

Differential Imagery Experience and *Ut Pictura Poesis* in the 18th-century

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That the ability to visualise, to see with ‘the mind’s eye’, varies between individuals has been known since Francis Galton reported on the results of his ‘Breakfast Table’ questionnaire in 1880. Research in the ensuing years has supported what Galton’s surveys suggested: that the vividness of the population’s mental imagery lies across a spectrum, with small percentages at the extremes being bereft of imagery or visualising with near percept-like quality. This paper explores what impact this factor of individual psychological difference had on the literary-theoretical debate over *ut pictura poesis* — whether poetry can or should emulate painting — as it culminated in the 18th-century. After making the case for personal experience of imagery being an influencing factor on the position that critics in the period took on *ut pictura poesis*, the paper concludes by engaging with the methodological and conceptual difficulties — for the philosophy of science as much as for literary theory and history — that the line of argument produces.

KEYWORDS mental imagery, differential psychology, 18th-century British poetics, history of art, history of science, interdisciplinarity

Ut Pictura Poesis

Taken from his *Epistle to the Pisos*, Horace’s formulation ‘*ut pictura poesis*’ — ‘a poem is like a painting’ (Dorsch and Murray 2000, 108) — became a central point of contention in theories of visual and verbal art, and of their relation, from antiquity onwards. Originally a benign observation about how the two modes are best encountered, Horace’s statement came to stand for the thesis that literature, just as much as the visual or plastic arts, deals in sensory experience, and vision in particular. The parallel goes at least back to Simonides’s ‘Painting is mute poetry and poetry is a speaking picture’ (Markiewicz and Gabara 1987, 535) in the early 5th-century BC, and would go on to be re-iterated by Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero; Longinus’s 1st-century treatise *On the Sublime* emphasises the poetic power of

‘visualization (*phantasia*)’ and ‘passages in which, carried away by enthusiasm and emotion, you imagine you are actually seeing the subject of your description, and bring it before the eyes of your audience’ (Dorsch and Murray 2000, 133). When writers of the European Renaissance returned to the texts of antiquity, they tended to confirm the unity of painting and poetry, such was the generally held tenet that all media are concerned with *imitation*. Philip Sidney’s *Defence of Poesy* (1579), for example, declares poetry to be an art of ‘representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth, [not unlike a] speaking picture’ (1987, 114).

Ut Pictura Poesis Erit

Horace’s phrase was increasingly used not only to describe the condition of the arts but also, with a slight modification,¹ to *prescribe* what they *should* be. Hence Charles Alfonse Du Fresnoy’s 1667 poem *De arte graphica* combines the formulations of Horace and Simonides to run:

Ut pictura poesis erit; similisque poesi / Sit picture: refert per aemula quaque sororem,
/ Alternantque vices et nomina; muta Poesis / Dicitur haec, Pictura loquens soleat illa
vocari. [*Let poetry be like painting; and let painting resemble poetry; let them compete with
each other and exchange their tasks and names; one is called mute poetry, the other shall be
known as speaking painting.*] (trans. Markiewicz and Gabara, 537)

Indeed it is as a demand, a ‘*call* for literature to act like painting by presenting images and tableaux to the reader or listener’ (Marshall 1997, 682, my emphasis) that the *ut pictura poesis* trope was most influential.

Motives, reasons

The call, however, was not universally followed. *Ut pictura poesis* was a point of contention, rejected (for example by Leonardo da Vinci, for whom ‘the only true office of the poet is to represent the words of people talking together’ [1956, 25]) as much as it was affirmed. That it was provokes the question of what might have lead an individual to be ‘for’ or ‘against’. Why call for literature to act like painting, and why believe that it should not? What leads to a statement on the vocation of a medium? Of course, there is no single driver. But to work towards an answer, we will divide — crudely, but in the name of utility — the multiple factors into two general categories: those that divorce the text from the author and conceptualise it from the ‘outside’, as a thing impelling and impelled by other things in the world; and those that consider the text from the ‘inside’, as the product of human subject whose motivations are psychological tendencies and processes. Conventional readings of the issue in hand operate on the basis of the former; a novel understanding of it can be gained, this article will argue, by attention to the latter.

We will see how this plays out in the eighteenth century — the ‘culmination’ (Marshall 1997, 682) of the *ut pictura poesis* debate — in the cases of two authors who take opposing sides on the issue: Joseph Addison and Edmund Burke.

Addison's view

First we will look at a series of papers by poet, playwright, essayist, and Whig politician Joseph Addison on the 'Pleasures of the Imagination', published in the summer of 1712 in the *Spectator* magazine, which Addison had co-founded a year before. Along with Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) and Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), Addison's essays on the imagination constitute the foundations of English aesthetics. They argue, essentially, that art, architecture, and nature have value not in themselves but only in as much as they stimulate the imagination; that the imagination is what adds pleasure to perception, and as such, should be cultivated.

But what is Addison's position on the question of *ut pictura poesis*? *Pleasures of the Imagination* effectively upholds the principle of similitude by discoursing not on poetry but on how *poets* should be and behave. A 'noble writer', we are told, should be born with the faculty of 'imagining things' in 'its full Strength and Vigour, so as to be able to receive lively Ideas from outward Objects, to retain them long, and to range them together, upon occasion, in such Figures and Representations as are most likely to hit the Fancy of the Reader' (1945, 294). On this view, poets work less with words than with images: they 'take them in' from the world then use language to make them re-appear for the reader. Poets must not only think visually — with 'a due Relish of the works of Nature' and 'thoroughly conversant in the various scenes of a Country Life' (*ibid.*) — they should aspire to be like painters. Classical authors are celebrated as such: Virgil, for example, for having given us in his *Georgics* 'a Collection of the most delightful Landskips that can be made out of Fields and Woods, Herds of Cattle, and Swarms of Bees' (1945, 296). Ovid 'everywhere entertains us with something we never saw before', while no other poet than Milton 'could have painted [the] Scenes' of *Paradise Lost* 'in more strong and lively Colours' (*ibid.*).

For Addison, then, the greatest poets 'paint' with their words. But why should he take this view? Why hold to the paradox that poets should be adept with images — when it is manifestly words with which they operate?

External reasons

As Addison's talk of 'receiv[ing] lively Ideas from outward Objects' might suggest, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* is built on the tenets of John Locke's empiricism, as set out in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). The empiricist principle that the mind operates via images or 'Ideas', which are imprinted by perception, would come to be central to eighteenth-century theories of perception and epistemology; Addison's was the enthusiastic vanguard of its reception. One 'external' reason for the position on *ut pictura poesis* expressed by *The Pleasures of the Imagination* is simply that, as Jean Hagstrum has remarked, it is a 'combination of ancient aesthetic principle and modern scientific psychology' (1958, 150). New psychological theories, where images are paramount, meet with a tradition where images are at stake, and revitalise it.

Internal motives

The internal motive for Addison's affirmative position on *ut pictura poesis* can be found in his description of 'secondary pleasures of the imagination' — those that accompany the experience of works of art or literature, as opposed to resulting directly from the sight of natural objects. The secondary pleasures differ with the medium of representation. Although verbal description is necessarily less mimetically accurate than painting — 'for a picture bears a real resemblance to its original which letters and syllables are wholly void of' (1945, 292) — when words are 'well chosen' they can have a much greater 'force in them', to the extent that

[t]he reader finds a scene drawn in stronger colours and painted more to the life in his imagination by the help of words than by an actual survey of the scene which they describe. In this case the poet seems to get the better of nature; he takes, indeed, the landscape after her but... so enlivens the whole piece that the images which flow from objects themselves appear weak and faint in comparison of those that come from the expressions. (1945, 292)

While the relative accuracy of visual and verbal representation is a matter on which arguments can be presented, the vividness is something one can only speak personally about: 'the reader' can only be this author. That Addison experiences images so vividly when he reads poetry is, I suggest, a key reason for his affirmation of *ut pictura poesis*. Poetry *should* deal in images because it is poetry's images that are, in effect, heightened versions of the objects they represent, with 'stronger colours and painted more to the life'. In the author's experience — which is taken for the universal 'reader's' experience — this is poetry's special capacity, and by natural extension, its vocation.

We will return to Addison, and give the grounds on which such a claim can be made, after examining the contrasting case of Edmund Burke.

Burke's view

Burke's *Enquiry into the Origins of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), published nearly 50 years after Addison's *Spectator* articles,² takes quite a different view on the question of *ut pictura poesis*. Burke's view is that poetry should not try to 'paint' with words; poetry, indeed, is the medium best suited to suggesting something *beyond* sensory experience, that is, the sublime. Milton's 'judicious obscurity' (Burke 1999b, 175; note Addison's and Burke's almost opposite characterisations) epitomises it: his description of hell sidesteps evocation. In a 'universe of death', claims Burke, we have 'two ideas not presentable but by language; and an union of them great and amazing beyond conception, if they may be properly called ideas which present no distinct image to the mind' (ibid.). On this view, poetic language's peculiar power is to communicate not by bringing images 'to mind' but *emotionally*, or by what Burke calls 'sympathy'. The purpose of poetry is 'to affect rather by sympathy than imitation; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker, or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves' (1999b, 172).

What, then, leads to such a position? Why refuse the imitative capacity of poetic language, and reassert the boundary between text and images?

External reasons

We can see the separating of painting and poetry, and the concomitant refusal of 'poetic imagery', as the expression of an ideological position — one to which imagination and imagining are a threat. Thirty years after the essay on the sublime Burke would put no small part of the blame for the revolution in France on the imagination: 'There is a boundary to men's passions when they act from feeling; none when they are under the influence of imagination' (1999a, 98–99). As W J T Mitchell (1986) has pointed out, the anatomy of the sublime predicted, or at least provides the terms for, Burke's response to French 'fanaticism'. Indeed, in the earlier work, we also find the imagination leading readers astray: '[S]o little does poetry depend for its effect on the power of raising sensible images, that I am convinced it would lose a very considerable part of its energy if this were the necessary result of all description' (1999b, 170).

Internal motives

Like Addison, Burke's theory of signification is based on Locke's — at least at first. Burke begins by reiterating Locke's principle that words produce three effects in the mind of the hearer: the 'sound, the ... picture, [and] the affection of the soul produced by one or both of the foregoing' (1999b, 166). Burke, however, cannot accept the notion of a 'picture-effect'. Considering even concretely evocative words, he is convinced that their 'most general effect'

does not arise from their forming pictures of the ... things they would represent in the imagination; because on a very diligent examination of my own mind, and getting others to consider theirs, I do not find that once in twenty times any ... picture is formed, and when it is, there is most commonly a particular effort of the imagination for that purpose. (1999b, 167)

So for Burke, Locke's theory of signification is untenable because it depends on words evoking images, and as far as Burke is concerned, that simply does not happen. Even 'the most lively and spirited verbal description' of, for example, a 'palace, temple, or landscape' raises only 'a very obscure and imperfect *idea*' of those things (ibid).

Here, then, is one *internal* source of Burke's position on *ut pictura poesis*.³ Because even 'lively and spirited' sensory evocation is lost on him, Burke urges a poetry which effects without it. Indeed, the poetic language he advocates, like a 'universe of death', effects *by* being *unpicturable*, making his particular *imageless* experience of language the condition to which poetic language should aspire: 'obscurity' moved from *de*-scription to *pre*-scription.

Differential imagery experience

To contend, as we are, that these critics' views on poetry's vocation are guided by their personal experience of mental imagery, needs some grounding. What, after all, is 'imagery experience', and what does it mean to say that these critics' experiences of imagery differ? The best way to answer this is historically, by sketching out a narrative that starts with Francis Galton's study of *visualising and other allied activities*, published in *Mind* in 1880.

Galton devised a questionnaire with the intention of discovering the 'peculiarities of the mental visions of different persons'.⁴ It was distributed to friends and relatives, school children, then to 100 of Galton's male acquaintances. The questionnaire begins by asking the subjects to 'think of some definite object — suppose it is your breakfast-table as you sat down to it this morning — and consider carefully the picture that rises before your mind's eye.' They are then asked, '1. *Illumination* — Is the image dim or fairly clear? Is its brightness comparable to that of the actual scene? ... 2. *Definition* — Are all the objects pretty well defined at the same time, or is the place of sharpest definition at any one moment more contracted than it is in the real scene?' (1880, 302) Consideration proceeds to 'Colour', the 'Extent of the field of view', 'Distance of images', and 'Command over images'; further questions enquire about instances of imagery in other modalities.

The results displayed a wide variation. They ranged from one respondent who claimed 'I can see my breakfast table or any equally familiar thing with my mind's eye, quite as well in all particulars as I can do if the reality is before me', to another who admitted, 'My powers are zero. To my consciousness there is almost no association of memory with objective visual impressions. I recollect the breakfast table, but do not see it' (1880, 310).

Variation in reported imagery vividness between individuals has since been quantified using close-ended questionnaires (usually that is devised by Marks [1973]), which consistently present a 'bell curve' of normal distribution across the population (see e.g. Faw 2009, 67). But the end points of the curve — the extremes of the 'spectrum' of reported imagery vividness — identified for the first time by Galton's study, received little scientific attention until recent research proposed the names 'aphantasia' — the complete lack of visual mental imagery (Zeman *et al.* 2015) — and 'hyperphantasia' — imagery of near perception-like vividness (Zeman 2016). *Aphantasia* was suggested in a paper that reports the results of questionnaires given to some 21 individuals who had presented themselves to the researchers as never having experienced visual mental imagery. A notable finding was that the majority of the 'aphantasics' reported compensatory strengths in verbal and logical domains; furthermore, they drew on what they described as "'knowledge", "memory" and "subvisual" models' (Zeman *et al.* 2015, 379) to successfully perform tasks — e.g. 'count how many windows there are in your house or apartment' — that would normally elicit imagery. This ability to complete behavioural tasks that were thought to depend on visualisations holds significant implications for cognitive science, as it bears on a long-running controversy over whether the subjective experience of imagery is functional or epiphenomenal to cognitive performance (Pylyshyn 2003). This and other

associated features and effects of *aphantasia* — the relationships with memory, mood, personality, and so on — have inevitably impacted cultural production at the same time as they have impacted individual experience. It is the job of further historical research to explore this prospect; for the moment it is enough to state clearly what we have so far suggested: that, based on their respective statements about language's sensory effects, Addison and Burke would seem to occupy opposite ends of the 'spectrum' of normal imagery experience.

Personal is typical

Galton's 1880 study is important for us not only because it introduces the notion of *differential* imagery experience, but also because Galton's discovery *postdates* Addison and Burke setting out their theories. As William James observed in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890), until Galton's study 'it was supposed by all philosophers that there was a typical human mind which all individual minds were like, and that propositions of universal validity could be laid down about such faculties as "the Imagination"'. Galton, along with Gustav Fechner, showed the falsity of this view, and that '[t]here are imaginations, not "the Imagination", and they must be studied in detail.' (James 2000, 49–50).

It must be admitted that both Addison and Burke *acknowledge* variation in individuals' capacities. Burke recognises that senses are variable, so aesthetic responses diverge: discussing the principles of what determines beauty, he finds them 'entirely uniform', but 'the degree to which these principles prevail, in the several individuals of mankind, is altogether as different as the principles themselves are similar' (1999b, 78). And in his consideration of readers responses, Addison wonders how it is that several of them, 'who are all acquainted with the same Language, and know the Meaning of the Words they read, should nevertheless have a different Relish of the same Descriptions'. He indeed puts it down to — alongside 'the different Ideas that several Readers affix to the same Words' — the '*Perfection of the Imagination* in one more than in another'. A person of deficient imagination 'can never see distinctly all [a description's] particular Beauties', just as 'a Person with weak Sight may have the confused Prospect of a Place that lyes before him, without entering into its several Parts, or discerning the variety of Colours in their full Glory and Perfection.' (1945, 293) But while Addison acknowledges the existence of such people, he does not include himself among the spectrum of imaging abilities: it is declared as general truth, rather than personal experience, that 'the images which flow from objects themselves appear weak and faint in comparison of those that come from the expressions' (*ibid.*).

Addison and Burke would seem to be of those who assume that there is a typical human mind — namely, their own — which all individual minds are like. As Addison puts it, it is '[t]he reader' who finds described scenes appearing more vividly in his verbally stimulated imagination than in observation of the scenes themselves; for Burke, '[t]he truth is, all verbal description, ... conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described,' that descriptions must be accompanied by tricks of rhetoric for the listener to be stimulated (1999b, 168). It is Galton's study that would come to make such universal statements untenable.

Problems with introspection

Discussing the merits of Locke's theory of language, Burke admits that 'it seems to be an odd subject of dispute with any man, whether he has ideas in his mind or not' (1999b, 248). He goes on to observe the difficulty of carrying out such disputes: 'strange as it may appear, we are often at a loss to know what ideas we have of things, or whether we have any ideas at all upon some subjects' (ibid.). The suggestion anticipates the criticisms, on conceptual and methodological grounds, that would come to be made of introspective, self-reports of imagery experience such as Galton's respondents gave — and such as we are taking Addison and Burke's pronouncements to be.

These criticisms (e.g. DiVesta *et al.* 1971; Kaufmann 1981; Schwitzgebel 2002, 2011) express doubt over the possibility of assessing individual differences in vividness by verbal means alone. Besides the difficulty of rating or ranking something without the possibility of comparison, the uncertainty that Burke alludes to make verbal reports susceptible to the influence of what would come to be called 'experimental demand', when participants deliberately try to produce the results that they believe the experimenters want, regardless of the actual underlying cognitive processes involved; there is some evidence (DiVesta *et al.* 1971) to suggest that self-ratings of imagery vividness are so affected. Verbal reports of imagery experience alone, the criticism goes, cannot reliably reflect actual imagery experience. Thus Angell's (1910) early challenge to Galton stressed the importance of finding correlations between the 'subjective methods' of self-report and what he called the 'objective methods' of measurement, in which success or failure in a task depends on the nature of a subject's imagery. Without correlations, Angell argued, differences in report might be differences *only* in report, and not reflect real variation in imagery experience.

The ensuing years — outside the behaviourist hiatus on subjective experience, and particularly since the development of neuro-imaging techniques — made good on Angell's request: differences in self-reports of imagery ability have been found to predict both behavioural performance (Kosslyn *et al.* 1984; Mast and Kosslyn 2002) and brain-activity levels during mental-imagery tasks (Amedi *et al.* 2005; Cui *et al.* 2007).

This is all to say that we *can* take Addison's and Burke's pronouncements to be representative of their actual mentalities. But the question remains of *how* their mentalities could have informed their stated positions on *ut pictura poesis* — and on what basis we can claim the existence of the possibility.

Evidence of experience guiding theoretical position

Support for the claim is provided by another disagreement over images, in a seemingly quite separate context: a debate in late 20th-century cognitive science. The so-called 'analogue-propositional' debate concerned the form of mental representations, with one side, led by Steven Kosslyn, maintaining that there is a difference between imagistic and non-imagistic thinking, and the other, led by

Zenon Pylyshyn, arguing that all representations are essentially language-like propositions.

Wanting to know how people take sides in the early stages of a scientific dispute, and hypothesising that a 'pre-theoretical supposition' about the correct account, shaped by subjective experience, serves as a guide, a 2003 investigation surveyed around 200 scientists engaged in imagery research. Using Marks's (1973) Vividness of Visual Imagery Questionnaire, plus questions about theoretical views on imagery, the investigators found that their participants were indeed more inclined to believe that images have a special status in cognition if images have a special and prominent role in their own experience.

The finding gives credence to our suggestion that imagery experience guided those in a previous dispute in which imagery was at stake. Indeed, contrary to first appearances, there is a structural similarity between the two debates: both call on those involved to ascribe a value to imagery in a situation of generality, be that situation the nature of poetry or the architecture of human cognition; and, as we have seen, it is the particularity of individual experience that is a guiding factor in the ascription of that value. Historicising, we can say that for the 21st-century researchers, the finding that scientists are influenced by their pre-theoretic intuitions has significant implications for a form of knowledge production that is predicated on the exclusion of subjective biases (Reisberg *et al.* 2003). For our 18th-century aestheticians, the influence of pre-theoretic intuitions could be said to undermine the hope of a burgeoning discourse of aesthetics, which is to speak in general, universal terms and make general, universal claims about beauty and taste.

This brings us to an important issue that we have yet to take into account: the considerable space of time between Addison's *Pleasures* and Burke's *Enquiry*. It is large enough, after all, to allow external, socio-cultural changes to enter and compromise the clarity of the contrast in Addison's and Burke's attitudes to *ut pictura poesis*: can we really separate the difference between their views from how the historical episteme differed between the beginning and middle of the 18th-century? The philosophical materialism, for example, that arose in the first half of the century came too late to inform Addison's essays but engendered in Burke's *Enquiry* a distinct language of embodiment (Sarafianos 2008). Thus where, for Addison, pleasure in 'an unbounded view' is due to its *association* with 'liberty' (1945, 290), Burke ascribes the delight in the view of large objects to the retina being struck by a proportionately large number of rays of light. For Burke, aesthetic response is grounded in the body's physical constitution: the 'efficient causes' of aesthetic impressions are affections of 'the nerves of sight' (1999b, 78). Indeed, his 'physiologism', as Vanessa L Ryan has argued, leads him to minimise mental activity, while 'his insistence on looking to the physical to explain the internal, psychological effects of the sublime breaks with a well-established assumption that the sublime is allied with an elevation of the mind' (2001, 270). It is thus possible that an external factor — philosophical materialism, as it is absorbed by Burke — urges his denigration of imagery and thereby his rejection of the *ut pictura poesis* contention. As Reisberg *et al.* (2003) admit, it is quite possible for introspections — even those as 'diligent' as Burke's — to be influenced

by a pre-held theoretical position, i.e. Burke's 'physiologism' might lead him not to 'recognise' images as such.

While it is important to be aware of such external factors, they do not necessarily mitigate our argument. As long as the correlation between the aestheticians' reported experience of imagery and their position on *ut pictura poesis* exists, then their experience of imagery remains a *possible* cause of their theoretical position, and that — supported by evidence from the above analogical situation — is all we aim to advance.

Conclusion

In the 18th-century *ut pictura poesis* comes to be a debate over poetry's vocation: what it *should* be or do. For one side, as we have framed it, poetry should emulate painting by offering images to the reader or listener, that is, by verbally evoking visual scenes; for the other side, it should be a medium of affective, rather than depictive communication, operating imagelessly, avoiding sensuously evocative language. So what is at stake in the question of whether or not poetry should emulate painting is the value of *imagery*.

If our claim that the degree to which the aestheticians *prescribe* an importance to images in poetry is at least partly based on the degree to which they *experience* images opens, as hoped, a novel aspect on the history of thought about relations between media, it should be noted that the *kind* of claim we have made has a venerable history. It was first made in the 19th-century, soon after Galton's studies, by T H Huxley, William James, and Alexander Fraser (1891), specifically in reference to the British Empiricists' views on 'general ideas'. Burman (2008) has recently re-iterated Fraser's thesis, inspired by his own experience of imagery, and Faw (2009), more circumspectly, has contended 'the *probability* that strong imagers led philosophical and scientific psychology into introspective paths — and the *possibility* that some poor imagers led it into behavioural paths.' (Faw 2009, 60). Thomas's (2011) *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on 'Mental Imagery', however, rejects any such suggestions. Thomas finds no evidence for the claim that people's theoretical opinions about imagery are correlated with what they are inclined to say about the vividness of their imagery; and besides, says Thomas, claims like Berman's fail to acknowledge the methodological and conceptual difficulties in assessing individual differences in imagery vividness. Introspective reports are simply untrustworthy. We can, in turn, respond to Thomas's concerns, by appealing as we have to the findings of Reisberg *et al.* (2003) — strong evidence for the connection between theoretical opinion and self-report — and Cui *et al.* (2007) — who show the reported vividness of a subjects' imagery to correlate with levels of visual cortex activity.

The foregoing paper has attempted to not only apply such knowledge to historical questions but also to historicise that knowledge, and integrate the histories of scientific and aesthetic thought about visual mental imagery. If it

does provide a novel perspective on an ancient debate, we hope that it stands conceptually and methodologically as an initial, prospective foray into how an elusive but integral facet of experience has shaped culture.

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Notes

¹ 15th-century and 16th-century editions of *The Art of Poetry* punctuated Horace’s phrase differently: ‘Ut pictura poesis erit ...’ rather than ‘Ut pictura poesis: erit quae ...’, which makes the text read ‘a poem will be like a painting’ rather than ‘it will sometimes happen that’ (Hagstrum 1958, 9).

² The space of time between them is significant: Addison’s writings precede those of David Hume, who had a significant influence on Burke’s. Hume held the self to be little but a bunch of entrenched associations, or habits of thought; ‘[c]ustom’, declares the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751) ‘is the

great guide of human life’ (quoted in Eagleton 1990, 45). Burke seized on the political implications of this (Eagleton 1990).

³ Another internal source is suggested by Kramnick’s (1977) biographical account, which presents Burke’s position as a direct expression of his sexual ambivalence.

⁴ Galton’s interest, it should be remembered, was not in ‘mental visions’ for their own sake. Rather, examination of the ‘natural varieties of mental disposition in the two sexes and in different races’ was intended to provide ‘data as to the relative frequency with which different faculties are inherited in different degrees’ (1880, 302).

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