of these objections might go like this:

To be sure, people enjoy and take pleasure in, say, mowing efficiently and producing a good crop, especially when this is done alongside friends and neighbours and without damaging the environment they all depend on. But there is no need to speak here of “aesthetic” satisfaction. The pleasure experienced owes entirely to the knowledge that one’s work has been of a high standard, beneficial to oneself, other people and the land itself.

The reply to this objection is that while a person may indeed take pleasure in knowing that something has been done well and to people’s benefit, this is not the kind of pleasure I earlier identified under the heading of “aesthetic satisfaction”. It is the sight of the fine stallion that has been reared, the rich smell of the mown grass, the perceived rhythm of bodily movement, the welcome sound of men and women working in unison and the sense of caring for the living beings with which a landscape is shared that were the source or object of the satisfactions I described. Except on the narrow “aestheticist” understanding of the aesthetic that we encountered earlier, all of these satisfactions are aesthetic ones, for they are pleasures in the experience of things, in things as they are seen, heard, smelt, felt and sensed.

The second objection to my claim that aesthetic sensibility is present and operative in work focuses on the word “operative”. The complaint is that while there may indeed be aesthetic pleasure yielded by work, this pleasure is, as it were, supervenient or collateral—a mere side-effect or extra bonus—and does nothing to help form and explain ways of working.<sup>2</sup> I’ll discuss in the final section how attention to aesthetic satisfaction might play a role in archaeological explanation of how landscapes have been made. For the moment, I simply observe how, once again, “aestheticism” is surely

the culprit responsible for the objection. If the aesthetic attitude were always that of the detached, contemplative observer, then it would indeed be difficult to see how it could play an important operative role in work and practical engagement with the world. But it isn't always like this. Aesthetic sensibility is exercised day in and day out, in relation to such mundane activities as eating soup, dressing, making a bed, even using a toilet, and to the performance of work.<sup>3</sup> With the "aestheticist" image dispelled, it becomes hard to see why anyone should deny that the aesthetic satisfactions found in work are operative, indeed that they may powerfully inform what and how things are made. That they are operative in working the land is, of course, precisely what is shown by the empirical evidence—based on interviews with some American smallholders—referred to earlier. Such evidence suggests, in fact, that aesthetic sensibility is not simply operative, but that aesthetic considerations may "trump" more obviously material and utilitarian ones.

### 3. Aesthetics and archaeological explanation

If landscape archaeology is the examination of how the land has been shaped by and in turns shapes human culture, then, if my argument is well taken, people's aesthetic sense is integral to what the discipline is about. This is because an aesthetic sense and the satisfactions that go with it inform the everyday engagement of people with landscapes through practices like farming. For practices of work to flourish—at least in traditional, pre-industrial communities—people must produce "according to the laws of beauty": they must be able to experience the aesthetic satisfactions in their work that I sketched in the previous section.

Some landscape archaeologists might agree with all this but nevertheless question the value or even the possibility of attending to aesthetic sensibility in the attempt to understand and explain the ways of life responsible for many—perhaps most—of the landscapes that interest them. Their point would be that these are landscapes shaped by people for whose aesthetic experience there is no evidence except the landscapes themselves. The people may, for example, be ones who died long ago, leaving no documentary testimony to their aesthetic preferences. In such cases, the argument goes, there can be no explanatory value in appealing to the aesthetic satisfactions experienced by people since there is no way of knowing what these were independently of the very landscapes whose provenance the archaeologist is trying to explain.

There are two responses to make to this reluctance to accept the explanatory value of attending to the aesthetic. The first is that there is more evidence, albeit indirect, than the sceptic admits for the aesthetic attitudes of peoples who left no testimony to them. In the first place, there are ancient texts whose authors articulate aesthetic concerns with landscape that it is not unreasonable to think were shared by many of their non-literate contemporaries who worked on the land. Examples would include Virgil's great first-century BCE poem, the *Georgics* (from the Greek word meaning "agricultural") and the third-century CE Daoist text, *One Hundred and Eighty Precepts* (several of which enjoin care for the look and orderliness of environments). Next, there are many later testimonies to the aesthetic appreciation of workers on the land which it is not unreasonable to extrapolate from and then attribute to peoples who left no verbal record. It is plausible, for example, to suppose that the aesthetic satisfactions in farm work described by Jean Giono or attested to in the interviews with American smallholders were ones experienced by earlier communities whose ways of working life were, in significant respects, comparable. To be sure, care must be taken in extrapolating and mistakes can be made. But this is true of any historian's attempt to reconstruct aspects of the lives of people who left no testimony—their religious concepts, for instance, or their attitude to sexual pleasure.

This leads on to the second response to an archaeologist's reluctance to accept that an appeal to aesthetic sensibility can be of explanatory value. Often, it is true, we have little or no evidence for people's attitudes beyond the behaviour of theirs we want to understand. But, typically, this does not prevent us from attributing a certain attitude on the grounds that this attitude, unlike others, would make good sense of the behaviour. We are engaging, that is, in what logicians call "inference to the best explanation". Consider, for instance, an archaeologist wondering why one tribe produced many glittering ornaments while those produced by a neighbouring tribe were matt and dull. Various

explanations might be explored. Perhaps, for example, the second tribe didn't have access to the shiny metals available to the first tribe. But when this and various other possibilities get eliminated, a plausible way of explaining the difference would be to attribute contrasting aesthetic preferences to the two tribes. If it can be sensibly maintained, as surely it can, that Medieval Europeans had a taste for all that glitters in a way that their Japanese contemporaries did not, then it would be strange to refuse to consider a similar claim in the case of the two tribes. Of course, there is a need for humility here, for admitting that one might be mistaken and that the difference between the ornaments is due to some factor not yet considered—to, let's suppose, one tribe's religious taboo on what glitters. But such epistemic humility is imperative in all forms of enquiry and should not be allowed to prevent enquirers from advancing explanatory hypotheses.

What has just been said about explaining differences between ornaments may also be said about differences between landscapes. Indeed, the value of considering aesthetic sensibilities becomes clear in cases where landscapes differ in ways that can be hard to understand without taking these sensibilities into account. In some cases, inference to the best explanation of the difference may impel us towards people's forms of aesthetic appreciation. Here is a putative example where, it seems to me, it is credible to suppose that contrasting aesthetic sensibilities at least helps to explain the emergence of contrasting landscapes.

Oliver Rackham, in his history of the English countryside, draws attention to a distinction between what he calls the "ancient" and the "planned" countryside. Despite the term "ancient", this is not an essentially chronological distinction since at any time over the last few centuries, both kinds of countryside can be found in different parts of the country. Rackham characterizes the ancient countryside as having an "irregularity", a "hedged and walled landscape", and "do-it-yourself" enclosures. The planned countryside, by contrast, is marked by regularity, straightness of lines and an "open" look. Rackham then makes two interesting observations. First, it is very hard to explain why some landscapes are "ancient" and others "planned" in terms of geographical differences or "natural variation in hills, soils and rainfall". Second, the same distinction is "found all over Europe from France to Crete", suggesting that it is one which "cuts much deeper in human affairs" than one might otherwise suppose (Rackham, 2003, pp. 11–12).

Well, perhaps the distinction cuts deep, and cannot be put down to "natural variation" because it reflects and manifests opposing aesthetic sensibilities. It's clear that aesthetic appreciation of the two kinds of countryside does vary: for instance, Rackham's own preference, which won't be shared by admirers of the Cambridgeshire countryside, is for the ancient. Of course, the aesthetic sensibility that helps to explain why one rather than the other kind of landscape has emerged in a certain area or country will not be free floating. It won't, that is, be a "mere" taste or preference unconnected with forms of life that provide the context in which aesthetic and other sensibilities—religious ones, say—are shaped and exercised. But then, as we've seen, it is a parody of the aesthetic attitude to suppose that it exists in quarantine from other modes of human experience and practice.

There are many other contrasts to be found among landscapes that invite at least the attempt to explain them in aesthetic terms. Could it be, for example, that the solid stone walls and barns that are characteristic of some agricultural landscapes reflect an admiration for what is strong and enduring? And that, by contrast, the fragile reed fences and huts characteristic of other farmlands reflect an appreciation of what is ephemeral, transient? Commentators certainly try to explain differences between, say, classical European and medieval Japanese tastes in art works and architecture along such lines. So, why not in the case of differences between landscapes? Once more, it will of course be wrong to disjoin these tastes from the forms of life in which they are set—but the same is true in the case of art works. The Japanese appreciation of the ephemeral and fragile surely did not float free from a Buddhist perception of the world as impermanent and insubstantial (Cooper, *in press*).

I have argued, in summary, that it would be self-stultifying for landscape archaeologists to dismiss appeals to the aesthetic as irrelevant or trivial. Attention to the aesthetic satisfactions that are integral to the ways of life that they try to understand and reconstruct belongs in the remit of their discipline.

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#### Author details

David E. Cooper<sup>1</sup>

E-mail: [davide.cooper@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davide.cooper@yahoo.co.uk)

<sup>1</sup> Philosophy Emeritus, Durham University, Durham, UK.

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#### Notes

1. On “everyday aesthetics” and engaged appreciation of nature, see Saito (2007) and Berleant (1992), respectively.
2. It is worth comparing this complaint with the view of some evolutionary biologists that pleasure in music—“auditory cheesecake”, in Stephen Pinker’s words (1999, p. 534)—is “useless”. And worth comparing my response with those made to these biologists by many ethnomusicologists.
3. My examples evoke Junichiro Tanizaki’s *In Praise of Shadows* (1999), an exquisite demonstration of the role of an aesthetic sense in ordinary life.

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