Sensing Collectives, an Introduction

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1. ENTANGLEMENTS OF AESTHETICS AND POLITICS

It may seem obvious today that aesthetics and politics touch or even intermingle, but to look for how they intertwine is no easy task. Trace them carefully and entanglements abound: They are relevant both for building, upholding, policing, and stabilizing orders of collective life, that is for governance, as well as for undermining, disrupting, renewing, and transforming established orders, that is innovation. To really get a feel for how this is weaved together, let us go through a few examples.

Artistic activism is a clear case for the latter. Aesthetic practices of modulating sensations and affects here call into question established norms and knowledges. Artivism mobilizes collective subjects who identify with an artistically expressed discontent with dominant political orders and discourses (Groys, 2014; Weibel, 2015; Nossel, 2016; see also chapters in this volume by Prinz, Paredes, Husberg & Marcecova, Beermann, Watson). In Germany, the Center for Political Beauty has gained some ambiguous fame in recent years for their radical interventions into the public discourse on the refugee crisis, which included throwing refugees to the tigers and digging graves in front of the German parliament (Stange et al., 2018; Rigamonti, 2022 see also chapter by Landau-Donnelly in this volume). But also, less spectacular and more classical forms of political protest, like public assemblies, rallies, sit-ins, camps, festivals, songs, and performances clearly work with sensation and affect to express and mobilize subjectivities that are felt not to be adequately represented in institutionalized politics (Stoehrel, 2017; see also chapters in this volume by Sommer and Suarez & Mitrovic). The Occupy Movement can be considered an example of performing experiences of precarity through vulnerably and living in solidarity in camps on urban plazas (Butler, 2015; Bassett, 2014). The white supremacist movement in the USA, too, is well versed in aesthetics and politics, as shown in a coordinated gathering of Tiki-torch-bearing, "acceptable, well-dressed college students" as a recruitment tactic in the lead up to the deadly "Unite the Right" rally in Charleston, USA (Davey & Ebner, 2017). In different modalities of sensing, the slow food movement combines aesthetics and politics by mobilizing a social movement via collective tasting experiences and "visceral identification" with

more attentive ways of eating (Hayes-Conroy & Martin, 2010; Bentia, 2014; see also chapter by Voß et al. in this volume).

These cases may count as examples of aesthetics and politics becoming entangled in processes of innovating collective orders, but there are also cases where they combine in the governing of collective orders. Take, for a start, when in 2015 then US president Barack Obama sang "Amazing Grace," a song written by a rueful slave trader, and was openly moved to tears at a public obsequy for victims of a massacre at a Black church, thus performing a caring and responsible state in connection with racism (Mondada et al., 2016; Kloppers, 2020). There are many more examples of aesthetics involved in governmental strategies if we look at the campaigning of political parties, the staging of summits, conventions, negotiations, and at governmental public relations (Edelman, 1988; Marcus et al., 2000; Hitzler, 2002; Hajer, 2010; Aronczyk et al., 2017). Even in the everyday work of legislative debate and decision-making there is a sensory and affective dimension (Manow, 2010; Dányi, 2015), and in the practice of partaking in elections (Nicholson, 2015). A more mundane attempt at governing with the senses is the display of grotesque images of disease and death on tobacco packages as a strategy to push non-smoking norms (Argo & Main, 2004; Keane, 2014; Burton et al., 2021). Finally, states are not the only ones engaging in aesthetic governance. Individual businesses and whole industries use multi-sensorial design and marketing strategies to shape appreciation for their projects, create attachment and desire for their products, and grow brand communities of people who affectively identify with their commercial strategies (Hennion et al., 1989; Spence & Gallace, 2011; Lindstrom, 2005; see also chapters in this volume by Austin & Leander, Schulte-Römer, Stewart, Voß et al.).

These examples give a taste of what we are after when stating that aesthetics and politics are in fact entangled in many instances where collective orders of life get engaged with in an effort to shape or shift them. We claim that we may indeed look at any process of what is nowadays studied under the broad rubrics of governance or innovation and we will find that this process entails both a dimension of actively engaging with ways of sensing and feeling as well as articulations of collective will and interest. And that both are very closely intertwined. With this book, we take up the challenge of analyzing this apparently very widespread and influential means of shaping collective orders.

The entanglement of aesthetics and politics comes as no surprise when we consider that both reflexively engage with ways of living together, constituted as they are in ways of sensing and feeling and in ways of commonly identifying with values and interests that mobilize collective agency and legitimize norms. If collective orders always comprise an amalgam of sensory and political orders, however, then obviously attempts at shaping such orders also must engage with established ways of sensing and collective identity.

What we set out to investigate is how—specifically—aesthetics and politics intertwine in the shaping of collective orders. First, this entails some conceptual consideration of what aesthetics and politics are in practice, how concretely they are done, and how they work. It requires us to sharpen our analytical tools for dissecting the aesthetic and political dimensions of innovation and governance processes. Second, it demands a closer look at a diverse range of empirical cases for reconstructing the patterns in which aesthetic and political practices intertwine and how they jointly constitute and transform collective ways of living.

A considerable part of this introductory chapter thus is devoted to laying out and honing our analytical tools against a review of relevant debates on the relation between aesthetics and politics. The other part gives an overview of the broad set of empirical cases handled in the subsequent chapters for how they describe the intertwining of aesthetics and politics—according to our overall conception.

Turning to the challenge of devising an analytical framework, we need a conception of aesthetics and politics that allows us to follow each thread through rather complex and contingent entanglements in practice, also beyond their traditional conception as institutionalized forms of the professional art world and policy-making by the state. But a close up view also brings the two to the brink of collapsing into one another, as we shall see. So, at the same time, we must keep the two apart in order to recognize each empirically.

A look into the vast literature on relations of aesthetics and politics suggests that the conceptual tools for such a balancing act are not readily at hand. Essentially, there are two extremes: On the one hand, there is the modernist conception of aesthetics and politics as two functionally differentiated systems with two autonomous and mutually incompatible logics of operation (e.g., Bourdieu, 1996 [1992]; Bourdieu, 2001; Luhmann, 1996, 2000; or, more tentatively, for art also Becker, 1982; and for politics Easton, 1979 [1967]). On the other, a post-modernist conception completely abandons the distinction between aesthetics and politics as a mere discursive construction, while indeed all doing is conceptualized as equally aesthetic and political (e.g., Foucault, 2020 [1984]; Lyotard, 1994 [1979]; or, more explicitly, Rancière, 2015). If we want to know more specifically how aesthetics and politics are done practically and how they intertwine, however, these two extreme positions cannot do the job.

Yet, beyond the two extremes which strike the eye when first entering the field, there are also some other, more recent attempts at conceptualizing aesthetics and politics—not as two distinct social systems or spheres, but as specific types of practices (for a general overview of practice-oriented study approaches see Theodore R. Schatzki et al., 2001; Reckwitz, 2002; Shove et al., 2012; Nicolini, 2012). Rather than starting from abstract principles and functions, these studies trace the activities that *do* certain things, that produce specific effects. For aesthetics, the relevant effects are sensorial experiences and affects. Aesthetic practices then are the concrete

doings that produce these (Hennion, 2004; Schwarz, 2013; Reckwitz, 2016). For politics, the relevant effects are collective subjectivities and the mobilization of collective agency and the legitimation of norms by way of referring to we-identities, collective will, values, and interests (Latour, 2003; Saward, 2006; Disch, 2011). Pursuing such a *practice turn* in studying aesthetics and politics allows us to empirically trace various patterns of entanglement and study how they are jointly involved in shaping collective orders or, more pointedly, how they together fabricate *sensing collectives*.

The remainder of this introductory chapter reviews established ways of studying aesthetics and politics and the gap they leave (Section 2), it traces more recent developments and what they offer us (Section 3), and then it moves on to sketch a praxeological analytics of aesthetics and politics (Section 4). This provides us with a conceptual framework for presenting an overview of the following chapters and for situating the different cases and their findings within the overall project (Section 5). We conclude with an analytical reflection on the specific forms of aesthetic and political practices that can be found across the chapters and on how they intertwine in stabilizing and renewing collective orders (Section 6).

2. PURIFIED SYSTEMS OR ALL DISTINCTIONS COLLAPSED?

For a long time, the relation between aesthetics and politics had been framed as an interaction, often interference, between two distinct, if not opposing, values, logics, spheres, or systems (Rebentisch, 2012; Hoggett & Thompson, 2012; Reckwitz, 2015). Aesthetic philosophy and theories of art had emphasized that creative expression should not be constrained by rules and must not be suffocated by moral, ethical or normative concerns, or commitments to certain programs of social change. It must stay aloof of struggles for the power to rule. In order to stay alive, aesthetics must celebrate the free play with sensation and affect, irrespective of political considerations. Likewise for politics, the main tenets of occidental philosophy and modern culture had been that it should remain above sensitivities and feelings. It ought to pursue sober analysis, rational argumentation and deal primarily with serious controversy for the collective good. Power was a matter of public responsibility, not capricious play. Politics required an intrepid, objective, calculating, regulative approach to the world, rather than a sensitive, subjective, empathetic, affective approach.

This idea of differentiating, demarcating, functionally purifying, and distinctly rationalizing aesthetics and politics had led to analytical frameworks which indeed took their separation for granted. Guided by normative considerations based on constructions of unique functions fulfilled by each separately for society as a whole, both aesthetics and politics were then observed, analyzed, and evaluated as independent spheres, and became institutionally shaped thusly: Politics was the public

questioning and shaping of collective orders through discursive means and a struggle for power within the institutions of the nation state (Easton, 1979 [1967]; Bourdieu, 2001; Luhmann, 2000). Aesthetics, on the other hand, was either a private affair, as "*de gustibus non est disputandum*," or, in its public role as "the arts," a form of amusing stimulation and well-contained play with conventions (Becker, 1982; Bourdieu, 1996 [1992]; Luhmann, 1996).

Distinct concepts of purpose and corresponding functional theories had given politicians and artists alike a shared professional orientation. Each could maintain their own legitimation for requiring autonomy and immunizing against interference by non-professionals. Each could argue a rationale in support of their demands for broader public authority, recognition, and institutional and monetary support. This modern functionalist perspective viewed the intermingling of aesthetics and politics with skepticism. Either aesthetic freedom ran the risk of being strangled by instrumental reason and order-bent politics (Adorno, 1973; Debord, 1995 [1967]) or the serious business of politics was under threat from reckless and irresponsible stoking of sensations (Lerner & Lasswell, 1951; Habermas, 1981).

These were the rules of the long-running game that art and politics played by, at least on the surface. Beneath that though, official accounts and declarations art, of course, could never stay detached from interests and power, often taking issue with and engaged in the struggle over rules and orders. And politics, of course, could never stay detached from sensations and affect, and often consciously worked with feelings. The line of separation was less clear-cut than often claimed (Rieff, 1953; Eagleton, 1990; Rockhill, 2014). It was eventually squinted away depending on the angle of observation, once institutionalized modern ideals of autonomous art and democratic politics were given a hard look, or the actual practices of doing aesthetics and politics taken into view.

Consequently, in the 1970s a counter-reaction to this modernist separation arose. The new social movements and their intellectuals sought to erase categorical differences for their discretionary constructed-ness and for the power and control they exerted (Foucault, 1972; Deleuze & Guattari, 1988 [1980]; Lyotard, 1994 [1979]; Ryan, 1989; Harvey, 1989). In the course of broader philosophical debates and re-oriented empirical studies and practical orientations, the dominant position of essentializing categorical distinctions and functional differentiation began to erode (P. M. Rosenau, 1991). Gradually, it became acknowledged that art had always been constitutively linked to collective orders and the struggle for power to shape them (Lewis, 2013 [1990]; Groys, 2008; Sartwell, 2011). New concepts of engaged art emphasized participatory experiments, social sculpturing, aesthetic happenings as part of the ongoing collective ordering (Beuys, 2007 [1986]; Roberts, 1990; Plant, 2002; Heinich, 2014). Likewise, it became acknowledged that politics had always worked with sensations and affects, and that it must do so in order to be effective (Ankersmit, 1996; Nussbaum, 2013; Ahmed, 2013). Newer concepts of politics down-

right included the sensory and affective dimensions (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]; Marcuse, 1979; De Certeau, 1980; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001 [1985]; Thrift & Amin, 2013).

A pronounced version of this reaction to the modern separation of aesthetics and politics is articulated by Jacques Rancière. His conception collapses aesthetics and politics into one integrated concern with the expression and perception of subjectivities (Rancière et al., 2001; Rancière, 2010). The relevant tension, for him, is between politics and the political—and both are defined in aesthetic terms. While politics is administrative, objectifying, regulatory, and repressionist, the political is creative, subjectifying, enabling, and expressionist. Politics establishes the "police order" and an "illusory democracy." The political, however, is liberating and truly democratic. Both politics and the political have their own ways of sensing, their own aesthetics. Politics administers a specific "distribution of the senses," an order that defines the sensory as that which is perceptible—i.e. that which is permissible to be seen and expressed in a society, and who is entitled to do so. The political in contrast is to bring subjectivities freely into expression, to make formerly imperceptible and excluded social actors sensed and felt in the common space of social life, and thereby break through and open up the dominating sensory order, and trigger a re-distribution of the senses. In this perspective, there is no politics nor anything political that is not sensory and aesthetical, too, as it is all about different styles of expression and perception. Political order and change are simply identical with sensory order and change. The political is aesthetic and the aesthetic is political. All is one, but in different temperatures and aggregate states, one could say.

Such post-modern reactions against the modern presumptions of progressive functional differentiation are influential in political theory, especially radical democracy (Little, 2019), and in aesthetic theory and in the history of art (Hinderliter et al., 2009). For our purpose, however, they seem to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Seeking to overcome the rigid foundational conception of aesthetics and politics as two opposing logics and their institutional containment in modern institutions of autonomous art and the liberal-democratic state, they give up on any conceptual differentiation altogether and forfeit any analytical purchase on studying varying patterns of intertwinement. Completely deconstructing aesthetics and politics as analytical categories means that both vanish as anything that can be studied for where and how it occurs and with what specific effects. Even if we endorse that foundationalist modern functionalism inadequately defines aesthetics and politics, we still require some conception of what they are in order to study them.

We have hinted at our approach of conceptualizing them generically as two different types of practices by starting from their effects, from what they do, and then empirically trace back to how this is done: How are specific aesthetic and political effects fabricated? For aesthetics we take sensory experiences and affects as the relevant effects, for politics collective subjectivity as a lever for mobilizing collective

agency and legitimizing norms. We will elaborate this a bit further into a conceptual frame, which we then use to discuss the contributions to this volume for what they show in terms of patterns in which aesthetic and political practices intertwine in governance and innovation. Before we do that, however, we briefly review three more recent strands of research that can give us some inspiration and conceptual background for articulating such analytics of intertwining aesthetic and political practices.

3. EMERGING ALTERNATIVES

Over the last decades, three strands of research have emerged that we can draw on. The first are developments in the social studies of the senses that offer a broader conception of aesthetic practices embedded in everyday life, not limited to the arts. The second are shifts towards social studies of governance that include culture, materiality, and bodies for conceiving the shaping of collective orders beyond words and rules. And the third strand emerges from an original interest in laboratory work in science and technology studies (STS) which was then extended to other forms of experimental practices.

3.1 Sensory studies

For developing a praxeological understanding of aesthetics, we can draw on the emerging field of the social studies of the senses (Howes, 2005; Bull et al., 2006; Vannini et al., 2012; Göbel & Prinz, 2015). Initially opened-up by conceptual and methodological work in anthropology (Stoller, 1989; Howes, 1991; Classen, 1997; Pink, 2009) and a broader re-entry of materiality, the body, practices, and affects in social research (Merleau-Ponty, 2013 [1945]; Synnott, 1993), the field re-discovered early precursors of a sociology the senses (James, 1983 [1890]; Dewey, 1896; Simmel, 1992 [1908/1907]).

It focuses on how the ways in which human bodies sense are recursively related to the ways in which people socially organize through shared signs, symbols and meanings, values, norms and rules, technology and infrastructure. This includes, for one, how the ways we live together actually shape the ways in which we sense ourselves and the world. But also vice versa, how sensing shapes the ways we socially relate and bond, and how we interpret and discursively reflect and regulate social life.

An example is that the predominance of seeing over other modes of sensing (like hearing, touching, smelling, tasting) and of particular ways of control-oriented seeing appear to have been shaped in the course of the development of modern cultures (McLuhan & Fiore, 1967; Prinz, 2014). Seeing appears to have co-evolved

with a specifically modern outlook on the world, a basic interest in and orientation towards objective knowing, functional analysis and instrumental control, and a specifically modern subjectivity of the thinking individual that exists autonomously and detached from its surroundings, especially from material objects and nature. Vice versa, this particular way of seeing which objectifies, plans out, and measures the world appears to be constitutive and shape-giving to modern forms of life, identities, epistemologies, institutions, and other forms of social order (Cosgrove, 2003).

A key notion here is the "sensory order" (Vannini et al., 2012, pp. 126–147; Howes & Classen, 2014, pp. 65–92; Reckwitz, 2016). The term depicts specific patterns of social life in which knowledge, values, and rules intertwine with particular ways of sensing. It is used to point out the conditioning and structuring effects of such socially ordered ways of sensing. They are analyzed for constituting specific forms of power that work through the configuring of sensory experiences, perceptions, and affects. As such they can also be exposed to incorporate the senses into systems of dominance and hegemony. Such analyses link up with earlier structural accounts of taste, as exemplified by Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1987), but they move beyond the symbolic dimensions of cultural consumption and turn to the training of corporeal capacities for actually sensing and being affected in certain ways (Hennion, 2004).

Also, more micro-oriented approaches are developed within this broader sensory turn in social research. They focus not so much on broader patterns and their structuring effects, but rather on the situational contingency and the dynamics of social sensing, and on the agency and reflexive capacities of humans to depart from, play with, subvert, and disrupt culturally dominant patterns of sensing, and on our creative capacities to re-invent and shape our own ways of sensing. Such reflexive engagements with sensory orders and with one's own habitualized ways of sensing are studied as aesthetic practices or techniques that actively seek to provoke and modulate sensorial perceptions and affects (Becker, 1953; Gomart & Hennion, 1999; Hennion, 2004; Schwarz, 2013; Reckwitz, 2015, 2016).

Recent sociology and anthropology of the senses thus offer a much more mundane and distributed account of aesthetics—not a logic, sphere, or system, but rather an integral dimension of social life. Against the background of sensing being something practiced in culturally specific ways, both formed in social relations and shaping them, the aesthetic here appears as any kind of reflexive engagement with culturally established ways of sensing, either evoking and actualizing them or modulating and changing them. This is done professionally in art, design, advertisement, etc. but is also practiced more widely throughout society, as well as in everyday private settings, and as part of other professionalized activities, for example, political campaigning and science communication. This offers us a generic conception of aesthetics specific enough to identify particular doings as aesthetic

practices and yet open enough to let us empirically reconstruct how concretely they are configured.

3.2 Cultural governance

A, for our purposes, complementary development to the social studies of the senses has also unfolded with regard to conceptions of politics, power, and governance over the last decades. For a long time, social order and control was primarily understood in terms of norms and rules. Governance was analyzed as the making and implementation of rules through the institutions of the state, most importantly law-making undergirded by a territorially bounded monopoly on violence. Most of classical modern social science thus defined politics, in one way or another, as the processes of capturing and deploying the ordering power of the state (e.g., Weber, 1992 [1919]; Easton, 1979 [1967]; Neuman, 2005; and, critically, Nash, 2010).

This has changed dramatically over the last decades. Across the social sciences, conceptions of governance have been widened beyond a focus on rules and the state's monopoly on violence. A first extension included informally negotiated norms and rules outside the state (J. N. Rosenau & Czempiel, 1992; Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1996; Mayntz, 1998; Pierre & Peters, 2000). This is a key topic of neo-institutional political science and economics. In most parts of political science, it led to analyzing politics and governance with a view to actors, processes, and modes of rule-making and compliance well past the democratic and the bureaucratic institutions of the state.

A second and deeper extension of the notion of governance can be understood as the result of a broader "cultural turn" in the social sciences (Mitchell, 1991; Steinmetz, 1999; Nash, 2001; Bevir & Rhodes, 2010). In the course of this turn, and its several components, like the linguistic, the practice, the material turns (Bachmann-Medick, 2016), several layers and dimensions of formerly naturalized orders came to be appreciated as social products, conventions, and habits. Language, social knowledge, gendered bodies, scientific facts, technology, and infrastructure were first de-constructed as necessary results of a functional process of natural evolution, and then re-constructed for their always power-laden and power-wielding social histories. Accordingly, they are now analyzed for how they contribute to establishing and stabilizing collective orders, or how subverting or disrupting them entails consequences for other dimensions of social life as well, and may imply an unravelling of the social fabric.

Foucault's studies of orders of language and discourse and how they constitute rationalities and subjectivities marked a starting signal for interrogating various other dimensions of culture for their ordering effects and for how they are shaped, how they have been shaped historically and are imbued with power relations, and how they are continuously reproduced, or could also be resisted and done otherwise (Foucault, 1972, 1980; Burchell et al., 1991). Butler's work is most prominent for in-

terrogating gender orders and the cultural constitution of the body in this regard (Butler, 1990). Latour is the most famous name for interrogating what is regarded as objective reality, scientific facts, and technological functionalities with a view to their practical making and reproduction (Latour, 1987).

With regard to our interest in relations of aesthetics and politics, the sensory studies come in here by also making sensory orders analytically accessible as a dimension of governance (Vannini et al., 2012, pp. 126–147; Howes & Classen, 2014, pp. 65–92), as part of a broadened and deepened understanding of collective orders and how they are shaped. Turning attention to these various modes of cultural ordering of collective life, and the power inscribed in and exerted by them, it becomes clear that their active shaping, and their public problematization and controversial negotiation, is in fact an extended realm of material-cultural politics. These politics are focused not on rule-making by the state but on the configuration of collective life in dimensions of language, presumed ontologies, morals, science, technology, architecture, gendered bodies, lifestyles—and ways of sensing. Against this background, sensing and affects start to draw attention as a dimension of collective ordering (Reckwitz, 2012, 2017) and open a view on "sensory governance" (Schulte-Römer et al., 2017), "aesthetic governance" (Voß & Guggenheim, 2019), "governing affects" (Penz & Sauer, 2019) and "affective politics" (Bargetz, 2015).

3.3 Practices of world-making

Alongside emerging social studies of the senses and culturally extended conceptions of governance, we find inspiration in the field of science and technology studies (STS). STS originally started with a similar move for science as the one we pursue here for aesthetics and politics: turning from functionally rationalized norms and institutions to practices (Pickering, 1992). This move yielded methodological and conceptual inventions that are useful for studying aesthetic and political practices as well.

Initially, STS simply focused on what was actually done in laboratories and scholarly communities for articulating and establishing facts and developing technologies (Latour & Woolgar, 1979; Knorr Cetina, 1981; Shapin, 1984; Lynch, 1985; Bijker, 1987). They side-stepped existing normative philosophies and idealistic methodologies that portrayed science as selecting its theories and hypotheses by neutrally testing them against objective, universal, eternal, passive nature; and the same with theories of technology development as evolutionary progress towards some objective functional optimum. Studying the practices of science, STS scholars reconstructed technoscience as a specific mode of shaping collective orders that works via the laboratory, where new, theoretically ordered realities are experimentally constructed in "secluded research," within the confines of an artificially simplified microcosm and among a select group of trained experts (Hacking, 1992;

Callon et al., 2009). Scientific claims gain authority by being publicly presented as discoveries of independently and universally given objective orders, as *representations of nature* rather than specific manmade constructions of reality. These claims are then more readily accepted as facts and undergird projects to use constructed effects technologically by replicating laboratory-realities elsewhere. Science is therefore performative in the sense that it contributes to creating the realities it represents (Latour, 1987; Pickering, 1994; Callon, 2007, 2010). Scientific accounts become true, also beyond the laboratory, when they are taken up for the definition of social problems and action strategies, and when they provide blueprints for technologically reconfiguring the world. So, more and more actors may become enrolled for replicating and expanding the artificial reality of the laboratory (Latour, 1983). Rather vague and speculative initial conceptions of order thus are gradually materialized, built up and expanded into a kind of ordered reality. The STS turn to practices has thus shown that instead of selecting theories against nature, the sciences experimentally work towards ordering nature and thereby realizing theories.

From within STS, the approach of reconstructing functionally rationalized and purified accounts of science by looking into practices has over the last decades been extended to other key institutions of modern societies, like politics and art. Political practices, for example, have been reconstructed as performatively representing collective subjects and their interests in processes of "group-making" (Latour, 2003; 2013, pp. 134–136 and 327–356; Disch, 2008, 2010, 2011). Rather than neutrally mirroring a given reality of collective subjectivities and interests, "representative claims" are studied for how they creatively invoke and shape the groups, constituencies, and broader polities that they claim to represent (Saward, 2006). This view has inspired a new constructivist theory of political representation (Disch et al., 2019).

In the same vein, artistic practices have been reconstructed with concepts from STS as a specific way of experimentally constructing prototypes, visions or scenarios of alternative realities that are performative with respect to sensory experiences and affective relations (Thévenot, 2014; Surmann, 2015; Kanngieser, 2016; Rigamonti, 2022). Artistic practices draw people's attention to their works by implicitly claiming to represent an intensity of experience that is valuable also to their audiences and generally relevant as a way to become humanly alive (Dewey, 2005 [1934]; Becker, 1982, pp. 352–365; Gisler & Shehu, 2017). If audiences then attend to and participate in works of art, and open up themselves to be affected, what they are actually participating in is the co-creation of intense sensory experiences and receiving a feeling of being alive (Berleant, 1970; Joy & Sherry, 2003). Like this, artistic practices engage with and shape collective orders by planting desires and aesthetic predilections into human bodies.

Beginning with science, STS thus has opened a broader agenda of exploring various practices of experimentation for their performativity, that is for bringing about

the world that they investigate, probe, and describe (Marres et al., 2018; Lezaun et al., 2016). Politics and art, like science, generate a specific power and authority by performatively representing some "source beyond or above" (Arendt, 1958, 83). In science and technology, it is objective reality and functionality. In politics, it is collective subjectivity, will, and interest. In art, it is intense experience and the feeling of being humanly alive. Invoking these transcendental unities empowers these practices to draw attention and draw agents into following, who then, by aligning their orientation and activities, contribute to realizing that unity and make its representation true, if only *ex post*.

In the following section, we outline an approach that brings together the three strands of research as reviewed here. We combine elements from them for articulating a praxeological analytics of aesthetics and politics in which they feature as specific practices of world-making, one engaging with orders of sensing and feeling, the other with culturally established group identities.

4. A PRAXEOLOGICAL ANALYTICS

The core challenge in articulating a praxeological approach to study how aesthetics and politics intertwine is to conceptualize such practices broadly enough to capture a wide variety of empirical patterns, on the one hand, also those beyond the historically specific modern institutions of autonomous art and liberal-democratic nation states. On the other, however, aesthetic and political practices equally need to be conceptualized narrowly enough to discern them empirically and analyze the specific patterns in which they intertwine and co-produce collective orders. Our approach for articulating such a generic but at the same time incisive conception is to start from the specific effects that each of these practices produces. From there we can empirically trace what is actually being done, and how, in order to produce said effects. This is where we can study in detail the various different ways in which empirically specific aesthetic and political practices are configured, how they are embedded in broader material-cultural contexts, and how specifically they work together in the shaping of collective orders.

It is the evocation and shaping of sensory experiences and affects that we take to be specific effect of aesthetic practices, and the evocation and shaping of collective subjectivities and agencies that we take to be the specific effect of political practices. Analyzing aesthetic and political practices then is a matter of reconstructing the doings that produce such effects.

We should note, however, that our interest lies in studying how aesthetics and politics intertwine in the shaping of collective orders. It is not the habitualized doing of certain sensory experiences and collective subjectivities that we are after, but rather specifically those practices that reflexively engage with and shape collective

sensing and willing. We are after the ways by which sensing and willing are actively evoked and modulated. We set out to find and reconstruct the doings that reflexively engage with sensory experiences and collective subjectivities to modify and shape the ways we sensorily relate to each other and to the world and to the ways we understand ourselves collectively and, the recursive level, individually, too.

4.1 Practices

But what are such doings, activities, or practices that shape sensory experiences and collective subjectivities? In order to empirically reconstruct and analyze them, we turn to generic theorizations of such practices as sensitizing concepts (Bowen, 2006; Hillebrandt, 2014).

Practice theory is helpful in our endeavor because it suggests that how we sense, experience, and think is not a property of an individual human being, nor of encompassing social structures, but that it is in fact a property belonging to specific practices in which humans participate. We then train our minded bodies and our embodied minds in specific ways, and thereby develop sensory capabilities and subjectivities in relation to discourses and materialities.

Practice theory takes practices to be the basic constituting units of social life (Theodore R. Schatzki et al., 2001). Practices can generally be conceptualized as patterned ways of doing something, consisting in relations of human bodies (with certain incorporated experiences, skills, and predilections), meanings (discursively constructed knowledge, definitions, framings, norms, and values), and materialities (both designed artefacts and architecture as well as 'natural' materiality) (Reckwitz, 2010, pp. 190–192; Shove et al., 2012).

Compared to alternative accounts of social life, such as action theory and phenomenology, practice studies decenter the intentional individual as a source of patterned social activities. Instead, they presume that practices are relationally constituted by heterogeneous elements. Recursive relations between human bodies, meanings, and materialities grant practices a life of their own. This generates patterns of doing with a certain continuity, but no determination (Schäfer, 2016).

As dynamic compounds in themselves, the practices are the ones recruiting individual human bodies into their processual logic and shape human sensitivities and subjectivities as well as our capacities for reflexive action (Foucault, 1982; Butler, 1988; Reckwitz, 2004; Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2016, 2017). Sensing and thinking are then features of practices more than of individual human beings, they emerge only in relation with discourses and materialities.

In contrast to biological and psychological theories, and the methodologically individualist social sciences that build on them, practice theory does not assume the senses to work as fixed transmitters of information from the environment to

the body (Reckwitz, 2016; for an early critique of the psychological model see Dewey, 1896). Rather, specific ways of sensing are part of specific practices.

The same goes for consciousness and subjectivity. Departing from Descartes, the "*cogito*" is not assumed to be a given core of human existence, but it is studied as a result of bodies participating in practices: Subjectivity is continuously being shaped in relation to discursively constructed meaning and interaction with material settings and artefacts, and with other bodies enacting culturally established conceptions of the human self.

This praxeological conception of sensing and willing allows us understand and study them not as internal, proper, and private to individual human beings but indeed as a feature of heterogeneous relations, or specific patterns of those relations that constitute specific kinds of sensing collectives.

Wider patterns of collective life, or what in other accounts is referred to as social formations or structures, is in the praxeological approach conceptualized as networks or webs of practices (Theodore R Schatzki, 2015; Hui et al., 2016; Everts, 2016). Linkages between practices exist in the dimension of people, discourses, and materialities, i.e., human bodies circulating between various different practices, symbols, and concepts being used and worked at in the context of different practices, as well as material devices and infrastructures supporting several practices at once (Shove et al., 2012). Such broader complexes of connected practices make up specific kinds of cultures performing their own realities (also in terms of ontological worldviews). They are variously conceptualized as specifically patterned material-semiotic relations and actor-networks (Mol, 2002; Law, 2009), as practice-discourse formations (Reckwitz, 2008) or, in the tradition of Foucault and Deleuze as heterogeneous assemblages, agencements, dispositives or apparatuses (Collier & Ong, 2005; DeLanda, 2006; Venn, 2006; Phillips, 2006; Barad, 2007; Legg, 2011; Nail, 2017; Scheffer, 2021).

Against this background for a basic conception of practices, we can now move to conceptualize aesthetic and political practices as specific kinds that are marked by the effects they produce.

4.2 Aesthetic practices

We suggest conceptualizing aesthetic practices as those that induce and shape sensory experiences and affects. They modulate collective ways of sensing and feeling. While specific ways of sensing are part of any practice (such as seeing and listening are part of the practice of crossing the street), we refer to those that reflexively attend to sensing and are oriented towards evoking and creatively shaping sensory experiences as specifically aesthetic, namely "sense perceptions not embodied in instrumental or normative practice, but rather performed for the sake of their affective

effects on the subject" (Reckwitz, 2016, p. 64; 2015, pp. 21–31; Dewey, 2005 [1934]; Teil & Hennion, 2004; Hennion, 2015).

This still comprises a broad range of activities, such as going for a walk through the woods, creating and exhibiting a painting, designing a website, or choreographing a street rally. In this broad and generic sense, aesthetic practices are not limited to art; they are part of everyday life and may occur in a variety of professional contexts. The dedicated evocation and shaping of sensory experiences and affects are furthermore part of home furnishing, celebratory rituals, corporate design and marketing, political speeches and campaigns, science communication, etc. Taken together then, we look for instances where sensory experiences and affects are reflexively and creatively being engaged with. From there we trace and reconstruct the specific ways in which this is done.

4.3 Political practices

Political practices, symmetrically, can be understood as those that induce and shape collective subjectivities and agency. They modulate collective identity, will, values, and interests that mobilize collective agency and legitimate norms. Often, the notion of politics is used more broadly to mark any activity of shaping collective orders (Mannheim, 1995 [1929]; Nash, 2001) or wherever programs to do so come in conflict with each other (Barry, 2012; Brown, 2015) or whenever distributional issues are at stake (Lasswell, 1936). A much narrower conception of politics, on the other hand, concentrates on making collectively binding decisions through the institutions of the state (Weber, 1992 [1919]; Easton, 1979 [1967]). We suggest a middle way between broadening out to include almost everything as politics and narrowing down to only very specific forms of institutional state politics.

At the core of our conception to study political practices here is the reflexive engagement with the ways people bond into groups to construct a collective identity as part of a 'we' with a common will, values, and interests (Alkemeyer & Bröckling, 2018; Delitz, 2018). Speaking and acting with reference to or on behalf of such a collective subjectivity can generate political authority. This specific form of power legitimates demanding actions and allows them to be aligned to realize collective goals or behavior to be regulated by collective norms (Bourdieu, 1985). The formation of such collective subjectivities is not naturally given, however (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000); there could as well be heterogeneous and diverging, singular, and idiosyncratic subjectivities that would never act jointly or approve of a common good. Such a 'we' thus needs to be performed, appearing rather as a fascinating and continuously ongoing cultural achievement (Latour, 2003). We therefore propose to take the evocation and modulation of collective subjectivities—the construction of a common will—to be the root of political action and the specific fulcrum for how political practices leverage processes of collective ordering.

As such, however, political practices are not merely tools for state governance but are, indeed, also available to companies, professional teams, scientific communities, neighborhoods, families, collectives—and just among friends going out and quarrelling over questions of what *we* want (to do, to eat, to see, to demand, etc.). Looking out for political practices may focus on the articulation of "representative claims" on behalf of some collective identity, will, value or interest (Saward, 2006), and how they are used to mobilize agency and legitimize norms (Disch, 2011).

4.4 The intertwining of aesthetic and political practices

With a more precise understanding of aesthetic and political practices, we may have a fine-grained look at the various ways in which they intertwine. We are particularly interested in how their interplay, be it convergent or conflicting, becomes effective in ongoing processes of collective ordering.

What the specific kinds of collective orders are that they jointly contribute to uphold or renew may vary from case to case. The chapters of this book discuss how they intertwine in governing and innovating colonial relations of power, techno-capitalism, technological infrastructures, consumer culture, urban living, relations with the environment, taste and ways of eating, political culture, populist discourse, gender relations, protest culture, and even scholarly conferencing.

Analyzing the intertwining of practices goes beyond viewing the relation of aesthetics and politics as an interaction through an exchange of their ready-made products, for example, when governments use works of art for public relations or when art thrives on state protection and funding. The praxeological approach instead reveals the entanglement of aesthetic and political practices in the making. This may be connections within the medium of people, symbols, or materialities themselves being part of both aesthetic and political practices. Or aesthetics and politics may integrate each other's effects for their very constitution and productivity. Political mobilization, for example, may work with the creation of sensory attention and affects (e.g., protest songs or national anthems). And aesthetic projects may work with the creation of collective will and agency (e.g., public interventions, flash mobs, large-scale artworks, theater, film, architecture). The practice turn allows us to zoom in on various specific ways in which aesthetics and politics are constitutively intertwined—not only how they interact, but also how they imply and co-constitute each other.

5. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

The book explores how fruitful a practice-oriented approach can be. We hope to learn from case studies that trace specific forms of aesthetic and political practices and

how they jointly contribute to the shaping of collective orders. This, we expect, can contribute a novel approach to studies of governance and innovation, one that goes beyond the usual focus on institutional, discursive, and cognitive dimensions of collective ordering. What results should be sensitive to the fabrication of sensation, feeling, will, and agency.

Contributions to this volume provide detailed accounts of how dedicated engagement with collective ways of sensing is intertwined and co-productive with the reflexive work at collective ways of self-understanding, willing, and acting. The authors take up the challenge to explicate aesthetic and political practices in how they are related and work together on specific forms of collective orders. In the remainder of this introduction, we first give an overview of each chapter and then tabulate the aesthetic and political practices that jointly contribute to either governance, that is, stabilize a dominant order, or those that jointly contribute to innovation, that is, nurture new alternatives.

We have sorted the chapters by this rough classification in terms of whether they focus their analysis on the aesthetic and political dimensions of some dominant order (governance) or of some disrupting and renewing engagement with a dominant order (innovation). Interestingly, though, all chapters also include accounts of the respective other side: Analyses of dominant orders also point out how they are contested and renewed. And analyses of disrupting and renewing engagements also take a look at the background of established orders against which that happens or at the building and stabilization of new orders as part of a struggle against the old ones. The clusters in which we present them, one on governance, the other on innovation, therefore fold into each other. Every chapter also contains a part that belongs to the other grouping. We start each part with a chapter opening-up a broader conceptual orientation, either focused on dominant collective orders (to be reflexively broken by creative interventions) or focused on the reflexive renewal of orders (by way of experimentally nurturing alternatives into being).

5.1 Aesthetic governance – and reflexive engagements with it

Sophia Prinz in her chapter *Re-designing the Sensory Order: Forms, Practices, and Perception* provides a conception of sensory orders as "topologies of form" based on the Foucauldian concept of orders of discourse developed by Merleau Ponty. She uses this conception to reconstruct the case of Italian architect Lina Bo Bardi taking up the task to design a museum of modern art in Salvador de Bahia by making it a museum of Afro-Brazilian popular culture, thereby critically engaging with hegemonic Western cultures of modernity and exposing creative work of the local population as form of modern art in its own right. Aesthetic practices here appear as Bo Bardi's reflexive dialogue both with Western sensory orders and with the self-developed topology of forms of the local people, by sensorily engaging with it, learning it, and interactively

nurturing its development in the museum. They are closely entangled with political practices of articulating and empowering an autonomous collective subjectivity of the Afro-Brazilian people with its own aesthetics, not subordinate but equivalent to allegedly global standards of Western culture. Prinz shows how aesthetic practices of reflexively engaging with sensory orders and political practices of engaging with collective subjectivities are closely entangled in such ventures of "critical design" or "design from below."

Jonathan Luke Austin and *Anna Leander* in their chapter *Escape, Erase, Entangle: Three Aesthetic Regimes Re-composing the Californian Ideology* engage with how corporations from the Silicon Valley seek to govern the affective qualities of their new digital technologies. They study how Google, Tesla, and co. "ignite our senses," "make us feel" and create "resonance" for their products. They distinguish three "aesthetic regimes" appealing to specific subjectivities: "Escape" offers an aesthetics of salvation beyond mundane human life on Earth. "Erase" scrubs new technological developments from visibility by making them disappear or appear to be natural and traditional. "Entangle" aesthetically links into accustomed styles, fashions, and practices of the everyday, strategically suggesting intractability. For engaging with the aesthetic politics of techno-capitalism, they propose that "the fissures and frictions generated by this overlaying of aesthetic regimes are also helpful" as they "become indicators of possible openings for political agency and change. Driving a wedge into the cracks might widen these openings and so pave the way for responsible and reflective re-workings the of contemporary technological aesthetics and their politics."

Nona Schulte-Römer in her chapter *Sensory Governance: Managing the Public Sense of Light and Water* investigates how the sensing of technical infrastructures is managed by experts. They seek to "make public infrastructures as unobtrusive as possible, up to the point where they get literally removed from the public eye." By nature of their being below surface, the aesthetics of infrastructures entail "inattentional blindness" also strategically furthered by their managers. But, in the wake of changes to address sustainability, the aesthetics of new functions are bringing these structures to the surface (e.g., warmth LED vs. old fashioned gas lighting). Engaging in sensory politics activists pursue tactics of nurturing alternative ways of seeing or smelling infrastructural systems (Marcel de Certeau). Unanticipated publics then arise around—literally—"sensitive issues" opening up "sensory controversies." Often, the new publics stand in the way of progress in terms of sustainability. "Sensory governance" is the term and concept that Schulte-Römer gives to the expert's challenge. Beyond the visual and olfactory qualities, they must manage the affects that infrastructures give rise to and do so by exerting control over the perception of the objects under their care, trying to make innovations palatable. The chapter cautions, however, against objectifying "average perceptions" and instead calls for reflexivity towards the situatedness of sensory experience.

Susan C. Stewart in her chapter *Packaging Pleasures: Design, Play, and Consumer Change* explores the sensory and affective qualities of ecologically harmful packaging and discusses the difficulties society faces in stepping out of this trajectory. She investigates how bodily habit and sensory reward reinforce the hegemonic dominance of single-use plastics. It is the playful affect they induce in consumers that makes them seemingly indispensable, beyond keeping crisps crisp. The chapter conceptualizes wrappers as affect generators (Andreas Reckwitz) and problematizes that "[o]ur interactions with disposable packaging trigger deep-seated pleasures that inhere within the sensing collectives of our fast-paced consumer worlds." The analysis works with widely circulated "unboxing" videos as evidence of human's fascination with packaging and with a typology of different forms of play (Roger Caillois). Stewart calls for designers of reusable packaging to harness dynamics of play to leverage aesthetic practices to break the hold that plastics have and shift practices of consumption by "redirect[ing] such euphoria to the powerful exercise of restraint."

Miguel Paredes Maldonado in his chapter *Hegemonic Sensory Practices of the Smart City and a Collective Remaking of Data-based Urban Commons* analyzes how the collective sensing of city dwellers is governed through smart city projects and presents an experiment to 'hack' the standardizing aesthetics of computational measurements. His starting point is that "bodily embedded sensory practices in the city—and the sensory orders they give rise to—are gradually being displaced by digitally mediated forms of 'sensing' which are, in turn, predicated on our interactions with a range of dynamic data … These digitally mediated practices of sensing follow a particular set of computational logics that change the sensory orders that regulate collective life in the city. … [B]y changing the ways in which people move about in the city, smart cities and platform labor applications also affect how people performatively represent the 'polis' as a collective subject." He points out that the problem of cybernetics is its emphasis on stasis, and the hegemonic order that prevails in such systems today is heavily weighted towards maximizing commercial outputs over all others. "This calls into question the agency of individual citizens, neighborhood communities, grassroots platforms and other non-hegemonic stakeholders in the city." Paredes describes in great detail how this works and proposes a counter practice developed as part of his own academic work. By co-opting the cybernetic paradigm with the aesthetic practices of urban hacking, critical making and play, his experiments offer new ways to perceive and diversify the smart city.

Hanna Husberg and *Agata Marzecová* in their chapter *We Thought It Was Fog, We Thought It Was Just Some Weather: Sensing, Datafication and Governance of Urban Air Pollution* undertake a partly artistic, partly analytical reconstruction of how collective sensing of the environment in Beijing is governed through scientific measurements and smart devices. China's response to the 2013 "Airpocalypse" was to ultimately provide air quality data to their citizens. Through fieldnotes and interviews, Husberg

and Marzecová explore how this established a relation with air as "a new arena of care and calculation." Due to the invisibility of air and the fineness of pollutants, sensing its qualities has become as much a matter of technological data collection as breathing it in. Technologically mediated sensing and interpretation of air qualities complements embodied sensing and affective qualities of the air. And this entails a new form governance. It centralizes the ways people perceive and relate with the environment. Withholding or releasing data and sending out recommendations on how to behave, go out or not, wear a mask or not, stay or move away—all this replaces individual sensing and sense-making. Like the cybernetics of smart cities, this management of people's perceptions and movements reduces their agency and inhibits collective action. What Husberg and Marzecová seek to revitalize with their artistic research is a countervailing embodied experience.

5.2 Aesthetic innovation – and collective re-ordering

Antoine Hennion's chapter *How to Better Sense What is Happening? A Political Lesson from Taste and Tasting* opens the second grouping of studies focusing on the innovative potential of aesthetic and political practices. Hennion revitalizes the pragmatist conception of a mutual constitution of objects and subjects in processes of experimental inquiry. Tasting then is a way of sensory attending and affectively opening-up to how things happen while experimentally modulating the relations of heterogeneous elements that jointly constitute the thing and how it is experienced. The practices of amateurs like music or wine lovers serve as an example of the aesthetic approach to the world. The chapter develops this conceptually, first as a combination of semiology with actor-network theory to "let objects speak," and then a combination of actor-network theory with pragmatism to "let tasters listen to and interact with objects." Hennion explores various semantic expressions to capture tasting as a practice of "putting oneself actively in states where the objective is not the control of things, but on the contrary a kind of deliberate loss of control, in order to give things back their hand, and in return to be able to rely on their reactions to increase their virtues …" With regard to politics he asks: "Is there a more political stance today than to collectively elaborate our ability to better catch and support the propensity of things? Isn't politics, too, an art of making agents and things exist more?" This would then be a shared orientation for invigorating aesthetic and political practice alike: "to get more sensitive to things in process of making."

The chapter *Provoking Taste: Experimenting with New Ways of Sensing* by *Jan-Peter Voß, Michael Guggenheim, Nora Rigamonti, Aline Haulsen*, and *Max Söding* picks up and works with Antoine Hennion's pragmatist conception of taste. They report on an exhibition offering an experimental setting for participants to playfully explore the possibility of shaping their own taste experiences by modulating selected elements of an eating situation—not only the food but also elements like memories, fram-

ings, body schemes, and atmospheres. They position their project against a diagnosis that the sensory sciences, together with corporate marketing, cultivate an industrialized order of sensing. Gustatory taste is another sense that has undergone industrial standardization and conformity. Can the bonds on our buds be loosened? The exhibition was itself an experiment at giving agency on their own tasting back to the eaters. The chapter describes the design, realization, and effects of this experiment. The authors analyze their undertaking in terms of aesthetic practices, reflexively engaging with sensory experiences of eating by configuring the experimental situation, and in terms of political practices, in a wide sense of problematizing and attempting to re-make collective orders of eating, and in more specific sense of proposing a new collective subjectivity of creative tasting.

Frederike Landau-Donnelly in her chapter *The Beauty of Feeling: On the Affective Politics of Sensing Collectives* investigates how the German art collective Center for Political Beauty (ZPS) articulates a specific collective subjectivity of those who long for politics to become affectively more intense. She focuses on a performance titled "*Thesenanschlag*" where activists on horseback nailed "10 theses for political beauty" to the door of the German parliament. "*Thesenanschlag*" is a German term with a dual meaning. It harks back to Martin Luther's posting of his theses on the church door, which incited the Reformation. But it also translates to "an assault with theses," presumably on the kind of politics practiced within the institutions of the German state. Their "10 theses for political beauty" sought to instigate a new kind of "affective politics" (Brigitte Bargetz). Landau-Donnelly undertakes a "poetic analysis" (Jacques Derrida) of how collectivity is invoked in those theses. This entails the composition of a commentary that is itself written as a poem expressing the affective responses from reading the theses. She reconstructs how ZPS invokes a 'we' that knows and feels the "idea(l) of political beauty as innate to a fairly generalized humankind." Yet, "[w]hile 'the human' as subject and carrier of political beauty is not further specified, the latent understanding of agency and subjectivity developed throughout remains rather individualistic, disembodied, abstract… Crucially, 'we' gain no insight into how 'we' can find to each other in the unstillable longing for other politics." Her analysis questions the universality of such collectivity claims and indeed the extent to which longing is open-ended—an "affective perpetuum mobile"—unmoored from specific issues and matters at hand that normally serve to mobilize.

Sebastian Sommer's contribution *"Wir sind das Volk!" – How the PEGIDA Demonstrations Aesthetically Practice an Exclusive Collective Identity* studies aesthetic practices as constitutive of the German right-wing movement Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of Occident (PEGIDA). He employs methods of performance analysis from theater studies to articulate, through his own bodily sensations as participant observer, how the choreography of street rallies in Dresden invoked a united collective subjectivity and its entitlement to hegemony. He positions this case against the background of Occupy Wall Street as an oft-discussed example of protest ac-

tions operating aesthetically while at the same time politically performing a specific collective subjectivity (Judith Butler, Jacques Rancière). Politically situated very differently, PEGIDA here appears as a movement that, by similar means, performs a very different collective subjectivity of supremacist nativism. Drawing attention to bodily and material practices of closure to the outside and purification on the inside, Sommer works out the "bio-political effects of performances … in the sense of aesthetically implementing a desired governmentality … in 'doing *Volksgemeinschaft*'." With Rancière and his distinction of "politics" (as practices of widening the democratic discourse by making unseen positions visible) and "police" (as practices of closing down arguments by barring unwanted groups), Sommer makes us reflect how and to what extent they are at work in PEGIDA performances.

The chapter *Digital Violence as Affective Disciplining after Feminist Protests: The Case of #NotLikeThatLadies* by *Marcela Suarez* and *Mirjana Mitrović* focuses on affective mobilizations as renewed ways of protesting to resist sexual police violence. Approaching affects as constitutive practices of any social order (Andreas Reckwitz), Suarez and Mitrović analyze these affective practices in political protests as both a site of resistance and an arena for disciplining. Through feminist protests carried out in Mexico City in 2019 to resist sexual police violence, they stress the ways in which fury, anger, and despair were mobilized to create shared ways of sensing and being affected by gender violence, for example, by painting graffiti with the slogan *#Feminicidestate* in historical monuments. They argue that the intertwining of these affects and the political practices transgressed the patriarchal hegemonic imaginary of how women should protest and what kind of affects they are allowed to bring into public spaces. The response to the protests in social networks resulted in practices of disciplining the women's affects, as protesters were the target of thousands of misogynic comments. They were also condemned as violent and dehumanized as irrational. Thus, the authors trace both the arc of affective politics that offer new repertories for doing feminist politics and the inevitable backlash to reestablish a pre-existing order through affect disciplining.

Rose Beermann in her chapter *Performing Disruptions: A Bodily Encounter with Misogyny in Lifestyle Television* presents a reflection on a dance performance as a "non-discursive, bodily critique" of a sexist TV show. The tackled TV show featured two men sitting on a sofa who casually assess the sex appeal of naked women presented to them in the glow of a spotlight, misogyny in talk-show format. Beermann describes autoethnographically how she had conceptualized, choreographed, and performed a dance performance to problematize the conception of women in this show: "With our bodies as a central means of expression, we wanted the audience to feel our critique… [W]e were looking for a resistant performance of femininity that might allow us to counter the male flow of speech." She reflects on how the critical reenactment actually worked, aesthetically and politically; that is, in how far intended sensory experiences and collective (dis)identifications were invoked in the audience. A

key moment was when she realized that the first approach of exposing the objectification of women by simply reenacting the show did not have the desired effect of causing irritations. Beermann ascribes this to an established "affective economy" (Sara Ahmed) in which seeing women as sex objects has become so natural that it doesn't even evoke strange feelings: "In light of my experience as a performer standing naked in front of an audience, I would like to ask: How can I renegotiate the way I want to be perceived? In my experience, the idea of reenactment has limits for establishing another bodily reality. If the affective economies in which the source material is embedded are very powerful and efficient, it is not easy to find gaps for subverting ways of sensory perception." A second approach then was to go beyond caricatural exposure and "not provide emotional clarity" but instead astonishment and confusion by "underperformance" (Lauren Berlant) and letting the performing bodies gradually slip out of their role as sex objects, avert habitualized ways of sensing by taking on strange forms, and gradually take on agency and become willing subjects. She concludes that "performance is a valuable research space to explore the preconditions for being together as a sensing collective."

The chapter *Sensing Collectives as Sensing Selves: Two Artistic Interventions & Two Theories of the Self* by *Jacob Watson* recounts two artistic interventions that were invited to the workshop that served as the basis for this book, making palatable some of the ideas on the agenda: Firstly, Vanessa Farfán's talk on "Collateral Aesthetics" about her experiences in China unintentionally inciting gatherings with her artwork that were deemed potential political agitation. She illustrated her talk with a demonstration for workshop participants to feel the tension of population density vs. personal space. The other intervention by Markus Binner made up the workshop lunchbreak in which all participants took on various roles—sometimes counteractive—to prepare a shared lunch in his "Bitter Mass Cooking" experiment. To make sense and give a sense of what it was like to be part of these two sensing collectives within the scholarly workshop setting, Watson gives a personalized account of his sensory experience as a participant. Using his background in philosophy he analyzes the "self" of a sensing collective as the site of either bundles of sense experiences or an embodied amalgam of will, resistance, and effort, or indeed both.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This book is an opening move, a first foray into a field that stretches out if we look at processes of collective ordering with a view to the intertwining of aesthetic and political practices. In that sense, there is nothing to conclude, but everything emerging from here will be welcomed. We did say, however, that we had set out to assemble contributions in this book in order to explore patterns that may become discernible. This is what we, admittedly very briefly, take up here to conclude. Very briefly only

because we do not want to take the analytical evaluation of our explorative case studies too far. They take different approaches and their results cannot adequately be synthesized and escalated too far. Plus, we do not want to close down studies of aesthetic and political practices by impetuously articulating ideal types of patterns and effects, but we, first of all, wish to encourage more open exploration.

Even our small and rather arbitrarily composed sample of cases shows that in the dimensions of both sensing and willing, collective orders are by no means 'natural' or 'accidental.' They are always also reflexively being worked at by embodied human (and non-human) agents, either for building and stabilizing or for disrupting and renewing through engagement in aesthetic and political practices.

In the case studies, we find very different kinds of collective orders engaged with for a wide range of concerns. These are: established orders of (dis-)appreciating diverse cultures and their art styles (Prinz), orders of digitalized techno-capitalism (Austin & Leander), technological infrastructures (Schulte-Römer), commercial packaging (Stewart), smart city management (Paredes), digital sensing of environmental pollution (Husberg & Marcecova), ontological attitudes and ways of relating with the world (Hennion), the tasting of food (Voß et al.), styles of doing politics (Landau-Donnelly), hegemonic political discourse (Sommer), gendered publics and protest culture (Suarez & Mitrović), sexism in popular media culture (Beermann), and the emerging collective order at our own sensing collectives research workshop as shaped by artistic demonstrations (Watson).

The case studies show that both governance and innovation entail the intertwining of specific aesthetic and political practices. We find both kinds jointly stabilizing established and hegemonic forms of governance as well as bringing forward emerging and emancipatory innovations—and often in concert. This thrusts aside the widespread expectation that aesthetic practices are always concerned with disrupting and renewing orders whereas political practices with building and stabilizing them. Even if some case studies start from an interest in stabilizing some collective order and others from their renewal, each study elaborates how efforts at governing and innovating are indeed very closely related. Governance practices often engender their own practices of contestation and renewal, just like innovation practices involve efforts at building and stabilizing new and alternative orders. Table 1 outlines, in a very tapered way, the stabilizing aesthetic and political practices described in each chapter, and the renewing aesthetic and political practices.

Table 1: Chapter overview with specific aesthetic and political practices in governing and innovating collective orders

Author(s)	Governance (established and dominant ordering)		Innovation (new and alternative ordering)	
	Aesthetic practices	Political practices	Aesthetic practices	Political practices
Prinz	Status quo of exclusively appreciating Western modern art as fine art	Elevate Western modernity to a universal standard of civilization	Design from below, nurture and exhibit the specific " topology of forms" of Afro-Brazilian popular culture	Articulate unique Afro-Brazilian collective subjectivity by exhibiting their own modern art
Austin & Leander	Unfurl "aesthetic regimes" of escape/ erase/engage to promote Californian Ideology	Invoke collective subjectivities of nihilism/ conservatism/ commonness in support of corporate strategies	Reflexively and responsibly re-work contemporary technological aesthetics	Mobilize agency against unfettered dynamics of digitalized techno-capitalism
Schulte-Römer	Manage sensory (im)perceptibil-ity of technological infrastructures	Secure public acceptance of technological infrastructures	Bring sensory qualities of infrastructures into perception (brightness of LED lights, impurity of water)	Mobilize resistance against strategies of managing technological infrastructures

Stewart	Design, advertisement, and playful engagement with plastic packaging	Mobilize consumption communities around "unboxing" and joy of rustling	Play-oriented design of reusable packages	Mobilize sustainable consumption communities
Paredes	Digitally sense, represent, and regulate movement in the Smart City	Smart City management performs a collective of "cybernetic selves"	Hack digital sensing tools for counter-mapping collective life in the city	Articulate collective subjectivity of city dwellers as autonomous and creative agents
Husberg & Marzecová	Digitally sense environmental pollution through mobile apps	"Algorithmic governance" performs a collective of centrally steered individual automata	Express human bodily experiences and feelings in relation with environmental pollution and app-data	Articulate collective subjectivity of bodily sensing and affectively communicating human agents
Hennion	Experience objects as static, passive, and independent of human subjectivity	Articulate collective subjectivity of humans detached from objects	Engage in tasting as letting things happen and allowing selves to transform in affective interaction with them	Articulate collective subjectivity of pragmatist experimental savorers (lovers/amateurs)
Voß, Guggenheim, Rigamonti, Haulsen & Söding	Practice the tasting of food as determined by given object and subject qualities (industrialized sensing)	Perform collective subjectivity of eaters seeking the optimal food	Practice tasting as experimental re-assembling of heterogeneous elements of an eating situation	Perform collective subjectivity of eaters creatively shaping situated ways of tasting

Landau-Donnelly	Do politics as soberly and unemotionally assessing and deliberating costs and benefits of options	Perform collective subjectivity of reasonable and realistic members of the polity	Do politics as poetically invoking humanist values and dramatically exposing their breaching	Articulate a longing for political beauty, for passionate and affective ways of doing politics
Sommer	Perform mainstream liberal attitudes of openness, tolerance, and diversity	Articulate collective subjectivity of all-embracing cosmopolitanism	Choreograph street rallies of nationalist-authoritative PEGIDA movement to create "echo chambers" as spaces of felt hegemony	Perform a collective subjectivity of "we, the people" as homogeneous, unified, and powerful
Suárez & Mitrović	Women feel abashed and duck away when falling victim to sexual abuse or they unemotionally claim their objective rights	Perform collective subjectivity of civilized members of a state of law ignoring patriarchal biases	Express rage in street protest, break the image of "good girls"	Perform collective subjectivity of women as hurt, upset, and able to put up a fight against sexual violence
Beermann	Sexual objectification of women in the "masculine gaze," celebrated in a TV show	Perform dual collective subjectivity of active male deciders and passive female bio-material	"Underperform" the female role model, subvert the "affective economy" by weird, maverick, and willful movements and by taking voice in a theatrical re-enactment of TV show	Perform collective subjectivity of women resisting sexual objectification, demanding recognition as interactive subjects

Watson, Farfán & Binner	Present and discuss papers with PowerPoint projections on a screen in front of rows of chairs	Perform collective subjectivity of competent academics and intellectuals	Stand up and move around to bodily enact the population density of Beijing and to interactively cook a lunch menu	Perform a collective subjectivity of flesh and blood human bodies interactively exploring a possible situational "we"

In order to further the analytical evaluation of our sample of case studies, we could characterize specific types of aesthetic-political shaping practices with labels like "critical design/design from below," "regimes of aesthetic marketing," "sensory governance and its contestation," "affective design," "hacking datafied sensing," "aesthetic ethnography of digital sensing," "making and feeling things happen," "experimental eating and tasting," "artistic activism for affective politics," "choreography of protest," "feminist protest culture," "feminist theater," "participatory art." This would, perhaps, also be a first step towards articulating more abstract patterns of aesthetic-political governance and innovation in conceptual terms.

Another way to comparatively analyze the case studies would be to cluster them by issues (e.g., technology, digital data, political culture, feminism), styles of engagement (e.g., design, marketing, protest, hacking, performance, experimentation), or scales of engagement (e.g., specific sites like an exhibition, a building, a place, or cities, regional infrastructure systems, national political and media cultures, global marketing strategies, foundational ontological orientations).

All such further approaches of systematically analyzing, comparing, typifying mapping patterns of intertwining are potential avenues that open up from our practice turn in studying relations of aesthetics and politics. However, we do not want to curve in here to close down the multiplicity of aesthetic and political practices and their various ways of intertwining for all too boldly designed ideal types. To do so would be premature. For now, they can be valued for unfurling a diversity of concrete forms of aesthetic and political practices, how they intertwine and jointly contribute to the shaping of collective orders—or the making of sensing collectives, as it were.

If this book is a stimulus for some of its readers to take their own go at tracing how aesthetics and politics intertwine in the shaping of collective orders, we have achieved what we intended. In that sense let's all go for *sensing collectives*—in the two senses implied by the phrase: first, conceiving of collectivity as co-constituted by ways of sensing and feeling and, second, perceiving collective orders empirically

with all our senses, by methods of sensory ethnography, artistic research, aesthetic experiments and the like, allowing us to also affectively experience what we study.

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